

Psychological Ailments and Schizophrenia: An Anthropological Description of Endogamous Marriage Patterns and Family Institution

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Abstract:

The research was conducted to study the role of endogamous marriages in the increase of schizophrenic patients. The locale of the study was Fountain House in Lahore which was a well known rehabilitation center for psychologically disturbed people especially for schizophrenics. Endogamous marriages were preferred in South Asian countries to strengthen the family ties. Inter-family marriages were also becoming reason of psychological disorders especially schizophrenia. The objective of the study was "To study the role of endogamous marriages in the increase of schizophrenic patients".

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Introduction

“Marriage is a relationship between one or more men (male or female) and one or more women (female or male) who are recognized by society as having a continuing claim to the right of sexual access to one another.” (Haviland 1999) Marriage is socially “marriage is a socially legitimate sexual union” (Ferraro & Andreatta 2010) and culturally approved custom “marriage is cultural” (Haviland 1999) which allows two opposite sex members of the society to have sexual relationship between them and they become legal parents of the offspring that result from their sexual intercourse. “Marriage is a union between a man and a woman such that the children born to the woman are recognized as legitimate offspring of both partners.”(Royal Anthropological Institute 1951, cited by Kottak 2011) Marriage is cultural, so it establishes certain rights and obligations between the people including, husband wife their children, them and their in-laws. In Islamic societies adultery is strongly prohibited. Female found to have sexual relationship with a person other than her husband was sentenced to death. “According to Shariah Law, women found guilty of having sexual relations outside marriage can be sentenced to death by stoning.” (Haviland et al. 2008)

Marriage is also a union between two individuals within the family. It is a “Series of customs” (Ferraro & Andreatta 2010) that “formalizing the relationship between adult partners within the family.” (Ferraro & Andreatta 2010) It creates a relationship between two known or unknown families, husband’s family and wife’s family. “A family is a social unit characterized by economic cooperation, management of

reproduction and child rearing, and common residence.” (Ferraro & Andreatta 2010)

Marriage within the family, caste and sect is mostly preferred in our society and is called endogamous marriage. “Anthropologically marriage is a group of two or more people related by blood, marriage, or adoption.” (Haviland et al. 2008) Endogamy is derived from Greek word ‘endon’ “within” and ‘gamos’ “marriage”. Endogamy is marrying within the particular group of individuals which includes cousins, in-laws. Endogamous marriages are the marriages within family, caste, ethnic group or specific social group. “Endogamy dictates marriage within a group to which one belongs.” (Kottak 2011)

In our society mostly family marriages are promoted to strengthen the family relations, to secure future, to hold property within the family and to increase the social status. Family marriage means marrying with the off springs of your parent’s siblings (cousins). Cousin marriages on the bases of kin are of two distinct types, parallel cousin marriages and cross cousin marriages. Parallel cousins are considered to be the children of two brothers or two sisters. “Parallel cousins are the children of siblings of the same sex.” (Ferraro & Andreatta 2010) Cross cousins are the children of a brother and a sister. “Cross cousins are children of siblings of the opposite sex.” (Ferraro & Andreatta 2010) In Islam marrying with both type of cousins is allowed but in some religions for example ‘Christianity’ marriage with parallel cousins is not allowed because they consider their parallel cousins as their real siblings. Marriage with the people, belong to the same kin group helps in strengthening and solidifying the relationship between social groups.

In our society people prefer marrying within family to secure future of their child. To kept the property within the family, for family solidarity, for secure future and for maintaining social status. People prefer marriage within the family because due to familiarity with the family back ground,

it strengthens the family relations, and because of social status and economic position they have self satisfaction. Unavailability of good match mates is one of the reasons to marry within the family.

Caste refers to a social class separated from others by distinctions of hereditary rank, profession, or wealth. Castes are the 'stratified groups' in which the membership is "ascribed" at the time of "birth" (Kottak 2011) for the whole life. People marry within the caste due to sense of pride, sense of belongingness and to maintain social status. Marriage on the bases of caste may also helps to increase the economic stability. Endogamous marriages are common among South Asian countries specially India, Bangladesh and Pakistan. Indians have strong belief on caste system. They prefer marriages within the same caste and avoid matrimonial relations with lower castes. Hyper gamy is also seem to be practiced among Indians. Hindus castes in India are strongly endogamous. Hindus believe that marrying below one's caste can cause "serious ritual pollution."(Ferraro & Andreatta 2010) In Pakistan caste endogamy is less rigid than India. Caste marriages are preferred in our country but are not compulsory as practiced in India.

Endogamous marriages may also become risk factor for developing diseases; travel in the lineage can be inherited because of intermarrying. Diabetes, Blood pressure, Cancer, Tuber calosis, Arthritis, Uric acid, Kidney failure all are the physiological disorders that are inherited, and are transferred genetically to the next generation. Endogamous marriages also effect the psychological health like Depression, Hypertension, Mania, Bipolar, Anxiety and Schizophrenia are the psychological disorders that are not only social but genetic as well. "Depression and Schizophrenia are caused by biochemical disorders that are genetically inherited." (Myers 2004) Endogamous marriages are one of those cultural factors which increase the risk factor of developing schizophrenia. Due to

these types of marriages the chances of developing schizophrenia increases.

Marriages within the family and caste increase the “risk-factor” Janes et al. (1986) of developing schizophrenia. Isolate the cultural and social factors that direct to mental disorders. However, the course and outcome of schizophrenia vary from culture to culture. “Separate the biological and cultural factors that control human behavioral and personality development.” (Mead 1935) Schizophrenia is called the “cancer of mental illness.” Austrian (2000) Schizophrenia is also called as splitting of mind. Schizophrenia is further divided into subtypes on the bases of severity and symptoms. In Catatonic schizophrenia patient faces motor immobility, Paranoid schizophrenia includes hallucinations and delusions, and disorganized type of schizophrenia includes symptoms of flat affect, disorganized speech and behavior. Residual type of schizophrenia is the least severe type which includes withdrawal, blunting, thought disorder. Undifferentiated schizophrenia is the type in which those patients lie who’s symptoms does not meet the criteria of any other type.

The risk of developing schizophrenia increases in the children if one of the parent or both are the patients of schizophrenia. The more severe a parent’s schizophrenia, the more likely the children were to develop it. Schizophrenia leads to “disturbed patterns of interaction within the family” Cheek (1965, 1967), the mothers of schizophrenic patients were generally ‘inactive and withdrawn, permissive but not supportive’. The father, playing peripheral role, were more supportive than mother.

The risk of developing schizophrenia is approximately 46% for offspring of two schizophrenics, 13 percent for children of one schizophrenic, 10 percent for siblings as a whole. Genetic studies of schizophrenia are better to understand the disease because there are some familiarities and the risk of developing schizophrenia of the sibling is about 2-3. (Hovatta et al., 1997)

The chances of developing schizophrenia in identical twins are very high. Siblings of schizophrenic patient also have possibility to develop schizophrenia. Two identical twins, one having schizophrenia the other will have higher possibility of developing schizophrenia. . “Genes are responsible for making some individuals vulnerable to schizophrenia” Faraone, Tsuang, & Tsuang (1999). Developing schizophrenia depends upon the severity of disorder in parents. The more severe the parent’s schizophrenia, the more likely the children were to develop it. “International surveys by the World Health Organization have examined disorders such as schizophrenia around the world and have found some basic similarities in the symptom profiles” Marsella (1979). If the identical twins having history of schizophrenia than the offspring of these identical twins have 17% chance of developing schizophrenia.

Materials and Method

The research was conducted in the rehabilitation center for schizophrenic’s known as ‘Fountain House’ in District Lahore. Time period for the research lasts from October, 2013 till February, 2014. The center itself was the sampling frame, from whose population the sample was drawn. Data was collected through the combination of probability and non-probability sampling. Initially stratified random sampling was used to fill socio-economic census forms. A total of ten psychologists were working in the Fountain House, seven in the ‘male block’, while three in the ‘female block’. Using stratified random sampling ten members were selected from each psychologist. For collecting extensive data regarding the effect of endogamous marriages in the increase of schizophrenia, interview guides were filled. This was carried out by using purposive sampling technique. The members directly relevant to the topic of the study were chosen to attain the required information.

Results and Discussion

Table # 1

Dependent Questions	Independent Question	Co relational Value
Did your parents marry due to property?	Are your parents Relatives?	.338
Did your parents marry for their secure future?		.923
Do you think marriage within the family maintain social status?		.923
Do you think that marriage within the relatives is the cause of family solidarity?		1.000
Do you think we marry within the family for self satisfaction?		.980
Do you think relatives do not ask for dowry?		.555
Unavailability of match mates can be the reason of marriage within the family?		.435
Familiarity with the family background can be the reason of endogamous marriages?		.880

According to the results there is a significant relationship between “Are your parents relatives?” and “Did your parents marry due to property?” as the correlation value =.338. The value indicates that 34% marriages take place within the family as to either increase the family property or to secure the already present property from being distributed outside the family. Thus, property and asset distribution can be one of the factors behind inter-family marriages.

According to the co relational value=.923 of “Did your parents marry for their secure future?” there is significant relationship of 92% between family marriage and secure future. People mostly prefer to marry within their families as the sense of security is stronger among relatives. Cross and parallel marriage alliances are believed to be far more reliable and dependable in contrast to the outsiders.

Result value of “Do you think marriage within the family maintain social status?” =.923 which indicate that 92% significant relationship present between maintenance of social status with marriage within family. Family marriages increase social status because if individuals are married out into a lower class the social status will automatically dwindle. Moreover, marrying out may divide their property which may taint their social status.

Result of co relational value of “Do you think that marriage within the relatives is the cause of family solidarity?” with “Are your parents relatives?” =1.000 which shows 100% relationship between them. Family marriages solidify relationships as the motivation to resolve conflicts becomes higher and the distances between families grow shorter. It also gives economic stability, status maintenance and family unity.

According to co relational value of “Do you think we marry within the family for self satisfaction?” with “Are your parents relatives?” =.980 which indicates 98% relationship between them. Parents feel satisfied because they have complete knowledge about their family background, personal knowledge about girl or boy, economic stability, personality etc.

According to the result from respondents about “Do you think relatives do not ask for dowry?” =.555 which shows 55% relationship which is more than half of the relatives demand for dowry.

Co-relational value of “Unavailability of match mates can be the reason of marriage within the family?” =.435 which is less than half of the respondents responded in favor of this statement. Results indicate that only 43% of the marriages took place because of unavailability of matching mate in the family.

Co-relational value of “Familiarity with the family background can be the reason of endogamous marriages?” with “Are your parents relatives?”=.880 which show 88% relationship between them.

Table # 2

Independent Question	Dependent Question	Co relational Value
Do you prefer marriage within your caste?	Are your parents Relatives?	.683
Sense of pride is the reason of marriage within the caste?		.646
You feel protected if you marry within the caste?		.546
Do you think marriage within the caste maintain social identity?		.624
Do you think marriage within the caste maintain social status?		.643

According to the co relational results of the independent question “Do you prefer marriage within your caste?” =.683 that indicates its 68% relationship with Dependent question “Are your parents relatives?”

Co-relational value of “Sense of pride is the reason of marriage within the caste?”=.646 which point to the 64% relationship with endogamous marriages. In our society people are mostly respected on the basis of their caste. Pride and respect are parallel to the caste one belongs to, thus marriage within the caste if one belongs to a respected caste is common.

According to the results of “You feel protected if you marry within the caste?” =.546 indicates 54% relationship which identifies our society’s sense of security with regards to their caste. The caste system is representative unity in problematic situation.

Results of the question “Do you think marriage within the caste maintain social identity?”=.624 which indicates 62% relationship of caste marriages role in maintenance of social identity. In South Asian countries caste becomes identity and people respect each other on its basis.

Co-relational value of “Do you think marriage within the caste maintain social status?”=.643 which indicates 64% relationship among them.

Marriages within the same caste are thus preferred in our society because it helps in maintenance of social status, gives economic and social stability and psychological satisfaction. The sense of pride on basis of caste is inherited from our ancestors. Religion of Islam also supports endogamous marriages. Marriage with parallel and cross cousins is preferred. South Asian cultural practices are also a motivational factor to marry within the same or upper caste.

Case Study # 1

Zahid Ali Khan, 38, was admitted in Fountain House 16 years back. His younger sister was also schizophrenic and was admitted there too. His parents had psychological issues which led to their divorce. Two of these siblings used to live with their father while the other two siblings lived with their mother. The children living with their father used to visit their mother often. Ten years back his father died. *Zahid* did not have a friendly relationship with his mother and only felt loved by his aunts. He never went back to his home after his admission to Fountain House. He really wanted to go home meet his family and cousins, wanted to live with them, be loved and gather beautiful memories but he was never considered stable enough to go back home permanently. He wanted to have his own family, build a home where he could happily live but all his dreams were rusted by time.

Case Study # 2

Usman Nawazish, 30, was admitted in Fountain House 10 years back. He belonged to a nuclear family. He got education till intermediate level. He was single and before his illness took over him worked as a bill board painter. Their parents were first cousins. He had two sisters and one brother. His mother died at young age. His younger sister Ayesha was admitted in female block from last 14 years. She had Bipolar disorder. His family still lives in Karachi. He was not very religious and only

went for offering Friday prayers. He felt he was a pampered child because he was youngest in the family however he faced extreme criticism from his elder brother which also played a significant role in his suspicious behavior towards his family.

Case Study # 3

Muhammad Babar was a 21 year old young boy. His psychological illness stated five years back when he was doing his F.A. His father was very strict about his studies and forced him to complete his education. He got low grades in F.A only 479 out of 1100. He became depressed on his academic performance. He left his study and rejoined in 2008 after a gap of two years and gave Bachelor's private exam but failed to pass. His failure amplified his psychological infirmity. In 2009 he again tried to complete his graduation but failed again. That was the time when he got his first treatment from Fountain House as his problem was at its extreme. He became stable after the treatment but relapse occurred due to non compliance of medicine. His father was also a psychiatric patient 17 years back, but now he lives a normal life. Babar was readmitted in Fountain House on July, 2013. His treatment continued and he was given a job through a joint program of Fountain House with an NGO to develop a sense of responsibility and to trim down his lazy attitude to make him a normal and productive member of the society.

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