

GROOM CHARACTERISTICS AND DEMANDS REALLY A ROOT CAUSE OF DESPAIR IN UNMARRIED GIRLS

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ABSTRACT

The present study was conducted with objective to determine the causes of despair in unmarried girls. A sample size 159 respondents out of 264 was selected through random sampling procedure from three Mohallahs of Union Council Jahngrha, district Abbotabad, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Pakistan. The conceptual framework of the study comprised of Groom characteristics as independent variable and causes of despair in unmarried girls as dependent variable. Chi-square test was used to find out association among study variables. The study found that a significant association with high amount of dowry can overcome all problems of physical unattractiveness ($p=0.031$), high demand for an employed girl than house wife ($p=0.000$) and arrange marriages have more problems for girl's parents in arrangement than love marriages ($p=0.007$). Awareness rising among masses through use of mass media, local political and religious leadership regarding religious and legal rights and status of women so that view of marriage and dowry as a capital transfer is publically negated, devising policies that can make it easy for poor and middle class females to access judiciary, minimize domestic violence through implementation of law, enhancing female learning and strengthening moral base of marriage and family to measure morality instead of economic benefits in mate selection were recommendations in light of study findings.

Key words: Despair, Groom characteristics, Women empowerment, Dowry and mental approach

Introduction

The status of women in Pakistan varies considerably across classes, regions, and the rural or urban divide due to uneven socio economic development and the impact of tribal, feudal, and capitalist social formations on women's lives.

According to NIMH (2012) Girls and despair seem to be connected with each other more than men and despair due to the fact that far more girls are inclined to undergo from depressive ailments than their male counterpart ([The Global Gender Gap Report, 2012](#)). The standard signs of despair that girls typically have are fatigue, a reduction of interest in usual pursuits, thoughts of hopelessness or worthlessness, irritability, very poor memory or focus, slumber and consuming disturbances or ideas of suicide.

Despair is a condition like happiness, love or hate but has some kind of practical element. Defining despair is not an easy task, a person can better know what despair is when he or she felt it. It can occur in mental, physical and spiritual forms which sometimes hold the good aspects of the life. It takes hopes, comfort and pleasures of life. It refers to a state of hopelessness and mood of depression. Depression effects one's behavior, attitude and sense of wellbeing (Salman and Sandra, 1997).

Despaired person has loss of interest in common detections, thoughts of hopelessness, feelings of worthlessness, annoyance, memory loss, and incontrollable disturbances or ideas of suicide (NIMH, 2012). The role of women and the norms attached to those roles also unstable and unsupportive relationship of women and man, made women more prone to despair (Podgornik, 2012).

Women are believed to be marriage material and they are not treated equally with male persons that are the major reason of their Deny of empowerment. The women remain unable to use the weapons like education, job and decision making material (Ansar Burney trust, 2007). For women some pattern standard are observed in society in such of which the women pass the whole life to secure their identity, which mostly dependent on the identity and recognition given by their groom's family (Najeeb, et al., 2008).

The groom characteristics desired by bride family are broadly classified into socio economic characteristic and biological characteristics. The biological characteristics most commonly include skin color, beauty, physique, height weight and cast of the girl. Whereas the socio economic characteristic is a long index list of income, cost, status, language, affiliation, education employment prestige and such like (Lewis, 2007). There is variation in performance for biological and socio economic actors in people from different religion and socio economic background.

Girgis and Fakhry (1994) saw despair in unmarried girls as the result of body look and physical characteristics. While for Hoeksena and Girgis (1994), when personality attributes deal with stresses results despair and low self-esteem.

According to Associated Press (1998) no one feels happy on the birth girl child, because of the thinking of her marriage they worry if she has not a fair skin color. Anderson (2000) mentioned dowry as the cause of hopelessness of parents, because the demands of dowry of grooms family and dislike by girl as she have to stay unmarried.

Dalmia (2004) criticized Anderson's theory that it can only lead to reduction in dowry payments, which creates doubts on marriage squeeze.

Ministry of Women Development (2007) found that girls worry about their beauty and fairness when they enter into teenage, girls who are not fair think themselves out of cost, they become inferiority complex only for their physical beauty. Madani (2006) and Usmani (2007) stated that being in inferiority complex, girls lose their psychological beauty.

Lewis (2007) argued that boys select a girl to be his bride if she is educationally and economically empowered, parents also feel comfortable when they educate their girl's child in order to find a job and make a demand in the marriage market. Ansar Burney Trust (2007) also discussed that women will be empowered only if they are treated equally in the family, they will find jobs, education and decision-making skills.

Najeeb et al. (2008) saw women as a source of sexual satisfaction. He suggested that in mate selection, not only a decision should be taken on her beauty but also her humor and intellectual level.

It was found in a report of National Institute of Mental Health (2011) that victims of domestic violence, socially restricted girls think that their parents and partners emphasize their attractiveness more than their intelligence, they fall into despair. Furthermore, there are childhood factors rather than their characteristics that cause despair in teenage girls.

Gulf News (2013) reported that a Muslim girl refused to marry in a family because of the demand of heavy dowry seems to be the first case in traditional Muslim society; they stated that dowry demand is a huge barrier in the way of unmarried girls and despair in them.

In addition, Bahugama argued that now a day every young man wants to have a fair and beautiful girl as his wife, this concept of finding a fair-skinned wife is deeply ingrained in the mind-set of every marriageable man. Which keeps the thought of white man's burden alive.

II. METHODOLOGY

2.1 Universe of the study

The study area was comprised Jahngriha union council, city Havelian, District Abbottabad, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. The study area more specifically consisted of three Mohallahs, Zamin Shah, Qassab, and Syalli. Unmarried females representing marriage age bracket were the potential respondents for this research study.

2.2 Sampling Procedure and Sample Size

A pilot study was conducted by researcher to determine the number of unmarried girls in the study area, according to which a total of 264 girls were on range of passing marriage age. A sample of 159 respondents suffices for the population of 264 (Sekaran, 2003). The random sample technique was used for data collection. The sample was proportionally allocated to each Mohallah by using proportional allocation formula (Cochran, 1977). Distribution of respondents is given in Table-1.

$$n_i = \frac{n}{N} \times N_i$$

n = Total sample size required for researcher.

N = Total unmarried girls in study area.

N_i = unmarried girls in each Mohallah.

n_i = Selected respondent size from each Mohallah.

Table-1. The number of unmarried girls and sample distribution in various Mohallah's in the Study Area.

S/N o	Mohallah Name	Total number of unmarried girls	Sample size
1	Zamin Shah	114	68
2	Qassab	63	38
3	Syalli	87	53
Tota 1		264	159

2.3 Characteristics of the respondents.

To fulfill the requirements of the study, the respondents had following characteristics.

1. They were in age group of 22 to 45.
2. They were unmarried.
3. Mentally sound to respond to questions.

2.4 Tools for data collection

Interview schedule was used as a tool for data collection with face to face interview method as a procedure. The interview schedule was pretested in the field and corrected for shortfalls.

2.5 Analysis of Data

SPSS software was used for the analysis of data. The uni-variate and bi-variate approaches were applied.

2.5.1 Uni-variate Analysis

Uni-variate analysis was used for percentage proportion of background, independent and dependent variables along with frequency distribution of respondents. Following equation was used for data class percentage.

$$\text{Data class percentage} = f/N * 100$$

Where,

f = Data class's frequency

N = total observations.

2.5.2 Bi-variate Analysis

Bi-variate analysis is one of the simplest forms of quantitative (statistical) analysis. It involves the analysis of two variables (often denoted as X, Y), for the purpose of determining the empirical relationship between them.

. Chi square test was used to test the strength and direction of association of variables at bi- variate level, i.e the degree to which the values of the independent variable explain the variation in the dependent variable.

Chi- Square Test

The Chi- square test was used to test the relationship between the two variables. Following statistical technique was adopted to find the value of chi- square test (Chaudhry and Kamal 1996).

Where,

$$\chi^2 = \sum_{i=1}^r \sum_{j=1}^c \frac{(O_{ij} - e_{ij})^2}{e_{ij}}$$

χ^2 = Chi Square

O_{ij} = Observed frequencies in i^{th} row and j^{th} column

e_{ij} = Expected frequencies regarding i^{th} row and j^{th} column

r = Number of rows

c = Number of columns

Df = $(r-1)(c-1)$

There are some conditions for Chi- Square Test which are given below,

1. The subjects for each group were randomly and independently selected.
2. Each observation qualified for one category.
3. Sample size was large enough so that no expected frequency is less than 5, for r and $c > 2$ or < 10 if $r = c = 2$.

If third assumption was violated in data then the Fisher Exact Test was used instead of simple Chi- Square Test. The mathematical form of the Fisher Exact Test as,

$$\text{Fisher Exact Test} = \frac{(a+b)!(c+d)!(a+c)!(b+d)!}{N! a! b! c! d!}$$

Where a , b , c , and d was the observed numbers in four cells of contingency table and “ n ” the total number of observations.

2.6 The Conceptual framework of the study

Following table shows the independent and dependent variables of this study.

Independent variables	Dependent variable
Dowry	Despair in unmarried girls
Domestic violence	
Legal framework for the protection of females	
Groom characteristics and demands	

III RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

3.1. Despair in Unmarried Girls

Despair is a state of depressed mood and hopelessness. Depression is a state of low mood and aversion to activity that can affect a person's thoughts, behavior, feelings and sense of well-being. What is the state of despair and what are the main causes derived by the study are given in table 2.

A high proportion of 81.8% of the respondents felt alienated because of being subordinate to men, 16.4% of them did not agree with the statement and 1.9% were uncertain. Moreover, 80.5% of the respondents saw their self-worthy of love care and support while 15.1% did not keep themselves in sentiments and 4.4% were uncertain. Similarly, 54.1% of the respondents believed that they were left alone by the family in their issues while 45.3% of them disagreed with the statement and 0.6% of the respondents remain uncertain. Bettencourt (2000) pointed out the issue of subordination of female in South Asian societies that women are seen as second-class citizens; they are not respected and are regarded as being inferior to men who caused despair and alienation in them.

Majority (73.6%) of the respondents thought that they were powerless as they were not allowed to plan and get their desired goals of life, while 25.8% of them did not thought so and 0.6% of them were uncertain. Moreover, 53.5% of the respondents said that they were incapable of solving their issues as they had no support from family, while 44% of the respondents disagreed and 2.5% of the respondents were uncertain. In addition, 79.2% of the respondents thought that they were limited in the choice of mate selection, 15.7% of them disagreed with the statement and 5% of them were uncertain. Bophal (1997) found that South Asian women are treated as just women, they are seen as able to affect the izzat, and hence, their behavior is closely monitored. In order to be marriageable, they must behave in accordance with cultural rules without their personal choices and decisions. Almost half (50.3%) of the respondents believed that they would be in different state if they were living in city

while 42.8% of the respondents disagreed and 6.9% of the respondents were uncertain. Moreover, 83.6% of the respondents were in the state where they become self-critical when they look forward towards their future and 16.4% of the respondents were not in this type of mental condition.

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Table 2. Perception of the respondents towards despair (dependent variable)

Statements	Agree	Disagree	Uncertain
You feel alienated because of being subordinated to men.	130 (81.8%)	26 (16.4%)	3(1.9%)
You see yourselves worthy of love, care and support.	128 (80.5%)	24 (15.1%)	7 (4.4%)
You have been left alone in your issues by family.	86 (54.1%)	72 (45.3%)	1 (0.6%)
You are powerless as you are not allowed to plan and get your desired goals of life.	117 (73.6%)	41 (25.8%)	1 (0.6%)
You are incapable of solving your issues as you have no support from family.	85 (53.5%)	70 (44.0%)	4 (2.5%)
You are limited in your choice of mate selection.	126 (79.2%)	25 (15.7%)	8 (5.0%)
You would be in a different state if u were living in a city.	80 (50.3%)	68 (42.8%)	11 (6.9%)
You become self-critical when you look forward to your future.	133 (83.6%)	26 (16.4%)	00

3.2. Association between Despair in Unmarried Girls and Grooms Characteristics and Demands

To measure the association between despair in unmarried girls and groom characteristics and demand, there are a few statements developed which are given in table 3.

A non-significant relationship ($p=0.813$) was found between despair in unmarried girls and looking for physical beauty more than mental beauty. Girgis & Fakhry (1975) stated that this thinking in girls has made them despair. Similarly a non-significant ($p=0.874$) relationship was found between the importance of the economic stand of women more than her beauty and despair in unmarried girls. According to Lewis (2007) males demand for educated and job holder wives, so a girl's parents feel comfortable to make their daughter qualified. Likewise a non-significant relationship ($p=0.390$) was found between despair in unmarried girls and preference of inter caste marriages over outside marriages. However to some extent a significant relationship ($p=0.031$) was found between despair in unmarried girls and high amount of dowry can overcome all problems of physical unattractiveness. The cultural support for economic wellbeing over physical or mental beauty make the rich win the struggle for choice of better spouse as compared to poor. The findings are in line with Rose (2012) that

educational, economic, and employment discrimination of women had placed them inferior and unacceptable by the partners and society. A woman who is rich enough to pay dowry or has any economic benefits for a person, she will definitely have a high chance of marriage and pleasant relation.

Again a non-significant ($p=0.671$) association was found between the high demand of educated girl than uneducated and despair in unmarried girls. However a highly significant relationship ($p=0.000$) was found between despair in unmarried girls and high demand for an employed girl than house wife. This was also confirmed by Lewis (2007) that employed girls are preferred over unemployed over mate selection. It is probably because if a girl is educated and have a job, then this might be easy for her to fulfill the demand of her new family. They fall in despair because they understand the tension of their parents when they enter into the teenage but they can't do anything if they have no education and earning source. However, a girl having competence in home chores are more liked by in laws has a non-significant relationship ($p=0.421$) with despair in unmarried girls, because this thing can be suitable for the pure rural areas where there is no opportunity of doing job outside home. Statement that arrange marriages have more problems for girl's parents in arrangement than love marriages has a significant relationship ($p=0.007$) with despair in unmarried girls. The reason probably be that when a couple fall in love then they only want the company of each other, regardless of any demand, and mostly they marry no matter if their parents are agree or not. So if they aren't then there is no question of dowry or anything else that can be a problem for the families behind.

The results show comparative analysis of materialistic view versus and aesthetic view. The materialistic view of preference for high dowry and benefiting from earnings of the female keep girls in despair. However, violating culture by preferring love over well of parents may subject female to greater social disapproval and segregation from parents family, hence fall in despair.

Table 3. Association between Despair in unmarried girls and Groom characteristics and demands

Statements	Attitude	Despair in unmarried girls		Total	Chi square (χ^2) P value
		Yes	No		

Now a day one's family look for physical attractiveness more than mental beauty.	Agree	114 (71.7%)	21 (13.2%)	135 (84.9%)	$\chi^2= 0.414$ (P= 0.813)
	Disagree	19 (11.9%)	3 (1.9%)	22 (13.8%)	
	Uncertain	2 (1.3%)	00	2 (1.3%)	
Economic standing of wife is more important than beauty of wife.	Agree	120 (75.5%)	21 (13.2%)	141 (88.7%)	$\chi^2= 0.269$ (P= 0.874)
	Disagree	14 (8.8%)	3 (1.9%)	17 (10.7%)	
	Uncertain	1 (0.6%)	00	1 (0.6%)	
Inter caste marriage is preferred over marriage from outside caste.	Agree	89 (56%)	14 (8.8%)	103 (64.8%)	$\chi^2= 1.881$ (P= 0.390)
	Disagree	41 (25.8%)	10 (6.3%)	51 (32.1%)	
	Uncertain	5 (3.1%)	00	5 (3.1%)	
Large amount of dowry can overcome all problems of physical unattractiveness.	Agree	115 (72.3%)	16 (10.1%)	131 (82.4%)	$\chi^2= 6.957$ (P= 0.031)
	Disagree	17 (10.7%)	8 (5%)	25 (15.7%)	
	Uncertain	3 (1.9%)	00	3 (1.9%)	
Educated female is high demand for marriage than uneducated.	Agree	112 (70.4%)	21 (13.2%)	133 (83.6%)	$\chi^2= 0.798$ (P= 0.671)
	Disagree	19 (11.9%)	3 (1.9%)	22 (13.8%)	
	Uncertain	4 (2.5%)	00	4 (2.5%)	
An employed woman is more preferred over house wife.	Agree	122 (76.7%)	14 (8.8%)	136 (85.5%)	$\chi^2= 17.064$ (P= 0.000)
	Disagree	11 (6.9%)	8 (5%)	19 (11.9%)	
	Uncertain	2 (1.3%)	2 (1.3%)	4 (2.5%)	
A girl having competence in home chores are more liked by in	Agree	102 (64.2%)	21 (13.2%)	123 (67.4%)	$\chi^2= 1.732$ (P= 0.421)
	Disagree	25 (15.7%)	2 (1.3%)	27 (17%)	

laws.	Uncertain	8 (5%)	1 (0.6%)	9 (5.7%)	
Arrange marriages have more problems for girl's parents in arrangement than love marriages.	Agree	119 (74.8%)	16 (10.1%)	135 (84.9%)	$\chi^2= 7.337$ (P= 0.007)
	Disagree	16 (10.1%)	8 (5%)	24 (15.1%)	
	Uncertain				

Conclusions

The results show comparative analysis of materialistic view versus and aesthetic view. The materialistic view of preference for high dowry and benefiting from earnings of the female keep girls in despair. However, violating culture by preferring love over well of parents may subject female to greater social disapproval and segregation from parents family, hence fall despair.

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