

MOCK - OCT-2025.

Forced Marriages in Pakistan: Causes & Consequences.

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The Essay

Forced marriages - a practiced slavery. Under the convention of modern practice of slavery, forced marriages can come easily under the umbrella of forced slavery. This includes forced labor, forced pregnancy, forced sterilization, sexual exploitation, domestic servitude and significant restrictions on personal liberty and movement. Forced marriages are often practiced in Asia, Africa, Europe and North America. In Europe and America most of migrated families have been reported for forced marriages account. In Pakistan, forced marriages are practiced among rural population and most prevalence is in Pashtoon culture. In essence, forced marriage is a form of marriage in which there is no consent of both individuals or atleast one individual. Frequently, both men and women bound by social, emotional and religious pressure. They are deprived of their fundamental rights, resulting in disturbing and upsetting consequences. Men and women are forced into marriage due to customs norms, to uphold traditions risking their physical health, having dire psychological

consequences with far detrimental impacts on society as a whole.

Forced marriage is classically illustrated as a problem that solely touches women's from South Asia; though it is not the case, both men and women fall into its victims. It also affects diverse group of people including Iranians, Turks, Afghans, Kurds, Arabs and Africans. Locally, this custom of forced marriages is practiced first and foremost as honor culture.

To recompense the unethical behavior of man, they "vanni" the girl, mostly in teenagers so the dispute can be capped. Even in order to level the pending debts, if family is unable to return cash, young girls are given as tributes. Most contributing factor of forced marriage is cultural practice of "tribe", either marriage is good or bad for the glorification of one's tribe as no other "blood" may enter in their line of succession. Elders of tribe or family make prompt decisions without consideration of time and age of young people. Moreover, in that lieu of tribal

reciprocal marriage often called "watta satta" is also practiced. In the scenario barrier of bride exist between two families. Many men who want to marry lot younger girl than them often give their daughters or sisters in "watta satta". Pashtun belt or tribes also practiced "walwar", money against match, in which groom family pay price to bride's parents. The money serves as a rescue and reward for long economic difficulties of her brought up. To settle disputes to settle for money as her bride price mostly women and sometimes men are forced into marriages having detrimental consequences.

Another cause of forced marriage is social dynamics. Many forced marriages are arranged in the name of protection and safety of women. Parents offer their children to their best men they know because they think that relatives will protect them. It gives them hope that children would not be treated as stranger but as bride of own family or blood. Many families living in Europe or America forcefully

marry their children to families back home. They want to protect their children from English civilization and norms which do not align to their culture and traditions back home. Similarly, the sexuality of women/ ~~or~~ men is also regulated by forced marriages as well. Most parents think their children, especially girls, are safer from risks of dating and more significantly, sexual activity outside of marriage. Thus in their patriarchal standards women must marry young so they don't ruin family reputation. Many families don't value girl or boys' opinion in marriage. In cultural and religious terms it is considered the right of parents to marry their offspring whenever or whoever they want. Moreover, marriage is usually an official relationship between two families rather than two people. ~~Initially~~ Parents are prompt to make their girls "engaged" (betrothed; book for marriage) so as to secure potential boy of their pleasure. Such matches are booked within family relatives.

on both sides so opportunity may not slip outside the family. Later on these engagements causes instances from either of sides to expedite the marriage early.

One of the primary causes of forced marriages is that it's a ticket out of poverty. For some poor families marrying off their daughter into wealthy family is guarantee that she would be provided with higher standard of living than they can provide also evade from giving heavy dowry to the daughter if married in same status or social class. Women who often sought assistance from shelter workers are victims of violence who were minor married off by parents to wealthier older men. In Pakistan, Samaa TV news broadcasted a case back in 2022 a young female of 22 years of age was married off to a wealthy man by her parents seeking good life standard when she was only 13 years old. Against their imagination girl was

Sexually assaulted by the rich man, went through forced pregnancy and when she could not bear him a male child, was thrown out to streets with her three girls one being only two months old. Similarly, in some tribes or territories making expenses on girls is deemed useless because ultimately they would be married away to live and work for some other household. Mindset that believe women are economic burden and therefore they are prompt to encourage their marriage early (National Commission on Status of Women, 2007). Thus, they shake off the economic load early on. Finally, lack of access to education and facilities coupled with lack of awareness among families. Family presumes there is no work for girl to sit idle at home now thus they are forcefully married off to relatives or other. Thus it can be assumed that economic dynamics are important contributors of forced marriages.

Forced marriage is stripping off

fundamental rights and of Personal liberty and choice from both men and women though in mostly cases from women. Girls who are married off before adulthood and bare children gr peirains to a dive risk to both maternal and child's mortality as women body is still growing towards maturation before the age of 18. Accordy to Unicef's 2007 report highest percentage of pregnancy is due to early marriages mostly in early teens. Forced marriages have high ratio of domestic violence. Abuse in these relationship can be expressed physically, socially, sexually verbally or mentally from both sides. When someone is denied their independence too early and their escape from certain relationship. Male in patriarchal society often resort to violence, women are often beaten brutally by either husband or inlaws. As most percentage of women forced marriage includes women marrying elder or children are married in early teens this poses a huge and devastating risk of contracting Sexually transmitted diseases such

as HIV or AIDS. Forced marriages bear dire health risks.

Forced marriages admirably pose psychological consequences. People being in forced marriage feels repelled from their spouses, resulting in familial disputes leading to more stress and frustration in the household. Marriages demand sense of responsibility men are to earn and also to manage equally between wife and their parents but in instances of wife is forced upon the men, they don't consider it their responsibility but a frustration which is endowed upon them. Similarly, in case of female all the household responsibilities which she never wanted in first place is placed upon her and she feels frustrated, anxious and depressed in that certain household.

In forced marriages society is also affected - In case of early forced marriages takes away right of education from the

couple. Female are asked to do house chores and men are compelled to now go earn for family forced upon them. The ability to seek knowledge, explore and grow leading to healthy and fulfilled life is crushed. In case of female marrying to old men and leaving education are now fully dependent on their husbands. Their own economic security falls to nearly nil how can they brought up a child in secure and decent environment. A large portion of these marriages end in separation or divorces. Thus, as family structure is basic unit of culture ~~to~~ harms, forced marriages ultimately harms the very constituent that elders in family wanted to protect. In sociological content, forced marriages reduces harmony among families. Unstable emotions, unstable household leading to familial disorders. These familial disorders contribute to a disturbed society. Disturbances between couple complaints between in-laws, families have unpleasant relationships.

Predominantly

Forced marriages in rural areas in Pakistan and overall leads to health risks, familial disputes, and is heinous act. It is some form of practiced slavery as individuals cannot leave marriage or join it out of their own will. It destroys couples, their household only to either appease families, get rid of poverty or follow rotten traditional norms. No one should be coerced in to forced marriages and practice is prohibited by the religion.