

Forced Marriages: Causes and Consequences in Pakistan

Outline:

well organized

1. Introduction

Thesis Statement: The polyfactors of poverty, peer pressure in tribal areas, patriarchal mindset and weak legal framework in Pakistan perpetuates forced marriages, a human right violation with life-long consequences including mental health, economic dependency and identity loss.

2. Causes of Forced Marriages in Pakistan

2.1 Poverty and settling debts in tribal areas of Pakistan

a. Exchange of young girls for disputes

b. Example of Abida named girl

2.2 Peer pressure and social coercion

a. Ensuring suitable partner

b. Caste and ethnicity

2.3 Patriarchal society

- a. Case of Watla Satta
- b. They perceive daughters as burden

2.4 Broken families

- a. orphan daughter
- b. A Girl in the River: The prince of forgiveness documentary

2.5 Weak legal framework

- a. Absence of enforcement of laws related to forced marriages
- b. The Pakistan Penal code section 498-B

3. Consequences of Forced Marriages in Pakistan:

3.1 Depression and physical violence

- a. 75% Pakistani girls and women witnessed physical violence
- b. 10 million girl are married before the age of 15 (Dawn)

3.2 Leads towards economic dependency on counterpart

- a. loss of education right
- b. dependency on in-laws

3.3 Unprecedented domestic violence based on their gender.

- a. Over 90% of Pakistani women have faced domestic violence in their lifetime (NEHRP)
- b. 8% of Pakistani have experienced sexual violence at home (UNFPA)

3.4 Unwanted pregnancies and unsafe abortions

- a. As per of 2023, an estimated 66 abortion occur each year per 1000 women of reproductive age in Pakistan
- b. ~~One in five married women in Pakistan who want to avoid pregnancy are unable to access effective method to do so.~~

3.5 Loss of self-esteem and identity crisis.

- a. Suicide attacks
- b. Shatter one's sense of self-worth.

4. Suggestions to minimize the Forced Marriages in Pakistan:

4.1 Legal and policy reforms

- a. Robust existential laws
- b. Swift justice
- c. Article 34 of Constitution of

5. Conclusion Pakistan

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While most ~~16-year-olds~~ are worrying about exams and friendships, Fatima was packing a bag for a journey she never chose, to a husband she had never met. In an era of globalization and digitalization where individuals can choose their careers, their home, and their identity with unprecedented freedom, the ancient chains of forced marriages continue to bind generations of youths. Forced marriages is a human violation considering as a cultural tradition. Simon de Beauvoir rightly said in her book 'The Second Sex' that one is not born, but becomes a woman. In Pakistan, forced marriages are product of polyfactors including mass illiteracy and poverty. Social coercion as well as social norms in certain areas of Pakistan also is cause of forced marriages. Pakistani society, a society dominated by male, considers their sons as their heirs and daughters as

burden. The consequences of forced marriages in Pakistan lead towards severe repercussions on victim's mental health and pregnancies issues. Economic dependency on their spouse and in-laws making escape virtually impossible. This essay attempts to discuss the causes and consequences of forced marriages in Pakistan.

To begin with, mass poverty and settling debts in tribal areas of Pakistan is the foremost cause of forced marriages. Tribal areas such as Balochistan and FATA, the jirgas, which is a tradition like judicial bench, decide the fate of a girl. Disputes in clans over a piece of land shatter the freedom of young girls. For example, in Balochistan's district Naseerabad, Abida was given in exchange of dispute settlement to the opponent clan. Therefore, poverty and settling disputes in tribal areas of Pakistan shatter the fullest the forced marriages.

Likewise, peer pressure and social coercion is another cause of forced marriages in