Determinants of Late Marriages and its Emotional and Physical Consequences on Females in Tehsil Chakwal

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Abstract:

Late marriage is a growing issue not only in urban areas but in rural areas due to certain socio economic factors. This problem results in many other problems a woman has to face due to late marriage. Man cannot live in isolation as marriage is an important institution of human society. Factors causing late marriages and its emotional and physical consequences were identified in this study. The study was conducted in tehsil Chakwal which is located in pothohar region of Pakistan. 120 married females between the ages 26 to 45 were selected purposively for this study. Interviews were conducted in local language with a close ended questionnaire. It was concluded that low income of males, difference in social status and education are major causes of late marriages. While, depression among emotional consequences ranked 1st and delay in pregnancy and infertility are ranked 1st and 2nd among physical consequences.

Keywords: Socioeconomic, emotional, physical, pregnancy, infertility.

INTRODUCTION:

Age of first marriage has been rising throughout the Asia. In countries like Pakistan, where women have traditionally married around 18 years, the movement is toward late marriage (24 years and older). The trend toward later marriage is associated with changes

that have important social and economic implications for the countries like Pakistan, such as declining fertility, changing roles for women and emerging youth subcultures (Greenspan, 1992). The term late marriage refers to delay than the Singulate Mean Age at Marriage (SMAM) of women (Kamal, 2011). The indicators also showed that the marriage age trend has been increased as teenage fertility has been reduced from 10 to 8 percent all over the Pakistan whereas more than half of the females' age at first marriage also increased from 20 years. Median age of females at first marriage also rose by 0.7 year in comparison of last decade (PDHS, 2013).

There are many conspiracies waves nowadays regarding the marriage age of females. The Islamic and social conflicts are always arise by debating on this topic with consequences ethically, socially, psychologically as well as biologically that marrying and having births at a later age is a "good" thing for the families that do it, or is it a potentially harmful side effect of other sweeping changes in the life course, such as young women's increasing career orientation and young men's declining earning power? (Martin, 2002).

Marriage patterns in recent years have begun to change at a big level. In most part of the Asia, average age at marriage for females has increased by many years, and recent studies have indicated that there will be a huge of population who will never get married (Nobes and Buttenheim, 2008). More delay is observed in urban areas than the rural areas due to changing social and economic structure. A study conducted by Hull in (2002) has indicated that marital age of females is three years later than the marital age of males in Indonesia. Whereas, divorce rate in Pakistan have also been increased in the last couple of decades. Rise in education, changes in occupation and women's work status associated with urbanization are key elements in increasing marriage age (Bruce, 2005).

Perfect mismatch, poverty, dowry, social status, employment and unemployment, family customs, cast system, religious beliefs, modernization and other related factors are the main cause for delay in the marriages of females in Pakistan (Hakim, 2001).

Increasing literacy rate of females, changing gender roles, urbanization and roles assigned to a single woman; all of these factors are responsible for increased age of marriage in females (Ikamari, 2005). With the improvement in education women are becoming more aware about their rights which alter their aspirations and roles.

Improved education creates awareness and alters the roles and aspirations of women, as it confers values, aims and abilities which support and encourage non-familial roles. Thus late marriages due to education produce results like infertility in females (Wilson, 2009).

The Pothohar region is much laden with industries and business purposes as well as services delivery instead of agriculture. For that reason huge number of population, also females move for economical as well educational purposes. The trend for attaining higher education is rising in the Pothohar region as there is tough competition to grab the better employment opportunity. People of the area invest their resources and time for having better education to earn a better employment to improve their life standards. To give better future to their children the parents mostly prefer late marriages.

Fertility and reproductive health is affected negatively with the changing age of marriage. Females are more dedicated towards their education now which causes delay in their marriages, this delay affects adversely like decline in fertility. Age at the time of marriage is an important social factor which cannot be denied ever as it has a strong association with the decline in fertility. The higher the age the higher is the probability of declining fertility in females (Miller, *et al*. (2007).

Particularly there is a risky pattern developing for late marriages. Many researchers have declared that 35 years and old is considered as a late marriage. One of the serious issues after late marriage is conceiving and after that there are more complications in pregnancy as fertility keep on declining with the age of female. But there is a confusion here that people often think age has no relation with the fertility of man but that is not true, man's fertility also declines with the increase in age. It is not easy to make positive pregnancy in delayed marriages, but if it occurs somehow then there is a probability of complications like miscarriages, low birth rate, abnormality and pre term deliveries (Aziz, 2015).

METHODOLOGY

The trend for attaining higher education is rising in the Pothohar region as there is tough competition to grab the better employment opportunity. People of the area invest their resources and time for having better education to earn a better employment to improve their

life standards. To give better future to their children the parents mostly prefer late marriages. Tehsil Chakwal of district Chakwal was selected as the study area. 120 females who were married after the age of 26 years; and between 26 years to 45 years were selected purposively for this research. A close ended questionnaire was used to investigate the possible reasons for late marriages and its consequences. Data was then analyzed using Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) and interpreted later.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Age category selected for this study was 26 to 45 years old married females. It is evident from the **Table 1** that very few respondents (3.3 %) lie in the first age category of 26-30. Half of the respondents (50.0 %) fall in the second category of age 31 to 35 which is yet considered to be the late marriage and rest of the respondents were 36 to 45 years old. Literacy rate in Pakistan is increasing day by day. A fair majority of the respondents (41.5 %) were educated above the secondary level and higher education is considered to be the primary causes of late marriages among females now. Females continue their study to delay their marriage. And higher education ultimately increases the demand of a highly educated and well settled boy for their marriage. Arrange marriages is a very common phenomenon in Pakistan, people in this region are bound to their customs and traditions and arrange marriage is one of the customs of this area. Children are expected to follow their forefather's traditions. A huge majority of the respondents (59.0 %) had arranged marriage in this study.

Causes of late marriages can be seen in **Table 2** placed in a ranking order where low income of males is observed as the highest mean of 2.99 and ranked 1st. It depicts that low income of males is considered as the main reason by most of the respondents. Everybody needs social and economic security for their daughter so people look for a groom with sound economic position which delays their daughter's marriage. Family trends and difference of social status ranked 2nd and 3rd respectively. Females are getting better education now so they decide to get married after their graduation and post graduation which ultimately leads to delay in marriages as well. Difference of religious beliefs is ranked 7th. People in the study area were sect oriented they like to marry their daughters in the same sect they do practice.

Table 1: Demographic variable

Variables	Category	Percentages
Age	26-30	3.3
	31-35	50.0
	36-40	26.7
	41-45	20.0
Education	Matric	57.5
	Intermediate	22.5
	Graduate	12.5
	Postgraduate	7.5
Marriage type	Arrange marriage	59.0
	Love marriage	26.5
	Exchange marriage	14.5

Table 2: Causes of late marriages

Causes of late marriages	Mean	SD	Rank Order
Low income of males	2.99	1.00346	1st
Family trends	2.89	1.03567	2nd
Social status difference	2.57	1.41236	3rd
Educated females prefer late marriage	2.31	1.47827	4th
Dowry	2.27	1.49384	5th
Cast difference	2.22	1.53638	6th
Difference of religious beliefs	2. 11	1.61474	7th
Marriages expenses	2.06	1.69255	8th

Table 3: Emotional consequences of late marriages

Emotional consequences	Mean	SD	Rank Order
Depression	1.6250	0.49102	1st
Anger	1.5320	0.49863	2nd
Tiredness	1.3795	0.47947	3rd
Laziness	1.2241	0.40759	4th
Mentally disturbed	1.1675	0.39745	5th

When emotional consequences were investigated it was observed that depression ranked 1st with the highest mean 1.62 and standard deviation 0.49. Anger and tiredness are ranked 2nd and 3rd respectively whereas laziness and mental disturbance lies at the last place 4th and 5th. It is depicted in **Table 4** that not only emotional but there are certain physical consequences of late marriages as well in which late pregnancy is ranked 1st with the highest mean value of 1.83 and standard deviation 0.42 which depicts the same results as Aziz (2015). Miscarriage is also reported by a majority of the respondents which has a mean value score of 1.52 and ranked 2nd while infertility ranked 3rd and high blood pressure is ranked 4th with

lowest mean value 1.20. Same findings were carried out by Shimanda (2009).

Table 4: Physical consequences of late marriages

Physical consequences	Mean	SD	Rank Order
Late pregnancy	1.8340	0.46303	1st
Miscarriage	1.5230	0.39863	2nd
Infertility	1.3284	0.44947	3rd
High blood pressure	1.2031	0.38848	4th

CONCLUSION

The trend of late marriages is associated with changes that have significant social and economic implications such as declining fertility and changing roles of women. Number of late marriages is increasing with day by day and it is creating huge problems for not only females but for their families as well. It is illustrated in this study that there are certain social and economic causes of late marriages which are creating adverse emotional and physical effects on females and their families. Marriages should not happen so late, in fact marriages should be made simple and easy with minimum expenses so that family belonging to any social class can arrange a marriage at the right time and age. This issue can be resolved through awareness campaigns and media must play a vital role in this regard.

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