



# Socio-Cultural and Economic Consequences of Forced Marriages: A Case Study of District Swabi Tehsil Razzar

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## ARTICLE INFO

### Article history:

Received: March 19, 2023  
 Revised: March 25, 2023  
 Accepted: March 28, 2023  
 Published: March 31, 2023

### Keywords:

District Swabi  
 Economic Consequences  
 Forced Marriages  
 Socio-Culture  
 Tehsil Razzar

## ABSTRACT

The institution of marriage was one of the universal social institutions developed to manage and regulate the existence of people. Forced marriage is a type of marriage in which a couple is married without their consent or against their will. Conventional marriage is the established societal pattern through which two or more individuals form a family, whereas forced marriage is a sort of marriage in which a couple is married against their choice.. The purpose of this study is to analyze the socio-cultural as well as economic effects that forced marriages have on the Pashtun culture. Tehsil Razar, which is located in the Swabi area, served as the study's primary location. In order to collect information, we used techniques of simple random sampling on 120 female respondents from the entire population of tehsil Razar. This was done for the aim of data collecting. The literature provided a comprehensive questionnaire that was adapted for use, and it was analysed descriptively using Statistical Software for the Social Sciences (SPSS). The current study concluded that in Pashtun culture, forced marriage has become the norm in terms of both the customs and traditions surrounding marriage. The vast majority of the young women are considered "other property," despite their ages ranging from under 18 to over 18. The custom of being married at a young age is deeply ingrained in Pashtun culture since it is believed to bring dignity to the family. Despite the fact that it is perceived to be a financial strain on households. One of the primary reasons for forced marriages in Pashtun society is the lack of education and the ignorance of the parents, both of which contribute to domestic abuse and deprive individuals of their rights as well as their physical and mental wellbeing.

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

Marriage helps people live well. Forced marriage is when a couple is married against their will. An arrange marriage is different from a forced marriage because the pair consents to their parents or a matchmaker helping them choose a mate. Marriages are often arranged under compulsion (Sharp, 2010). Most Forced Marriage Unit (FMU) claims involve Indian women (India, Pakistan and Bangladesh).

This may indicate a substantial and recognised South Asian community in the UK. The increasing number of young British Bangladeshi and Pakistani persons of marriageable age may potentially worsen it (Samad & Eade, 2002).

Yet, forced marriage is not a problem in South Asia. In 2008, East Asian, Middle Eastern, European, and African women made up 12% of FMU cases (Sharp, 2010).

### Definition of Marriage

The term marriage refers to a formal or legal partnership between a man and a woman. Marriage is a societal and legal link between two individuals that unites their lives financially, psychologically, and legally. Generally, the contractual marriage arrangement implies that the couple is legally bound to each other for life or until they desire to divorce (Haviland, Prins, McBride, & Walrath, 2013).

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### How to cite:

Ahmad, Z., & Ahmad, A. (2023). Socio-Cultural and Economic Consequences of Forced Marriages: A Case Study of District Swabi Tehsil Razzar. *CARC Research in Social Sciences*, 2(1), 12-17.

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.58329/criss.v2i1.19>

## Types of Marriage

### Forced Marriage

Human rights are violated if a person is made to get into a marriage against their will since everyone has the freedom to choose anyone they want to share their home with. A marriage is considered to be "forced" if either of the prospective spouses does not give their consent to the union and is instead pressured into entering into it. Pressure can come in many forms, including the physical, the psychological, the financial, the sexual, and the emotional. (Administrative Branch, 2014) A marriage conducted without the lawful consent of two people, where duress is a factor," is the definition that is generally accepted for "forced marriage" (Uddin & Ahmed, 2000).

A marriage is considered to be "forced" if one of the parties to the union was bullied, threatened, or duped into believing that they would suffer negative consequences if they did not go through with it. It is never ethical to coerce somebody into entering into marriage (Wilson, 2007).

### Forced and Arranged Marriage

Forced marriage occurs when one or both parties are forced to marry. The 2000 Home Office report on forced marriage focused on consent as the discriminating factor. The report defined arranged marriage as a family-facilitated marriage with both partners' consent, and forced marriage as one in which either or both parties do not consent or do so only under duress (Gill & Anitha, 2009). For centuries, many communities and countries have practised arranged marriages. A forced marriage is different from an arranged marriage. In planned weddings, the marriage is organised by both families, but the prospective couples decide whether or not to accept. In a forced marriage, one or both partners are compelled to wed. Pressure can be physical, psychological, financial, sexual, or emotional. Vulnerable adults who cannot consent to marriage can be forced into marriage without coercion (Government, 2014).

### Factors Affecting Forced Marriage

There are numerous factors that contribute to the existence of intended and potentially forced marriages, such as social, cultural, financial, political, and legal circumstances. The respondents identified some factors that appear to be at the root of these marriages.

#### Marriage Is a Social Act

Many families don't value girls or boys' marriage opinions. Due to the fact that it is our constitutionally protected right to marry their offspring, whose parents hold the view that marriage is a social act that establishes a nuclear or extended family. Marriage is usually an official relationship between two families—the bride's and the groom's. When a marriage is planned in the country of settlement or origin, the bride is informed. Young girls face a *fait accompli* when the wedding is official in their own country, often during an apparent holiday trip that the parents or social circle keep secret.

#### Protection of Young Women/Source of Safety to Female

Many parents forced or arranged marriages for their daughters because they are still under parental authority in

some families and considered minors. Parents marry their children to secure their futures. Parents want to marry their children to the best men because they know their relatives will protect them. In fact, they hand over their daughter's future to a husband and in-laws they trust and have a bond of honour with, seeing it as a guarantee of a secure future for the young wife between in-laws who will not treat her as a stranger.

### Family Honour

Due to their conservative backgrounds, most immigrants use forced marriage or arrange marriage. They fear their children marrying strangers. Most parents force their children to marry within the family or community to prevent absorption by the majority culture or other minority groups with different cultures or religions. Forced or arranged marriages create uniqueness issues and protect these families from integration and identity signs. Marriage preserves family honour and social status. Thus, ignoring that obligation can threaten the family bond, and those who do risk rejection.

### The Family Is In Exile

In religious and cultural terms, families sent away as an extension from their country of origin adopt endogamous marriage. This model is based on the preservation of bonds within a related group that extends beyond geographical boundaries. Endogamous unions are based on networks of ongoing contacts with members who remained in the country of origin or who have settled in other immigrant societies, and matrimonial alliances are what keep the dispersed family alive. Transnational contacts are facilitated by modern communication technologies that eliminate distances. As a result, arranged or forced marriages are used to sponsor family members or members of a membership group to immigrate to Canada through the spouse who is already here. This results in the transfer of people from there to here and the maintenance of transnational contacts.

### Control Women Sexuality

The sexuality of women is regulated by forced marriage as well. Most parents think their girls are safer from the risks of dating and, more significantly, sexual activity outside of marriage if they are married off at a young age. By discouraging such relationships, they hope to reduce the number of unintended births that occur as a result. In many societies, a family's honour rests on the shoulders of its female members to behave sensibly in sexual situations. These households carry on valuing patriarchal standards, which are then internalised by the local community. The need to regulate women's behaviour in order to protect family reputation and, by extension, patriarchal authority is at the root of many of these standards, including the insistence that women remain sexually virginal into adulthood. Forced marriage, especially at a young age, is the finest defence against any challenge to this point of honour and is thus subject to close surveillance.

### A Guarantee against Poverty

One of the primary causes of forced marriage is poverty. For some poor families, a daughter's marriage to a wealthier man is both a means of providing her with a higher standard of living than they can provide and a means of securing a nest egg in exchange for a dowry. Some young

women who have sought and received assistance from shelter workers for victims of violence were minors when their parents married them off to much older and wealthier men. These were girls from Latin American and West Indian countries whose parents, due to extreme poverty, "sold" them to French-speaking Quebecois men in exchange for cash. One of these girls was barely 13 years old when she was sponsored and brought to Montreal, where she was subjected to sexual assault.

### **Forced Marriages in Pakistan**

In Pakistan, marriages by coercion are all too common. People living in Pakistan as well as Pakistanis living in other countries, including those who have made their homes in those other countries, are vulnerable to the danger posed by the threat. They do this for a variety of reasons, the primary one being to assist members of their family in Pakistan in obtaining citizenship in the foreign country. However, they do this by marrying their sons and daughters to members of their family in Pakistan against their consent. There is also the possibility that this is being done for the purpose of settling family properties and for the mutual benefit of all parties involved.

A significant number of young girls and women in Pakistan are coerced into entering into marriage against their will. Despite the fact that Pakistan is a Muslim country and that Islam gives girls full rights to marry according to their own free will, we continue to fail to follow Islam's teachings, which is why this injustice against women persists. Marriages between minors are expressly outlawed by the Constitution of Pakistan. It is illegal for a boy or girl under the age of 18 or a girl under the age of 16 to get married. Unfortunately, the laws that can protect women and young girls are only enacted, but no one is willing to act upon these laws once they have been passed.

### **Forced Marriages in Pushtun Society**

In Pashtun societies, arranged marriages are extremely common. Levirate marriage is especially prevalent and is regarded as a family honour. The levirate marriage dictates that when brothers reside and one of them is married and has died, but has children, the widow of the deceased may not marry an unknown or non-family member. Similar to when a person's wife dies and she has an unmarried sister at home, the family decides that she should marry her sister's husband. She may not agree, but due to the elders' decision, she will comply. Less people are aware of the fact, and thus its prevalence is increasing.

### **Problem Statement**

Forced marriage is a universal social problem particularly in developing and under developed societies. It has a negative impact on every society especially in Pashtun society although many families having practice of forced marriages considered it good for their family especially in term of family honor. The prevalence of the issue in society has a great interest to me as it creates many other social problems in society, which affect the social life of the effectives. The current situation in society motivates me to investigate the nature and different socio-cultural and economic consequences of forced marriages. Which will enable me to put forward some suggestion and recommendation based on finding of the result, which will decrease the ratio of forced marriages and ultimately eliminate the problem in the society? The finding of the

study would be enable policymaker to formulate policy accordingly for the improvement of social stander and life of the society.

### **Objectives of the Study**

- To know the demographic profile of the respondents.
- To investigate the various causative factors of forced marriages in Pashtun society.
- To dig out the social consequences of forced marriages in Pashtun society.
- To explore the economic consequences of forced marriages in Pashtun society.
- To investigate the cultural consequences, which cause forced marriages in Pashtun society?
- To put forward recommendation based on my finding of the study to eliminate problem from study area.

## **2. METHODOLOGY**

The title of the study in Swabi District is "Sociocultural and Economic Consequences of Forced Marriages in Pashtun Society." Using data collected in Tehsil Razar, District Swabi, and the study examined the socio-cultural and economic effects of forced marriages in Pashtun society. The current study focuses on forced marriages in Pashtun society, their socio-cultural and economic repercussions, as well as their causes and mitigating factors. A comprehensive questionnaire and interview schedule were used to collect data in order to achieve the study's objectives. Using simple random sampling techniques, a sample of 120 respondents was drawn from the entire population of Tehsil Razar District Swabi for the purposes of data collection. According to the 2018 Census, the study area for the present research was Tehsil Razar, District Swabi, with a population of approximately 584000 people (According to Census-2018). On-site data were entered into the Statistical Program for the Social Sciences (SPSS) for analysis. The data's frequency and percentage distributions were examined descriptively. The information was displayed in tables.

### 3. Result & Discussion

**Table 1**  
**Shows Frequency and Percentage Distribution of Questions.**

S#	Statement	Agree	Disagree	Neutral	Percentages
1	Forced marriages leads to marital conflicts and domestic violence	88(73.33%)	5(4.16%)	27(22.5%)	120(100%)
2	Forced marriages are the violation of human rights.	102(85.00%)	5(4.16%)	13(10.80%)	120(100%)
3	Illiteracy is the major cause of forced marriages in Pashtun society.	82(68.33%)	29(24.16%)	9(7.50%)	120(100%)
4	Some societal norms in Pashtun culture forcefully compel girls to get forced marriage.	79(65.83%)	25(20.83%)	16(13.30%)	120(100%)
5	Lack of awareness parents regarding women rights leads to forced marriage practice	97(80.83%)	18(15.00%)	5(4.20%)	120(100%)
6	Education is a powerful weapon to minimize force marriage ratio	104(86.66%)	3(2.50%)	13(10.83%)	120(100%)

Finding shows that 27 respondents (22.5%) neither agreed nor disagreed with the statement that forced marriages lead to marital conflicts and domestic violence. 88 respondents (73.33%) strongly agreed with the statement that forced marriages lead to marital conflicts and domestic violence. 5 of the respondents, or 4.16%, were of the opinion that they did not agree with the statement. It has been determined that the vast majority of respondents are in agreement with the statement that forced marriages are the root cause of marital conflicts and domestic violence.

The majority of respondents (102 out of 135) concurred wholeheartedly with the assertion that forced marriages constitute a violation of the rights of women. 13 of the respondents, or 10.8%, gave an answer that was neither agree nor disagree to the statement, while only 5 of the respondents, or 4.16%, gave an answer that was disagree. From the data that was collected by hand, it was possible to draw the conclusion that the vast majority of respondents were in complete agreement with the assertion that forced marriages are a violation of the rights of women. A total of 82 respondents, or 68.33%, agreed with the statement that illiteracy is the primary factor contributing to the prevalence of early marriage among children in our society. 29 of the respondents, or 24.16% of the total rejected the statement. 09 of the respondents (7.5%) gave a response of neither agreeing nor disagreeing, and 3 of the respondents (3.3%) gave a response of strongly disagreeing. It has been determined that the majority of respondents agree that the primary factor contributing to the prevalence of forced marriages in Pashtun society is illiteracy. 79 respondents, or 65.83%, agreed with the statement that certain societal beliefs coerce young women into entering into marriages against their will. Twenty-five of the respondents, or 20.83 percent, were against the statement. 16 of the respondents, or 13.30%, took the neutral position and said they neither agreed nor disagreed with the statement. It has been determined that the vast majority of respondents are in agreement with the statement that certain societal beliefs coerce young women into entering into marriages against their will. 97 respondents, or 80.83 percent, were in agreement with the statement that a lack of awareness among parents regarding the rights of women leads to the

practise of forced marriages. 18 of the respondents, or 15.00%, took the opposite stance to the statement. 5 of the respondents, or 4.2%, took the neutral position and said they neither agreed nor disagreed with the statement. From the information that was gathered, it is possible to draw the conclusion that the vast majority of respondents concurred with the statement. 104 respondents, or 86.66 percent, were in agreement with the statement that Education is an effective tool for reducing the number of forced marriages. The responses of 13 people (10.8%) indicated that they were neither in agreement nor disagreement with the statement. 3 of the respondents, or 2.50 percent, were of the opinion that the statement was incorrect. It has been determined that the vast majority of respondents concurred with the assertion that education is the most effective tool for reducing the number of marriages that are the result of coercion.

### 4. CONCLUSION & RECOMMENDATION

Marriage is a universal social institution that controls and regulates human life. It is the accepted way to start a family. Forced marriage involves a couple being married against their will. An arranged marriage is different from a forced marriage because the couple of consents to their parents or a matchmaker helping them choose a spouse. This study examines Pashtun forced marriages' socio-cultural and economic effects. Swabi's Tehsil Razar hosted the study. 120 female respondents were randomly selected from the entire population of tehsil Razar for data collection. A descriptive approach was used to analyse questionnaire data. SPSS descriptively analysed the data.

According to the study, Pashtun marriages are now forced. Most Pashtun girls under 18 marry because they are considered "other property" and must move in with their spouses. Pashtuns are honourable, so they marry their daughters early to protect their honour. Otherwise, Pashtun women are considered an economic burden on their families, and early marriage is the only way to share that burden, forcing young girls to leave their homes. In Pashtun society, early child marriage is linked to low parental education. Daughters are considered a liability on parents due to their low education and economic integration, while

marriage is seen as a way for women to secure their economic future. Early child marriage ruins girls' education and their desire to succeed and be independent. Forced marriages deprive girls of their rights and health. Forced married girls must perform heavy domestic chores, and those who do not are beaten.

Based on finding of the study and to reduce the practice of forced marriages the following recommendations have been put forward.

- The law and enforcement agencies of Pakistan should implement the laws against forced marriages
- Female right should be strictly implemented in the society which will reduce the mentioned practice of Force marriage.
- Public awareness should be brought in society through different activities like seminars, conferences, social media etc. to stop Force marriage practice.
- Employment opportunities should be provide to the local people which is alternately reduce Force marriage practice as many people in the society practice Force marriage because of their poverty and living condition.
- People of the host community should be aware that they are not burden they are their loved ones
- The local Govt and other agencies are focus on education, as education will eradicate the upper mentioned phenomena.
- Strictly, penalties should give to the offender, which will reduce Force marriage practice.
- Negative consequences of Force marriage should be highlight, which will reduce the ratio of FM in the near future.

### Competing Interests

The authors have declared that no competing interests exist.

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