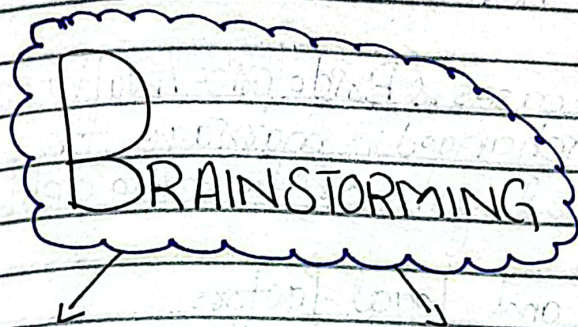


MOCK EXAM CSS-2026

ESSAY: FORCED MARRIAGES IN PAK: CAUSES AND CONSEQUENCES



Causes

- Family pressure
- Economic factor
- Political/legal factor
- Lack of good proposals
- Poverty
- Lack of education
- Cultural norms and traditions

Consequences:

- Emotional and mental health issues
- Domestic violence
- Impact on children
- Education disruption
- Economic dependence
- Violation of human rights

OUTLINE

1. Introduction

Hook

Thesis Statement

2. Causes of Forced Marriages

2.1 Family Pressure

2.1.1 Parents or elders force children to marry for social or traditional reasons.

2.1.2 Families often rush a marriage due to fear of "losing a good match".

2.2 Poverty and Unemployment

2.2.1 Families arrange marriages to reduce financial burdens.

2.2.2 In some cases, (Bride price/Wafa satta) girls are exchanged in marriage for financial gain or to settle debts.

2.3 Political and Legal Factors

2.3.1 Weak enforcement of laws against forced marriages.

2.3.2 Lack of awareness about laws like the Child Marriage Restraint Act.

3 Consequences of forced Marriages

3.1 Emotional and mental health issues

3.1.1 Depression, anxiety, trauma from lack of consent or abusive relationships.

3.2 Impact on children

3.2.1 Children born into forced marriages may face neglect, poverty or emotional instability.

3.3 Social Instability

3.3.1 forced marriages perpetuate cycles of poverty and inequality in society.

3.4 Economic Dependence

3.4.1 Victims often lack financial independence, making it harder to escape bad marriages.

4. Conclusion

THE ESSAY

"Death is far less scary to contemplate than a forced marriage to an unloved male" - Richard Wilbur. This quote shows the pain and hopelessness that people feel when they are pushed into forced marriages. In Pakistan, this problem is very common and comes from cultural traditions, family pressure, poverty and unemployment, weak enforcement of laws against forced marriages, lack of awareness about laws like the child marriage restraint Act. While on the other hand, the consequences of forced marriages highlight mental health issues, impact on children, social instability, economic dependence. The theme of this issue shows that forced marriages leads to a toxic life. Mental health issues are increasing day by day, making it hard to overcome. Many people, especially women, are not given the right to choose whom they marry, which leads to serious effects on their happiness and freedom. Hence, forced marriages in Pak^{istan}, driven by cultural traditions, economic pressures and weak legal enforcement, lead to severe emotional, social and economic consequences for victims, emphasizing the urgent need for awareness, legal reforms and societal change.

"Examining the specific causes and far-reaching consequences of forced marriages in Pakistan reveals the complexity of this issue and underscores the need for multifaceted solutions."

Firstly, family pressure is a common cause of forced marriages in Pakistan. In rural areas of Pakistan, there have been cases where girls as young as 14 or 15 are forced into marriages by their families to settle debts, avoid dowry expenses or maintain family alliances. For instance, in some tribal regions, the practice of swara or vani (giving girls in marriage to settle disputes or debts) still exists. A real-life case was reported where a 16-year-old girl was given in marriage to a 40-year-old man as a part of a dispute settlement between families. Such cases highlight the gravity of forced marriages and their impact on young girls' lives. Similarly, families often rush a marriage due to fear of losing a good match, leading to decisions made without considering the child's wishes or well-being. Secondly, in many areas, poverty and unemployment lead families to arrange marriage to reduce financial burdens. In 2019, a case from rural Sindh, Pakistan, highlighted how poverty forced a family to marry off their 13-year-old daughter to a 40-year-old man in exchange for

money to pay off their debts. The family, struggling with extreme poverty and unemployment, felt they had no other option ^{but to} marry their daughter for financial relief. Additionally, in a rural village in Pakistan's Punjab province, two families arranged a ~~Watta satta~~ marriage to settle a long-standing dispute over land. The families exchanged girls in marriage: a 16 year old girl from one family married a boy from other family, and in return, a 17 year old girl from second family married a boy from first family. Both girls reportedly didn't want to marry but were pressured by their families to go through with the arrangement to resolve the dispute.

This practice of exchanging girls in marriage highlights how cultural traditions can lead to forced marriages without considering the girl's consent.

Thirdly, In Pakistan, these are laws like ^{weakened enforcement of laws against forced marriage} the child marriage restraint Act aimed at preventing child marriages and protecting individuals from forced marriage. However, the enforcement of these laws is often weak, particularly in rural areas. This weak enforcement allows practices of forced marriages to continue. For instance, in rural areas of Pak, despite the existence of laws prohibiting child marriages, girls as young as 12 or 13 are sometimes married off due to cultural norms or family pressures. Law enforcement might be minimal in these regions, allowing such practices to persist without strict legal consequences.

Similarly, there is not much enough awareness about laws like the Child Marriage Restraint Act. In some conservative communities in Pakistan, families might not be aware of the legal age for marriage or the penalties for violating the Child Marriage Restraint Act.

Forced marriages have serious and lasting effects on individuals and families. They often lead to emotional, mental and social challenges. Victims face issues like depression, while children born into such marriages may suffer neglect or instability. Victims of forced marriages often experience depression, anxiety, due to lack of consent and abusive environment. For instance, A 15-year old girl in Sindh was forced to marry a man twice her age. She later developed severe depression and attempted suicide because she felt trapped and powerless in the marriage.

Similarly, children born into forced marriages, often face neglect, poverty as their parents struggle with unhappy or dysfunctional relationships. Example: In rural Punjab, children of a forced marriage between a 14 year old girl and a 40 year old ^{man} were reported to be malnourished and lacking basic education, as the family was financially unstable and emotionally strained.

Additionally, forced marriages can

contribute to social instability by perpetuating cycle of poverty and inequality. In a village, Sindh a 14-year old girl was married off to settle her family's debt. She had to drop out of school and became financially dependent on her husband, who worked as a laborer. With no education or skills, she remained trapped in poverty, unable to improve her situation. Often women are forced into marriages, which can lead to a range of negative outcomes that affect not just the individual but also the broader societal dynamics. While on the other hand, forced marriage frequently lacks financial independence, which makes it harder for them to escape the marriage or improve their situation. For instance, in Punjab, a woman forced into marriage at 16 was entirely dependent on her husband for money. When her marriage became abusive, she wanted to leave but couldn't afford legal help or basic necessities to live independently. Economic dependence forced her to stay in the toxic relationship.

In Conclusion, While forced marriages remain a significant challenge in Pakistan, there is hope for change through awareness, education and stronger enforcement of laws. Empowering individuals, especially women, with education and financial independence can break the cycle of poverty and inequality. By fostering community support and

promoting awareness of legal rights,
society can move towards a future
where marriages are based on mutual
consent and respect. Progress may be
slow, but with collective effort, a
brighter and more equitable future is
within reach.