



## Causes and Consequences of Early Marriages in Khanewal District Punjab, Pakistan

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### Abstract

Early marriage is a human rights violation and a practice that undermines efforts to promote sustainable development, early marriage has affected 58 million girls, many of whom were married against their will and in violation of international laws and conventions. The present study of main focus causes and consequences of early marriage in Khanewal district, Punjab Pakistan. The research was conducted for the main objectives of, to find out the health problems of married women by early marriage as well as, to investigate the impact of early marriage on women life. The population was selected the area of ward no-1 Basti Syedan Jhang Road tehsil. Kabir Walla District, Khanewal Punjab Pakistan. It is situated 45 Kilo meter away from Multan. 100 Respondents were selected for this study with the help of Snow ball sampling. For data collection Interview guide was done for early marriages. Through interview, the researcher was able to observe deep to the attitude and expressions of respondents

### Keywords

Causes, Consequences, early marriages, health problems, Khanewal district, Punjab Pakistan.

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## **Introduction**

Marriage is a very important institute of society and religion as well. Marriage is not just the relation of sex; sex can be done without marriage, marriage is a universal social institution. Marriage is a legal way of the regulation of sex in human life. In other words, marriage is the license for leading the sexual life. Marriage is a source we establish and maintain a family in a society. Marriage is the public joining, under socially specified regulations of men and women as husband and wife. Shankar Rao, C. (2006). A marriage occurs in every nook and corner of the world, and each differs in respects of its culture and tradition. Thus the purpose, form and function of marriage differ from society to society Gohschalk, 2007. Early marriage is one of the types of marriage which is considered somewhat harmful. Early marriage is widely recognized as a violation of children's rights. It also clearly represents gender discrimination as in most cases females are younger than male. In all over the world early marriages prevail in different forms. Early marriage is considered a marriage of a child younger than 18 years old. Creswell, J. and Clark, V. (2007).

According to Bahgam and Mukhatari (2004) Shariah is made up of the rules given by the Prophet and through which Muslims are to be governed in their relationship during life with fellow human beings and with him. Quran is the primary source of Shariah. The second source for Shariah is the Hadith which is the sum of the sayings, practices and actions of the Prophet. The third source of Shariah is Ijma, which is the consensus of opinion of knowledgeable people in the community on any given problem. Adulthood is not accepted by the Islamic Scholars. A girl has attained adulthood when she starts menstruation which according to the different schools is arbitrarily set at an age between 9 years (Imamiyyah) and 17 years (Hanifa). With some variations, most scholars agree that in cases where a child has not attained adulthood, the father or guardian can marry the child nonetheless. According to Budabin (2007), overwhelmingly, child marriage practices are there among the poor where educational and employment opportunities for girls are limited or non-existent. Families often feel fear about their daughters of having premarital sex that may result in unintended pregnancies and Sexually Transmitted Infections and HIV. So, early marriage of the daughters prevents the parents from this all this type of fears. Parents believe that other families may be able to provide better peace and clam to their daughters.

## **Research Methodology**

The present study was conducted for the purpose of, to find out the health problems of married women by early marriage as well as, to investigate the impact of early marriage on women life. The population was selected the area of ward no-1 Basti Syedan Jhang Road Teh. Kabir Walla District Khanewal Punjab Pakistan, it is situated 45 Kilo meter away from Multan. 100 Respondents were selected for this study with the help of Snow ball sampling. For data collection Interview guide was done for early marriages. Through interview, the researcher was able to observe deep to the attitude and expressions of respondents.

## Significance of the Study

Early marriage is serious issue in Pakistan; such a marriage badly affects physical, psychological, social and economic values. Early marriage also effects on mother's health and may cause many diseases like HIV, and many females health problems as well as transferred diseases, death of mother, obstetrical fistulas and pregnancy complications. This study will highlight the issue of marriage system and consequences of early marriages. Early marriages are practiced mostly in under developing countries. The researcher selected this topic for the research keeping in view al the serious problems mentioned above caused by early marriage.

**Table 1: Types of Marriage**

<b>Marriage</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Exogamy	13	13%
Endogamy	87	87%
Exchange marriage	35	35%

Source: Field survey by Interview

**Table 2: Categories of the married age**

<b>Age</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
<b>12</b>	6%
<b>13</b>	8%
<b>14</b>	6%
<b>15</b>	16%
<b>16</b>	27%
<b>17</b>	31%
<b>18</b>	6%
<b>Total</b>	100%

Source: Socio-Economic Census Survey report

The tradition of early marriage has some negative impacts on young girl's life. These effects are observed during the research, by respondents interviewing of asked many question about their early marriage life. Young girls are not much efficient as wives. It was observed in most of the cases that young married girls were not much efficient to meet their rights and duties

towards her in laws and even towards their husband because the girls were not mature physically, biologically and even mentally.

**Table 3: Age differences victim of early marriage**

<b>Sr.No.</b>	<b>Name</b>	<b>Present Age</b>	<b>Age at Marriage</b>
1.	Asma (Wife)	18 years	14 years
2.	Ghulam Jaffar (husband)	25 years	21 years
3.	Age difference	07 years	

Asma was too weak because, she give birth two children through operation in three year. Due to the weak health, she was not able to pay all duties as a house wife and not even perform like a good mother, even she was not be able to do intercourse with her husband. Now her in-laws said that she is not wise as a daughter in law and as wife. In this way she always bears taunts from her saas and nand as well. Due to the early marriages, Women cannot enjoy full freedom of their life because in very younger age, they have in-laws responsibilities on their shoulders. Due to the younger age of wives husbands is septic, they do not allow them to go outside. This table shows the freedom of mobility of researcher's respondents.

**Table 4: Freedom of mobility of early marriage**

<b>Mobility</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Freedom	34	34%
No freedom	66	66%
Total	100	100%

Source: Field survey by Interview

This data was conducted by interviews. In this area women have not the freedom of mobility. In this study total respondents were 100 women. This table shows 34% women have freedom of mobility after marriage in early age, 66% women have not freedom of mobility after marriage in early age. It was observed that the young girls have to face a number of restrictions in their in-laws; even most of the respondents told that their saas( Mother in law) and husbands did not allow them to purchase their own clothes of their own choice. They had to buy the required dressings and other things by the final decision of their husband or saas.

They think that their daughter in law is too young so she cannot differentiate the good and bad quality. Thus as they said the girl had to obey because of her early age. The concepts of their in laws were fixed that they are innocent and immature.

**Table 5: Right of mobility of early marriage**

<b>Sr.No.</b>	<b>Name</b>	<b>Present Age</b>	<b>Age at Marriage</b>
1.	Samreen (Wife)	21years	15 years
2.	Nasir (husband)	25years	19 years
3.	Age difference	04 Years	

Source: Field survey by Interview

Her husband and in-laws were too skeptics. They taunt her immature age and believe that she was too young to understand the difference between good and bad. So, they do not allow her to go out from home for shopping. Once she went for shopping with her sister in law but when her father in law came to know he beat her badly, from that day onwards going out is forbidden for her. Samreen said she was leading her life as a prisoner in her own home.

**Table 6: Age differences, victim of early marriage**

<b>Sr.No.</b>	<b>Name</b>	<b>Present Age</b>	<b>Age at Marriage</b>
1.	Mummtaz (Wife)	24years	17 years
2.	M. Iqbal(husband)	33years	26 years
3.	Age difference	09years	

Source: Field survey by Interview

Mummtaz had merely completed her matric degree when she was forced to marry. To add upon my shock she told me that her husband was uneducated and was not able to write even his own name. Mummtaz did not want to marry him but her parents fixed her marriage and informed her. They did not ask for her opinion and married her to Iqbal quietly. After the marriage, she wanted to continue her study through Illama Iqbal Open University which she has successfully done and now she is graduate. Her husband cannot speak Urdu fluently where as speaking or understanding English was far away from him. Such as, he pronounces Khoon instead of Phone. If she tries to correct him, he gets angry within no time. His ignorance is the reason for his unemployment.

**Table 7: Restriction on education due to early marriage**

<b>Sr.No.</b>	<b>Name</b>	<b>Present Age</b>	<b>Age at Marriage</b>
1.	Tahmina (Wife)	20years	16 years
2.	Noman Jabar (husband)	24years	20 years
3.	Age difference	04years	

Source: Field survey by Interview

Tahmina could not complete her education because of early age marriage. After marriage her husband had to suffer from the disease of liver and kidneys and was operated thrice. Doctor advised him to take complete bed rest because he wasn't able to perform daily routine works. Due his bed rest the family had to suffer from extreme depression and economic recession. They had no other source of income. Living in such misery Tahmina decided to do job, but her little education became the hurdle in her way. As a result, Tahmina had to work as maid in homes to run the cycle of her life and her family. Many respondents were weak and frail. But their in-laws and husbands deliberately remain ignorant to their weakness and expect that these poor girls should perform every imposed duty whole heartedly. This domestic violence affects their health and psyche badly. One of the respondents revealed that she is the victim of domestic violence which is inflicted upon her not only by her husband but all the in-laws. She is often beaten by them badly. Such type of cases is faced not only by one woman in Pakistan but almost every second woman. As a result many of my respondents have ended up their relation to divorce.

**Table 8: Victim of domestic violence of early marriage**

<b>Sr.No.</b>	<b>Name</b>	<b>Present Age</b>	<b>Age at Marriage</b>
1.	Allah Rahki (Wife)	26years	17 years
2.	Ansar Amein(husband)	40years	31 years
3.	Age difference	14years	

Source: Field survey by Interview

Allah Rahki got marriage at the age of 15 years. During her first pregnancy Hepatitis and Diabetes attacked her and caused problem during delivery. She had to undergo operation but was unfortunate to have the in-laws who payed no attention to her health even when she

deserved it badly. This resulted in ever lasting effects on her health. Today Allah Rahki is not able to properly fulfill all her responsibilities where as when she demands for her daily or monthly expense her husband and mother in law are reluctant to give her expense and abuse her by putting different allegation upon her. She is also beaten badly by her husband and mother in-law. And provide no medication too.

**Table 9: Restriction of Family on family planning**

<b>Sr.No.</b>	<b>Name</b>	<b>Present Age</b>	<b>Age at Marriage</b>
1.	Shanaz (Wife)	22years	16 years
2.	M. Arshad(husband)	23years	28 years
3.	Age difference	12years	

Source: Field survey by Interview

Shanaz have 5 children at age of 22 years. Her young age did not allow her to have continuous pregnancies and she got her first delivery through operation. She was aware of family planning and somehow discussed it with her mother in-law and her husband. Her husband being a rigid religious person strictly rejected family planning, where her mother in-law wanted many grand children. As a result Shanaz had to abide by the instructions and wishes of her mother in-law and had to compromise her health. After continuous pregnancies she became the victim of blood deficiency and many such health problems. She worries about her condition but cannot do anything. Psychological impact is one of the major problems caused by early marriages. A few of respondents have great psychological impact. They were being stressed and over burdened so much that they were badly affected psychologically. They could not share their health problems especially sexually health problems. Few of respondents became psychologically so weak that cannot bear pressure and became worried so much even in minor issues. Thus depression is created in them which is the main cause of being aggressive and problems are created between them and their husbands. After all they could not take full care of their children.

**Table 10: Health Categories of early marriage**

<b>Diseases</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Depression	14	39%
Jaundice	4	10%
Arthritis	7	18%

B.P High	3	5%
B.P Low	10	28%
Total	38	100%

Source: Field survey by Interview

This information is obtained from interviews. This table shows the poor health condition of women who got married in young age. Total respondents were 38 in this locale. Early child bearing cause many diseases in females as described in the above table. Premature childbirth can lead to a variety of health problems for mothers such as weak reproductive health, depression, jaundice, B.P High, B.P Low. In this age women has physically immature of the sexual organ and face physical pain that link with sexual Intercourse.

**Table 11: Victim of miscarriages of early marriage**

Sr.No.	Name	Present Age	Age at Marriage
1.	Nadia (Wife)	19years	13 years
2.	Ali.Imran(husband)	26years	20 years
3.	Age difference	7years	

Source: Field survey by Interview

Due to the early age, she had four miscarriages in two years. She was weak and frail. Now she can never become a mother in her life. She will remain childless throughout her life. Such circumstances resulted in the second marriage of her husband.

**Jaundice:** When a woman gets pregnant in young age, her health is badly affected. Her immune system is weakened and she becomes prone to many diseases. Jaundice is one of them. This disease does not only effects mother health but also on the health of newly born baby. 10% of respondents suffer from this disease. This situation is very serious.

**Arthritis:** In this age, girl's body is not mature for sexual relation and giving child birth. When they give birth to a child, arthritis disease attacked on them. In this locale 18% women suffer the disease of arthritis. This disease remains throughout all life. This disease affects legs. Few women were victim of this disease and could not walk properly

**Depression:** Due to the early age women were not able to fulfill all the responsibilities as wife, house wife and as a "daughter in law". Her in-laws and husband degrade all time. They cannot share their sorrows with any one in her in-laws. In this locale 39% women were suffer the disease of depression.



**B.P Low/B.P High:** Due to the weakness and depression attack the disease of B.P High / B.P low. 28% women were suffering in B.P Low and 2% women were suffering B.P High. Because in early age many responsibilities on their shoulders. When they cannot pay all responsibilities effectively then they can face many problems.

**Table 12: Categories of relation between husbands and wives**

Relation	Frequency	Percentage
Bad	16	44%
Good	15	40%
Better	7	16%
Total	38	100%

Source: Field survey by Interview

According to this table 44% women that were the victim of early marriage are leading their life in the different troubles due to poor relations with husband. 40% women were leading their life in a neutral way, and 16% women leading their life very happily. All this information is obtained through interviews.

## Conclusion

Early Marriage is a critical factor in our society which creates disorders in the society. These disorders could not reveal and they place everlasting impacts on the lives of innocent females. Through the interviews and observation during the research many reasons are highlighted like concept of paraya mall, gender inequality, control over sexuality, protecting family honor, influence of Islam, unawareness of the losses of early marriage, tradition and culture, role of patriarchy, lack of education, kinship ties, poverty, decision of “jirga & Punchayat”, watta satta, fear of rape, pressure of the relatives, promissory marriage, saving property, more daughters, economic support, limited laws are found for the early marriages. In this research it is concluded that women have to face many disadvantages of early marriage like less proficient, restrictions, domestic violence, reproductive health issues, education, affect on child health, and affect on mother health lack of decision making, no rights for work, divorces, psychological impacts, working device, extra martial relations and nature of relationship between husband and wife. Due to all these impacts, victim of early marriage have to face the bitter behavior of society, an early married female face physical and sexual abuse by partner or his family. Females are considered less valuable so parents think females are not supporting their family income. Thus they have to leave their parent’s home. Socio-economic Status is very low because they are totally dependent on their husbands. The study of this research explains that the early marriage is also gender discrimination. However, female is deprived of all her basic

rights such as partner selection, property rights, decision making and education rights. Early marriages may deprive a female from social rights, human rights and the rights of women. People of the concerned locale are mostly illiterate that is why people have no awareness about the human rights. The early marriage system is a cultural pattern that is based on the parent's decision. People of the considered area believe that girl's education is wastage of time and because of education girls become independent and stubborn. Plus education teaches the girl to break customs. Due to the illiteracy, women have no sense of their rights that's why they are being suppressed by males.

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