

**Role of education in determining marriage timing and
spouse selection criteria among female Ph.D. students**

(A case study of Islamabad, Pakistan)



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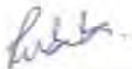
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FORMAL DECLARATION

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Maryam Manzoor

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ABSTRACT

The current anthropological qualitative ethnographic research carried out about the relationship between education and marriage shows how education impacts the age of females at marriage. This study tends to find how age factors along with education impact the institution of marriage. Further, it also explores the important traits for spouse selection among highly educated females in Universities in Islamabad. For this purpose, the study considers the highly qualified university students at the Islamic International University and the National University of Modern Languages of Islamabad Pakistan. Primary data is gathered with the help of interviews, focus group discussions, observation, and case studies. The findings of the current study tell us that there is a strong link between education and the timing of marriage. Education enables females to understand the obligations and responsibilities of marriage. It helps women to create an environment of tolerance in the family. Females acquiring higher education are more likely to marry at a later age as compared to less-educated females. They tend to be career-oriented and this higher education increases the likelihood of their economic independence. This is one of the reasons for delaying marriage. The economic condition of a spouse is taken as an important selection criterion among female university students. The other important traits for the selection of spouses are sincerity, loyalty, faithfulness, patience, and the responsible nature of the spouse. These are vital findings for the selection of spouses among highly qualified female students in the Pakistani cultural context.

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1. INTRODUCTION

Marriage is a principal institution and substratum of all social relations both for the individuals as it further constitutes a family and the society at large. From the sociological paradigm, it is the only institution in which people voluntarily enter covering family life and all intimate relationships. (Farooq & Arshad, 2017) Historically in different times, marriage has been understood in various dimensions as a political, social, and economic alliance where personal preferences and love were not necessary. With the changing time and generation, the marriage cycle has gone through numerous trends and changes. (Wani, Patra, & Bhat, 2017)

Education is globally recognized as the most effective means of empowering individuals, especially women. It has the potential to bring change in every institution of society including the institution of marriage. Although there is a significant gender gap in education, specifically higher education for women in Pakistan. But the rate of enrollment of females in higher education is increasing. The participation of females in higher education has increased from 36.8% in 2002 to 46.2% in 2008. The Latest data on gender reveals that the overall enrollment of females in universities is almost 49%. (Kaleem & Rathore, 2017).

Education substantially influences personal characteristics including psychology which consequently impact the marital relationship, family life, social life, and progress of a country. For instance, the establishment of a career consequently empowers women economically. Highly educated females contribute to the economy

of the household and economic prosperity helps children to get education from good institutions along with their wellbeing.

Generally, a higher education level of females is correlated with the timing of marriage. It is a general observation that a higher level of education is a key factor for delaying the marriage of females. Acquiring a higher level of education takes many years of life. After completion of higher education, the age of most females increases to thirty years. Therefore, an increase in educational attainment delays the timing of their marriage. Moreover, it is also observed that highly qualified women are financially independent and therefore are capable of abstaining from marriage. In addition, a higher level of education not only postpones marriage but also contributes to the lower marriage rates among highly qualified women. On the other hand, it is also observed that higher educated women are more likely to marry than uneducated ones. It is because females and males with higher levels of education are successful and attractive partners for each other because of their economic stability. (Bruderl, 2007) The career orientation of the highly educated female is a contributing factor in delaying marriage.

Furthermore, spouse selection is one of the most important decisions of people's lives in all terms that directly or indirectly influence their social, emotional, personal, and economic domains of life. It requires a series of steps to make decisions by looking through physical traits, social manners, attitudes, and other socio-economic values. (Sarir, et al., 2018) Several theorists suggested approaches about spouse selection theorized that people select their partners either consciously or

unconsciously and their choices are based on some personal, social, and cultural match and balance.

When choosing who to marry, education plays an essential role. Women with higher education tend to treat marriage differently which affects the timing of marriage and criteria of spouse selection. Education is the central determinant and important variable for marriage that influences the preferences of people for specific partners. Age at marriage and the likelihood of marriage is influenced greatly by educational attainment. While explaining the role of education in delayed marriages of females, it is revealed that it allows women to seek quality and time to their type and enable them to select a spouse to match with more compatibility. (Shafer & Qian, 2010)

There are more specific criteria and preferences for spouse selection among university students with higher education. Besides the physical appearance, age similarity, and the same level of understanding of the world, intelligence, personality, and emotional satisfaction, as well as educational achievement, are observed. Besides the local marriage market, the educational background has an increased influence on marriage among university students while other social and religious factors are decreasing insignificance. (Nielsen & Svarer, 2009)

The female enrolled Ph.D. university students have specific criteria and personal preferences for spouse election. This study discussed their inclinations regarding marriage by linking higher education with their unmarried status and delayed age at marriage.

1.1 RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

- i. To explore the relationship between marriage and education.
- ii. To find out the impact of education on the timing and age at marriage.
- iii. To assess the role of education in spouse selection criteria of female Ph.D. university students.

1.2 STATEMENT OF PROBLEM

Marriage is recognized as the universal institute of all societies as it is the foundation of family life. Thus, selecting a spouse is an imperative decision in a person's life. Everybody has different dreams and considerations about selecting a life partner. The key component of the spouse selection process is personal preferences. Worldwide various factors also play their roles such as structural influences, needs and values, gender, race, culture, class, personal traits, and economy, etc. Globalization has changed every aspect of life, it has directly impacted our social norms and values, so the selection of spouses in society also changed from what it was in the past. The level of education also plays a pivotal role when choosing a spouse. Higher education raises the enlightenment in the person, there it also affects the likes and dislikes, considerations, and compulsions of various traits in a life partner. In Pakistani society, education considerably affects the marriage timing and women with higher education are more likely to have delayed age at first marriage. Therefore, this research tends to explore the relationship between education and marriage behavior of females, that either females take education as a tool to postpone their marriage or the educational priorities throwback marriage to be on time. This study would explore the role of education in marriage timing through analyzing various parameters that become a cause for delay in marriage. This research will analyze

how education determines spouse selection criteria and preferences along with the effects of education on the choice of spouse among female Ph.D. university students.

1.3 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

The findings of the study will be situated within the areas of social and cultural anthropology that focuses on social institutions, family structures, rituals, and cultures, etc. The purpose of the study is to find out the preferences of highly educated females regarding spouse selection and the role of education in marriage timing and behavior. Several kinds of research have been done that focused on exploring the relationship of marriage behavior with social status, caste, and culture. A few types of research are conducted in Pakistan on such topics regarding marriage behavior and personal preferences in spouse selection of women. This research will be an initiative to study the phenomenon specifically concerning highly educated females. Therefore, it would be easier to analyze the reasons for transition in spouse selection and age at marriage in Pakistan for future research.

Furthermore, the main focus of the majority of previous research was married couples and post-marital experiences. This research will be a beginning point to predict the marriage behavior of single and educated females. Through exploring the relationship between marriage and education, this research reveals that whether the marital decision of females is influenced by other social, economic, and personal factors or education is the sole determinant or predictor of their marital choice.

1.4 Outline of the Thesis

Following the first chapter of the dissertation, the second chapter explains the methods employed to conduct the research, the ways of using techniques, and the experience of the researcher in the field along with justification research methods. The third chapter is the theoretical base of the thesis that reviews existing literature relevant to research topics and questions and provides key concepts and operationalization of them as per research. Chapter four presents a brief introduction, historical background, location, and information on the research site. Chapter five provides a detailed account of the correlation between women's education and marriage. Chapter six is related to the impact of education on the timing and age of marriage. Chapter seven consists of the topic of spouse selection criteria among female Ph.D. students. The remaining two chapters summarize the thesis by relating it with key findings and conclude the research. The appendix contains an interview guide used to conduct interviews.

2. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

The available literature about the role of education in determining marriage timing and spouse selection criteria among female Ph.D. students is not enough to understand it.

Different writers have worked on this topic. The literature review contains books and articles on the topic to extract existing knowledge available on the topic.

2.1 Marriage

Marriage is a socially recognized relationship between a male and a female. The children born from their union are socially recognized as their accepted offspring. It establishes an institutionalized relationship with legitimate sexual and parentage relationships that are the foundation of households and families. In other words, it is the union of a man and a woman from which the born offspring are identified as legitimate children of both partners. (Siemens, 2019)

2.2 Spouse selection

Spouse selection is the process of choosing a person for marriage or selecting a partner with whom to form a long-term relationship like marriage. It refers to a procedure through which an individual is chosen or chooses a potential partner from a variety of eligible factors that form and maintain a long-term marital and romantic relationship between two people. (Brackett, 2019)

2.3 Education

It is the hopeful, wise, and respectful cultivation of learning attempted by the belief that everyone must have the chance to share it. To understand education, it is necessary to discern education as a process of encouraging discovery, giving time to truth, and

inviting possibility. According to John Dewey, it is a social process of living that prepares people for the present, not for the future. (Illeris, 2003)

Education is the wealth obtained by an individual by studying a particular subject for a period or getting experience through life lessons that supply insight about something. The instructions from individuals or relevant sorts of literature are required in education. The common forms of education include years of studying in an institution and getting an education in a variety of subjects. (Jamie, 2019)

2.4 Education and marriage behavior

The interconnection between years of schooling and changes in the decision about marriage is clear from several pieces of research. In the case of Pakistani society, the years of schooling are associated with delayed marriages. Education provides personal autonomy in search of a mate in the marriage market and making personal choices. As Pakistani society is a traditional society, it has low literacy rates, particularly for females. Several pieces of research have shown that women with higher education are more likely to have delayed marriages. Education as a selected variable showed that the years of schooling are strongly related to the age of marriage of females. In contrast to the women who have less, or no education have earlier marriages. The marriage transition of a country is closely associated with the level of education women acquire. Aneel Shahzad in his research on the correlation between delayed marriage and education has demonstrated many factors other than education that are also associated with the postponement of marriage. (Shahzad, 2017)

Education does not only improve one's status and marriage options (marriage timing), it also serves as a criterion used to rate the eligibility of a partner. The

educational status of a man is considered to be important when considering marriage. In fact, highly educated women believed that they could afford to wait for the right one, the partner who has comparable achievements in comparison to their own. Many women prioritized the personal achievements, status, degrees, profession, and income of men while selecting a spouse. Qualitative research led by Dyson in 2007 revealed that educated women invest more in pursuing a career instead of marrying too early. As some of them exercise economic freedom, they have high priorities and preferences when selecting a partner.

They are placed in a high position in the marriage market. They prefer men with adequate earning, higher education, and stable employment. (Dyson, 2007)

Education requires high-powered and time-intensive investments in education and career development. Women are educated and professionals in establishing their careers do not believe in searching for a partner earlier. Oppenheimer in 2000 suggests that because marrying and starting a family can threaten their career goals and ambitions. Early marriage may also result in dropping out of university. But often, delaying marriage may result in singlehood. It can cause fear of singlehood among many people. Many studies suggest that intelligent and educated women are more likely to delay marriage in order to invest in their career and to find a mate compatible with their IQ level. It is also evident that many highly educated women are at the risk of staying single as they have delayed marriage. (Brown & Lewis, 2004)

2.5 Relationship between marriage and education

To draw a causal link between marriage and education, Goldin in 2000 argued that college and university completion were strong predictors of marital status and controlling of age. In the middle of the twentieth century, many American women attended educational institutes for the purpose of finding an educated spouse. To marry a college-educated male was a basic preference of college-educated women. Most highly educated women are unwilling to settle for men who are less intelligent, educated, and professionally successful than they are. (Mcintyre & Lefgren, 2006)

To study the correlation between education and marriage, the literature from other disciplines must also be considered. Martin argued that the delay in marriage is dependent on the educational status of the woman. The highly educated women postpone their marriage whereas the low-skill women foregone it. Data obtained through interviews from married couples argued that late marriages are more stable than early ones. (Iyigun & Lafortune, 2016)

In both developed and developing countries, there is a rapid rise in the educational attainment of women and an increase in the age at marriage. Education is regarded as a prime catalyst of significantly affecting age at marriage. (Gangadharan & Maitra, 2001)

The analysis of marriage and human mate selection described that the selection of partners is followed by a bundle of traits, age, education, intelligence, and physical appearance, etc. The economic criteria for selecting a partner are scarce in economic contributions. Psychologists and sociologists further study the spouse selection process by using data obtained from personal advertisements in newspapers. The data includes self traits and descriptions with the amount of personal information that helps to make a

match easier and preferences clear. Analysis of the data illustrated that women prefer men who are slightly older than them and are capable of investing both financially and emotionally in them. Women are more likely to pursue long-term relationships and they are more demanding, so they invest in a stable relationship. (Blossfeld, 2009)

Both psychological and economic studies have certainly increased our understanding of what women are searching for in a partner. They corroborate that marriage has an economic dimension too. Single educated women are searching for potential spouses able to provide good companionship with whom they enjoy similar tastes and interests. The empirical analysis has proved that single people have strong preferences for certain characteristics they search for in partners. There are also some traits they avoid finding in a mate during the spousal search. (Vaillant & Wolff, 2010)

In terms of marriage age, stated more precisely the institution effect contends that the onset of the marriage process. The marriage process is delayed by staying in educational institutions. The pattern of marriage rate of people who stay longer in educational institutes is shifted towards higher ages. (Bruderl, 2007)

2.6 Marriageable Mate Traits

The phenomenon of late marriage and the timing of marriage of highly educated professional women is a consequence of the interaction between marriage, education, and careers. The parental support and their attitude towards the education and career of women also play their role in determining the time of marriage. The age between 20-24 is highly career-oriented in women. Educated and intelligent women may select a less accomplished partner for a short-term relationship, but they prioritize only educated, committed people of their own age or a few years older. (Allen & Kalish, 2014)

For many decades, the focus of marital research is the desirable traits for potential partners. In the nineteenth century, the studies conducted showed that the focus of both men and women was to search for mutual attraction and love. These characteristics ranked number two as the greatest valued traits for both genders for mate preferences. Both genders started to show interest in preferring a partner with a similar educational background in the late nineteenth century. Women also looked for financial potential and good looks. Parmer in 1998 studied social and historical literature of preferences of people while selecting marriageable traits. It was found from his findings that the majority of women preferred a man with a pleasing disposition, maturity, and dependable character. Himes and Hills also presented research on American and African men and women on their mate selection patterns. Mutual compatibility is found to be of greater importance. Women also want men with great health and refinement. The least valued factors found in the research were similar religion, politics, skin color, hair texture, social status, etc. A large portion of women prefer men who have never married before and have a stable career. (Buss, Shackelford, Kirkpatrick, & Larsen, 2011)

In a survey, the level of education influences the answers of the women as the well-educated women are often looking for physical characteristics such as height. The highly educated women who are taller preferred to select their partners who are taller and economically more advantageous. (Vaillant & Wolff, 2010)

Educated women consider less educated, unstable, employed men as unmarriageable men. Highly educated women seem to choose men for economically based characteristics, such as income and education whereas in some cases the selection is based on social characteristics such as ethnicity and religion. A new study examining

how the educational advancement of women has affected their marriage patterns in recent decades has demonstrated that women with more education selected their spouses with higher incomes over higher education in contrast with women who have low levels of education. (Clarke, 2011)

2.7 Educational Homogamy

It refers to when educated people choose to marry other educated people. Blossfeld argued that educated individuals rarely be in a relationship with people having less education than themselves. Likewise, they also avoid entering a relationship with people having a greater level of education. Based on several types of research, it is found that women prefer to marry men with more education. Matthijs investigated the role of education in building a relationship based on social exchange. Educational homogamy appeared to be of higher priority than other variables in many societies. (Matthijs, 2010)

Under the theoretical perspective of spouse selection, the most common trend among highly educated students is educational Homogamy. In any society, all the systems of spouse selections for the educated segment of the population have the tendency of marriage with having the same level of education. People who have the same educational level can get married to each other. This is the case of the similarity index that is above all the factors including religion, age, socioeconomic status, and specially caste-based preferences even in the educated class of society. Notably, the importance of cultural characteristics and educational homogamy has increased over time that forms identical behavior, values, and beliefs. (Farooq & Arshad, 2017)

3. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

In research, a methodological framework attempts to increase the comprehension of why various things in the social world are in the way they are. The research methodology is a systematic method to deal with research and how research is carried out. It is the work plan of the researchers through which they describe, explain, and predict how the knowledge is gained. The qualitative process provides explanations of social phenomena by exploring in-depth details of human culture, behavior, and expression with the help of tools and techniques. I will use relevant qualitative research methods to carry out this research.

3.1 Rapport Building

It is one of the imperative and initial steps of fieldwork for the researcher that develops mutual trust and positively affects the findings of the research. (Stephen, Miller, & Schallenkamp, 2007). It is the method to create a connection with people to establish an environment of understanding and trust and negotiating relationships. It is a fundamental phase for successful interaction between the researcher and respondents. Rapport building provides a non-judgmental behavior and harmonious relationship between respondents and researchers so the researcher can generate effective communication with people.

The initial and vital step of my fieldwork was to build comfortable communicational connections with female students enrolled in universities for higher education. Marriage or marital preferences is one of the personal matters of every individual. To ask questions or to discuss openly delayed marriages or age at marriage on

a personal level requires friendly and comfortable communication. For this purpose, I employed this technique prior to using other research tools.

3.2 Sampling unit and sampling size

Sampling is the process of selection of few individuals from a population of interest to generalize the results about the situation of the whole population. The sampling unit of my research is the female Ph.D. students at Islamabad universities. I have selected 30 students aged 27-35 as my research respondents because it is difficult for me to cover all the students acquiring higher education in a short period. All of the respondents have the marital status of single and never been married.

3.3 Purposive Sampling

I have used purposive sampling to select my sample. In qualitative research, purposive sampling is a widely used method also termed judgmental sampling that fulfills the criteria of research questions in the selection of respondents and helps to identify respondents more efficiently. (Palinkas, et al., 2015) In purposive sampling, the researcher finds individuals who comply with the requirements of research questions and the aim of the research.

I have used purposive sampling because my research focused on exploring the relationship between education and marriage timing and preferences in spouse selection of females of a specific age group acquiring higher education.

3.4 In-depth Interviews

Both formal and informal interviews are widely used techniques in social research that generate detailed information about the research questions and provide useful data.

(Stuckey, 2013). I have prepared an interview guide to conduct structured interviews whereas the informal discussions were part of daily life conversations redirected towards research objectives. I have conducted thirty interviews with females who are acquiring higher education in the Islamic International University Islamabad and National University of Modern Languages Islamabad. The in-depth interviews were done in one to one setting and each interview had a duration of one hour to two hours. The schedule of the interviews conducted with higher educated females was dependent on the availability of the respondents as they have limited time to give due to their engagement in higher education. Furthermore, interviews were conducted according to the willingness of every respondent. A few interviews are written manually, while other interviews were recorded using an audio recording.

3.5 Interview Guide

The interview guide is necessary to conduct formal interviews. The researcher asks questions from the interview guide. I have prepared an interview guide comprised of relevant, understandable, and meaningful questions for research respondents. All the questions have an open-ended response pattern. The interview guide was used while conducting interviews and discussions with respondents. It assisted me in generating relevant themes of data.

3.6 Case study Method

The case study method is an appropriate method of investigation of an issue or a situation when complex factors are involved. (Fidel, 2004). It helps the researcher deeply studying and understanding the whole case. It is not a sole method of inquiry; rather it involves a variety of methods such as interviews and observation to reveal the history of a person. I

have conducted three case studies to investigate the role of education in delayed marriages through detailed interviewing, discussing, and observing respondents. The case study method generated detailed information often irrelevant to research objectives, the irrelevant data and information was omitted while writing the thesis.

3.7 Focus Group Discussion

It is a qualitative participatory research technique that focuses on knowing several differing paradigms and serves as a platform to get local knowledge from a moderator. (Nyumba, Wilson, Derrick, & Mukherjee, 2018) It is an effective method to assemble individuals with related areas of interest in obtaining knowledge and information. Further, it helps in establishing discussion amongst several participants that provide understanding about their experiences, beliefs, and differences on a particular topic. I have conducted one group discussion by using this method and key participants helped me in arranging group discussions that facilitated me in collecting different perceptions, worldviews, and experiences of females about research objectives.

I introduced myself and provided a brief purpose of arranging the discussion and the aim of the research at the start of the discussion. Following the introduction, to create a friendly situation for all respondents I asked a few general questions about education and marriage. During the discussion, I have tried to get participants to respond in detail and prevent them from giving short responses. The focus group discussions were recorded by audio recorder.

3.8 Audio Recording

To employ research techniques including interviews and discussions, audio recording is one of the supplementary tools to record detailed information as it is difficult for the

researcher to write each and every point during interviews and discussions. This technique provides reliability and authenticity of the data because recordings can easily listen again and again during evaluation to deliver valid results. I have applied a sound recording device to record in-depth interviews and focus group discussions after taking permission from research respondents. It helped in avoiding interruption during interviews and discussions. It facilitated me to collect every piece of data and to concentrate on non-verbal data and information. It facilitated me to examine the facial expressions of the respondent during the interview. The audio recording method also helped me to save extra time. I have recorded data during the fieldwork.

3.9 Photography

In academic social research, photography is a creative attempt and a collaborative tool to record visual information. It assists the readers to entirely comprehend the explored data. (Wilton, 2016) I have captured photographs of Islamabad and the International Islamic University and the National University of Modern Languages. It helps the reader to properly become familiar with the area and the universities who are unfamiliar with these universities and want to explore the educational institutes in Islamabad city. Ethical consideration was taken into account and all the pictures were taken with the permission of administrative authorities.

3.10 Field Notes

In the field, writing field notes is an effective method of recording daily events and facts. It is one of the primarily used methods to record data and is still employed. It consists of writing essential information by using paper and pen as one is unable to remember every piece of information. It is an important source of collecting ideas and memories from

interviews during fieldwork. (Tessier, 2012) In this research, it is one of the significant techniques utilized to record research data. During fieldwork, it is very difficult to convince respondents to record interviews using an audio recording. It was also not possible to record whole informal discussions by using an audio recorder. Therefore, I record data according to research objectives, non-verbal data gathered through participant observation, and interpretation of interviews. The relevant data written in the daily diary was later analyzed.

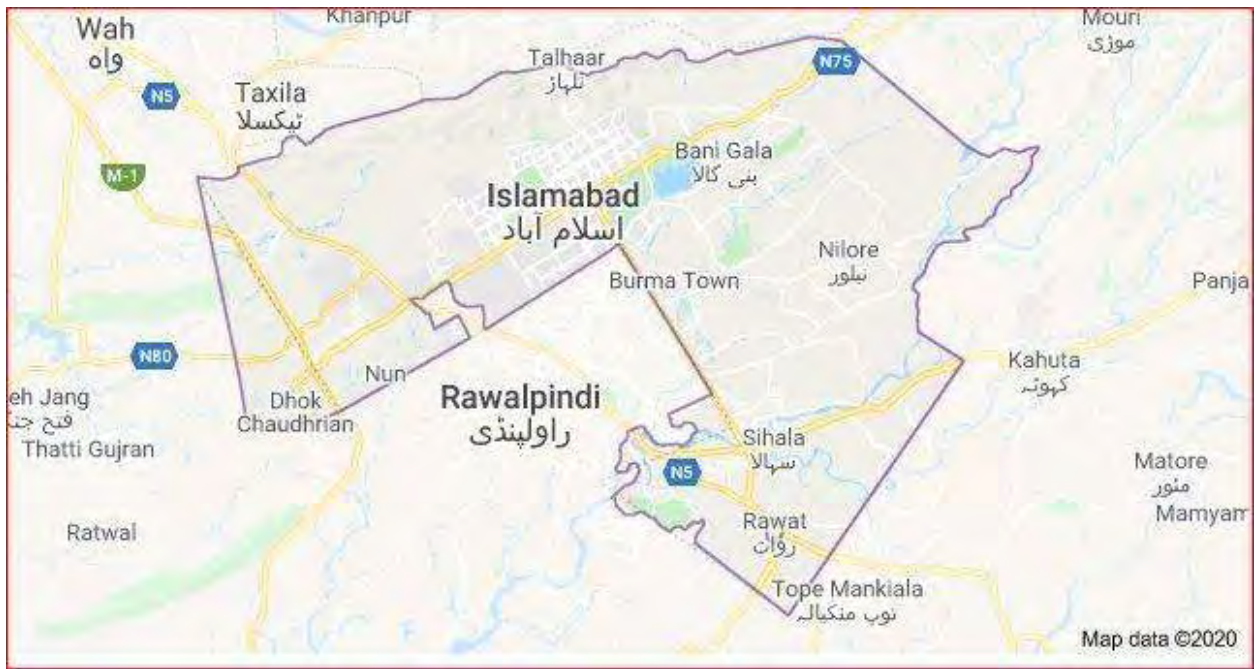
3.11 Research Ethics

This research is accomplished by the consideration of various ethical practices. The identity of the researcher and the purpose of this research were not hidden from research respondents. To ensure informed consent, females who were willing to become a part of this research were selected as research respondents. Personal information of respondents such as name, age, and other data was kept confidential. Interviews were recorded after taking permission from respondents.

4. Research Setting

This research was conducted in the universities of Islamabad city. Islamabad is the capital city of Pakistan and administered by Islamabad capital territory. Female respondents from two educational institutions were selected as per the judgment of the researcher and research criteria. Figure 1 shows the map of Islamabad city.

Figure 1: Map of Islamabad



(Source: Google

map)

4.1 Introduction to Research locale

This research has been conducted in the universities of Islamabad. Fem ales students at International Islamic University and the National University of Modern Languages were selected for interviews. Islamabad is the capital city of Pakistan. It is located in the northeast of the country, on the Potohar Plateau. Unlike other cities in Pakistan,

Islamabad is a planned city. Islamabad itself is made up of 505 km² of urban land and 401 km² of rural land. The city is located within the wider Islamabad Capital Territory which includes the 906 km² of Islamabad as well as a further 3626 km² of land known as the „Specified Area“. The Specified Area includes the Margalla Hills to the north and northeast, much of which is a national park. Islamabad city is displayed in Figure 2.

Figure 2: Islamabad City



(Source: By Researcher)

4.2 Historical background

The site for Islamabad was designated for the capital city in 1959 and the city was opened in 1963. Upon choosing Islamabad as the site of the new capital city in 1959, the government commissioned Doxiadis Associates, a Greek firm, to prepare the master plan for the new city. The master plan sought to ensure that the city would develop in harmony with its surrounding area. The master plan divides the metropolitan region into three zones: Islamabad itself (Zone 1); the national park area (Zone 2); and Rawalpindi

and its surrounding cantonment (Zone 3). The Margalla Hills National Park is intended to act as a limit to the northward extension of the city. Further to this, Islamabad city itself is also divided into zones. Zone IV is the largest in the area while Zone I is the principal residential area covering 222 km². Each residential sector within Zone I is identified by a letter of the alphabet and a number and covers an area of approximately 4 km². Zone II covers 40 km² and consists of the under-developed residential sectors. Zone III covers 204 km², Zone IV covers 283 km² and Zone V covers 158 km²

Under the master plan, Islamabad was designed as a linear city with a grid arrangement of sectors and straight, intersecting roads. Each sector was expected to be a human community and provided with self-sufficient utilities and amenities at the neighborhood level. The master plan also provides a network of service centers with decentralized activities at neighborhood and sector levels. Similarly, the plan provides a range of open spaces for leisure, recreational farming, and model villages. The largest of these open spaces is the protected Margalla Hills National Park, which contains diverse flora and fauna. The administrative boundaries of the city and district were set by the Capital Development Authority Ordinance of 1960. This same ordinance also assigned the management of the capital area, including the nearby city of Rawalpindi, to the Capital Development Authority. However, subsequent legislation has seen the creation of new managing institutions, meaning there are currently three main agencies charged with some aspects of development administration in Islamabad.

4.3 Climate

Islamabad has hot, humid summers followed by monsoon and severe winters. The weather varies greatly across seasons. Winter typically runs from December to March

with some rainfall. Cold temperatures of around 4.5°C are common over the coldest months of December to February. Summer runs from April to September producing hot temperatures averaging around 35°C. Extremes of temperature, as high as 46°C, have been recorded during these months. Summers are accompanied by a monsoon season beginning in June or July and running through to September. Winds are predominantly from the southwest, except during the monsoon season when winds come from the southeast. The average annual rainfall is about 1150 mm. Some 65 percent of this falls from June to September. The average yearly humidity is 55 percent.

4.4 Population

In 1998, the year of the last census, Islamabad's population was 805,235 with 434,239 men and 370,996 women. The urban population of the city was 529,180 while the rural population was 276,055. The average annual population growth rate from 1981-1989 was 5.2 percent. In 2011, the population was projected to have reached 1.7 million. Ethnically, Islamabad is the most diverse metropolis in the country with communities from all of Pakistan's major ethnic groups. Based on 1998 data, almost 60 percent of the population is aged 15–64. About 3 percent of the population is above 65 years old and almost 38 percent is younger than 15. Islamabad has the highest literacy rate in Pakistan at 73 percent. The city has a labor pool of about 185,000 people, while the unemployment rate at the household level is 12 percent. Population density is around 889 people per km². The city has the largest foreign population in the country. The city is also growing as a business and commercial center, which attracts a large highly skilled workforce from other major cities including Karachi, Lahore, and Quetta. All of the country's diplomatic

ties are maintained and exercised from Islamabad, as all major embassies, consulates, missions, and Pakistan's Foreign Office operate from the city.

4.5 Language

The national language of Pakistan is Urdu. However, people living in Islamabad feel proud of speaking English than using their own language. It is generally observed that not being able to speak fluent English is now an embracement. The people of Islamabad are assessed on the basis of the language spoken by them. There is There exists a trend of using roman English for communication here that has unfortunately led to the destruction of the original Urdu language. Other languages spoken in Islamabad include Punjabi, Pashto, Balochi, and Pahari.

4.6 Educational Facilities

Islamabad city has the highest literacy rate in the country. The literacy rate of the city is 87%. There is a large number of schools, colleges, universities, and other educational institutions. The quality of education in institutions exceptionally good in private as well as government-private institutions. There are multiple national and international schools in Islamabad for boys and girls. There are three high schools and colleges for girls and five for boys in Islamabad city. In addition to it, there are a number of high-ranking universities in the city, where people from other provinces come to get a quality education. The women from the universities of Islamabad such as International Islamic University Islamabad and the National University of Islamabad are selected to conduct research.

4.7 Economic Setting

Islamabad is the capital city of Pakistan and a key contributor to the economy of Pakistan. Islamabad is the largest stock exchange of Pakistan after Karachi. Which generates a great amount of revenue for the country. Along with information and communication technology, many other state-owned and private companies are operating in Islamabad. The Federal Board of Revenue collects a huge amount of revenue as compared to the population of the city.

4.8 Location

Research is conducted in the International Islamic University Islamabad and the University of Modern Languages. The following are the details of both universities.

4.8.1 International Islamic university

The university is a center of Islam, theology, and Islamic studies. In 2012, the university was ranked 4th in the general university category by the Higher Education Commission. In February 2014, it awarded King Abdullah of Saudi Arabia an honorary doctorate in politics and international relations. It offers undergraduate and post-graduate programs in law, science, engineering & technology, humanities, arts, religious studies, social and natural sciences. Figure 3 shows the location of the International Islamic University within Islamabad.

Figure 3: Map of International Islamic University



(Source: Google map)

Old campus

The old campus lies about the Faisal Masjid. The masjid was designed by Vedat Dalokay, a Turkish architect. It was donated to the university by King Faisal of Saudi Arabia. The Masjid is one of the largest in the world and is able to accommodate tens of thousands of people in its prayer hall, women's gallery, and courtyard.

New campus

The new campus occupies Islamabad's Sector H-10. The first phase of construction of the new campus was completed in 2013. Since then a campus area for women has been established. In 2006, the construction of the Central Library and the Lincoln Corner was completed. The view of the new campus of International Islamic University is displayed in Figure 4.

Figure 4: International Islamic University Islamabad



(Source: by researcher)

Faculties

Faculty of Arabic

The Faculty of Arabic teaches Arabic Language, literature, Linguistics, Translation, and Interpretation.

Faculty of Basic and Applied Sciences

The Faculty of Basic and Applied Sciences, founded in 2003, teaches computer science and software engineering, physics and nanotechnology, mathematics and statistics, environmental sciences, biotechnology, and bioinformatics.

Faculty of Engineering and Technology

The Faculty of Engineering and Technology, founded in 2007, offers degrees in Electrical Engineering, Mechanical Engineering, and Civil Engineering.

Iqra College of Technology

The Iqra College of Technology is a constituent college of IIUI. It offers B. Tech and Diploma of Associate Engineering programs.

Faculty of Languages and Literature

The faculty of languages and literature offers BS, MS, and Ph.D. degrees in English, Persian, and Urdu.

Faculty of Management Sciences

The faculty of management sciences was founded in 1995. In 1996, the Department of Business Administration offered a Master of Business Administration program. The Department of Technology Management was founded in 1998. It is the largest faculty of the university with around 3,700 registered students.

Faculty of Shariah and Law

The Faculty of Shariah and Law was first established in Quaid-e-Azam University in 1979. In 1980, it was incorporated into International Islamic University, Islamabad. Students enrolling in doctorate programs complete one year of compulsory coursework before commencing a thesis. More than 900 students have graduated from this faculty.

Faculty of Social Sciences

The Faculty of Social Sciences offers degrees in Education, Politics and International Relations, Psychology, History and Pakistan Studies, Islamic Art and Architecture, Mass Communications, and Sociology.

Faculty of Islamic Studies

A Faculty of Islamic Studies was founded in 1981. It offers degrees in the Tafseer and Quranic sciences, Hadith, comparative religion, Dawah and Islamic culture, Aqedah, and philosophy, and Seerah and Islamic history. The Dawah Academy was founded in March 1985. The Sharia Institute of Training was founded in 1981 and became an academy in 1985.

4.8.2 National University of Modern Languages

The National University of Modern Languages is a public university with its main campus located in Islamabad, Pakistan, and other satellite campuses in different cities of Pakistan. It was established as an institute in 1969 and upgraded to a university on May 29, 2000. Figure 5 shows the location of the National University of Islamabad within Islamabad city.

Figure 5: Map of the National University of Modern Languages



(Source: Google map)

It offers undergraduate and post-graduate programs in languages, linguistics, social sciences, communications, engineering, management sciences, and computer sciences. It is one of the largest universities in the country. In 2013, the university was ranked in the

top 15 by the Higher Education Commission Pakistan general category ranking. The National University of Modern Languages is shown in Figure 6.

Figure 6: National University of Modern Languages



(Source: by the researcher)

Faculty of Engineering and Computer Sciences

The faculty of Engineering and Computer Sciences comprised of Department of Engineering students and Department of Computer Sciences

Faculty of English Studies

The faculty of English Studies includes the Department of English for Under-Graduate Studies, the Department of English for Graduate Studies, and the Department of English for Functional Courses.

Faculty of Management Studies

Faculty of management studies of NUML consisted of NUML School of Business and Department of Governance and Policy Department

Faculty of Social Sciences

The faculty of social sciences at the National University of Modern Languages is comprised of the Department of Education, Department of International Relations, Department of Peace and Conflict Studies, Department of Mass Communication, Department of Pakistan Studies, Department of Islamic Studies, and Department of Applied Psychology

5. The Correlation between Women's Education and Marriage

Marriage is the culturally, legally, and religiously recognized union of two individuals, man, and woman, which imposes immense responsibilities and obligations on them. Education in this era of globalization and technological advancement is considered a life survival strategy. Education educates people on how to survive and sustain life in this era. This development created a huge gap between educated and uneducated people. It is because an educated individual can understand different things easily and education make one able to do things in a more efficient way. Unlike to present, in the past, the role of education was not that crucial. The people who were not educated were successful in their lives. Therefore, our forefathers were successful in their lives. The attainment of higher education substantially influences the institution of marriage. The attainment of proper education helps in understanding the cultural, social, and religious significance and importance of marriage. Marriage is the most important decision of one's life because it is not just a sexual relationship, but one's whole life depends on the choice one made for the spouse. In Pakistani society, marriage is an essential institution and religious and social obligation. It is necessary to fulfill the responsibility and commitment of this social contract. Education creates a sense of responsibility among educated females that how to act as a wife, and mother. Unlikely traditional uneducated female, highly educated women can support their partners in every sphere of life. A highly educated woman can serve the country, society, and family.

5.1 Personality Development and its Impact on Marriage

Education considerably impacts the personality of higher-educated individuals. It is very essential as it is not only a source of knowledge and information, but it developed potential and talent for the grooming of personality. It gives an individual a sense to differentiate between good and bad. It is generally observed a thing that educated girls are more tolerant and patient than uneducated girls. Moreover, education makes an individual able to easily understand the responsibilities and obligations of married life. They can easily bear the burden of their married life with patience and tolerance. The married life of an educated female is more stable and sustainable than an uneducated one. One of the respondents said:

“Proper education makes a person qualified enough to cope with the responsibilities of marriage easily. Education shapes the personality of an individual by giving the sense to differentiate between good and bad for married life”

Another respondent narrated:

“Education did not make a girl arrogant or selfish rather education makes girls more sensible.”

In addition to it, educated females are more likely to make decisions about their own life and education makes them able to make the right decisions about their married life affairs. Along with higher education, age also makes a highly educated female wise enough to exercise her decision authority.

Furthermore, education creates tolerance and patience in an individual. It is critical for opening one’s mind to accept diverse points of view. Endurance and tolerance

are building blocks for long-term stable and sustainable marital relationships. On the contrary to uneducated or less educated individuals, an educated individual can admit the right opinion of the spouse easily. Many marriages broke up due to a lack of understanding between two married individuals. Furthermore, education is a source of awareness for people. It is because of education, a high education female can be in a better position to understand herself, her position in society, her position in the family. Therefore, an educated female can perform better in every walk of her married life. The purpose of education is not only economic independence, but the personality development factor is important for a happy married life.

5.1.1 Psychological development

Education boosts up the mental and cognitive abilities of an individual. It has a protective effect on the mental health of an individual. The psychological aspects of education include brain nourishment and mental satisfaction. It also makes a person emotionally strong. The overall health of an individual is depending upon the mental and emotional health of a person. High levels of education enable a woman to deal with the issues and problems of married life in a better way. A mentally healthy female can handle every problem in a better way than a mentally unstable one. Also, education helps in learning how to deal with the problems that emerge in society rather than becoming depressed. Moreover, mentally stable women can get rid of psychological disorders for example anxiety, depression, and hypertension easily which is a key to successful marital life. Mental growth is possible through proper education and an individual becomes mature in the late twenties. A respondent narrated:

“The main concern is not with physical adulthood, but one should

psychologically mature. Physical adulthood came at the age of 15 but at this age, a person is not emotionally mature for marriage. So, it better to have wait for cognitive maturity then married life will be better.”

The psychological well-being of an individual is associated with early marriage and lower education. Generally, the respondents have the opinion that most early married females suffer from depression, anxiety, and general health problems. In addition to it, they also suffer from emotional distress and depression caused by the burden of handling marital responsibilities at an early age. Respondent has further reported that education is key to the success of marriage and any success needs a good psychological condition.

5.2 Link of Women’s Economic Stability with Marriage

Education in every sense is one of the fundamental factors of economic empowerment. Increasing female' educational attainment contributes to women's economic empowerment. The economic independence of women is impossible without education, especially higher education is compulsory or important for a female to become financially independent. Marriage is positively associated with the income and economic condition of women. Economic empowerment is key to women’s capability to overcome poverty and improve their well-being. The economic independence of women not only improves the living conditions and status of a family, but it also improves the status of women in the family and society by making them independent of their male members. The participants further revealed that education makes women capable to become financially independent and leading a happy and prosperous married life. A respondent said that.

“One should be independent in life financially. It should be a female’s own choice or decision what should be done with her life but in her point of education should be given first priority. A female should never be dependent on anyone so that if any tough situation comes and she has no other support, education can be her only support for surviving and facing all the challenges of life. One should be able to carry the burden of any challenge independently.”

In an unfortunate situation, women can be self-sufficient through education and also can help their families to overcome challenges. The economic condition of females is not satisfactory because there is a limited number of females who acquire higher education. Generally, married women are financially dependent on their husbands due to the lack of their own income. For instance, if a woman becomes a widow or divorced, then an educated woman can handle her family properly than an uneducated one. Therefore, education makes females able not only to become economically self-sufficient but can also to support the family financially.

5.3 Impact of female education on family life.

A family is a social unit. It starts with marriage when two individuals get married. Resultantly, a new family came into existence. Education according to respondents brought happiness into family. Educated girls have a wide-ranging impact on family and its wellbeing. It is because the economic prosperity of a family more likely to bring happiness in all spheres of life. Educated parents can provide every possible facility to their children and the happiness of children is ultimately considered as the happiness of the whole family. Moreover, it is due to education, husband and wife understand each

other in a better way between husband and wife by making them able to accept and tolerate each other's opinions. Educated individuals take decisions by their mutual understanding. They do not depend on unilateral decisions of one family member as unilateral decision making in most cases caused disputes in the families. An educated woman not only provides economic or financial support to her family members, but she also manages her house in the proper mode. An uneducated female cannot be much helpful, firstly she is not considered as worthy to give her a chance in decision making. Secondly, she mostly engaged in unpaid household work that cannot support her family economically because of no contribution to the income of the family. One of the respondents narrated.

“With the passage of time, the point of view of society has changed on females getting a higher education. Society is becoming materialistic. People now have started preferring females with higher education especially Ph.D. so they can earn and support their family.”

It is because in this era a man cannot fulfill the demands of the whole family being a sole earner and provider. Now due to globalization, people are aware of facilities provided by parents to their children in developed countries. Higher household income is associated with high levels of education of parents, especially females. Everyone wants to give their children a quality life and education. So, without the assistance of females, it is impossible for men to do all this for their family. Participation in the work of both husband and wife can fulfill the requirements of quality life and other facilities to their family.

5.3.1 Footprint of Education on Motherhood

The women's lower educational attainment and marriage at an early age result in poor growth, malnutrition, and mortality, of their children. As lower education or illiteracy is associated with women's low social status, and health status and it influences the social status and health of children. Moreover, a mother's educational level has an enduring footprint on the upbringing of her children. It is because education not only impacts the personality of females but also of their children. It makes mothers interact with their children differently. One of the respondents narrated.

“Children are greatly influenced by their mother in their childhood because they observe that how their mother is talking? How she is doing something? They learn everything from their parents. An educated mother interact with her child differently than a typical mother that interaction impacts child positively.”

Mothers with higher education are more likely to expose their children to various activities that encourage their mental and intellectual growth. Furthermore, since intelligence is linked to educational attainment. Intelligence is considered partially hereditary. The children of highly educated females may have inherited, genetic benefits over other children. A mother's education level influences her children's educational results in several different stages. Some of the respondents said that an educated mother can help her children in their education by teaching them. The levels of education of mothers also instrumental in the academic performance of their children because highly educated mothers help their children in their education. It is because a highly qualified female is more equipped to assist children to do homework and study for tests. Therefore,

there are huge differences between educated mothers and uneducated or less educated mothers. Children's education and occupational level depend upon the education of parents. Mothers' education attainment not only impacts just their child-rearing but also their social systems. It is because children of less-educated mothers experience less success than the children of educated mothers. Highly educated parents also utilize a broader vocabulary more generously than uneducated or less educated parents. Learning lots of words early in life helps to better academic outcomes. Therefore, mothers' conversations with children in their childhood have enduring implications.

Having better-educated parents means a higher household income, which is required for better schooling and wellbeing for the children, among other benefits. For example, parents' income impacts the level of education of children. Highly educated females are more likely to have stable and long-term marital relationships; therefore, their children gain the benefits of family stability. The sustainability and stability of marriage are essential for the better physical and mental health of their children.

5.3 Education as Key to successful social life

Education is a social institution and human beings are social animals that cannot survive in isolation. Education is used by people to form their social identity, to understand themselves and their relationships with other people. In the present time, education makes it much harder for illiterate and less educated people to develop a positive social identity. Illiteracy and lower levels of education can negatively affect the self-esteem and well-being of an individual. Through proper education one can spend a happy and prosperous life. Education plays an important role in the socialization of individuals. Education restructures the order of the population by creating a new class system and

redefining the rights and obligations of the members of society. In the aftermath of a marriage, a couple must stay in society. Education helps married individuals to live with other people through teaching tolerance, patience, harmony, and cooperation to make social life prosperous. Respondent claimed that educated girls are more tolerant in order to avoid disputes. They are more likely to show patience when the situation is crucial.

Cooperation among society is also a key to a happy life. If social life is happy then marital life is also happy. Education is very necessary for understanding marital relationships as well as relations with other people in society. One of the respondents said.

“Marriage is not just the name of eating, drinking, and physical desires but one has to follow the complete code of social life. A generation is dependent on the decisions of a couple. So, education provides a better understanding of marriage life. Education is a social institution and it cannot deny. Informal education has been left behind now it is a time of academic education. Education teaches us every aspect of social life.”

Education determines human adaptation and behavior, therefore, the behavior of an individual with other people is also interlinked with education. An educated person can properly manage his/her marital and social life. An educated person has knowledge about various ups and downs of life. An educated person can perform in social life according to this knowledge. Respondents consider education as important as oxygen for social grooming and personality development. For instance, as oxygen is necessary for biological living the same is the case of the essentiality of education with for social, academic, economic, and stable way of life. Therefore, education covers all aspects of

life. The way of think has been impacted by education significantly. If one looks at the girls of villages who uneducated and compare them, university girls, you will see the difference as clear as water.

5.7 Impact of women's education on Development of a Country

The educated population leads to the development of a country. It is evident from the developed world that the whole population struggle for their countries. Female walk shoulder to shoulder with male and work like them. The third world countries are underdeveloped because females in these countries are illiterate or less educated. Pakistan is facing many crises and overpopulation is one of the challenges Pakistan is facing today. It has scarce resources as compared to its growing population and it is one of the biggest importers of goods from developed countries. More imports than exports generate economic crises in the country. Highly educated women are more aware of the challenges faced by the country and the reasons behind these crises. Highly educated women generally have fewer children than uneducated women and they give their children quality education and life. Women play a major role in the poverty eradication of a country by economically uplifting their households. Most of the women of these countries are engaged in unpaid household work and they have a very limited contribution to economic activities that is the main reason for the backwardness of these regions. In Pakistan, its approximately half of the population is comprised of female, but very limited female are contributing to the economy of the country. That is one of the major reasons which are responsible for the backwardness and underdevelopment of the country, especially for its economic crises. Educated women, as well as men of Pakistan, can play a significant role in the development of the country. This research has revealed

that highly educated females. Fifty percent population of the country has consisted of females, so staying half of the population at home cannot lead the country to advancement and progress. Almost all of the respondents have the view that the development of the country depends upon the education of females and their contribution to the economy of the country.

5.8 Education and Negative Attitude toward Marriage

In our country there almost negligible cases of highly educated people who do not prefer marriage. Secondly, if someone is not ready for marriage then the family forces him/her to get married. In western societies, people are less likely to prefer marriage but in Pakistan due to cultural and religious values and norms women are in favor of marriage. According to participants of this research highly educated women are more likely to marry and their divorce rate is low. Higher education also increases the age of an individual. Age brings maturity and consistency to a person. This is another factor in a stable marriage relationship between two individuals. It is observable in western societies people are not in the favor of marriage due to responsibilities and financial burdens attached to it. However, education is not only the reason that makes people behave negatively towards marriage. Secondly, some people consider their education is more important than marriage. A respondent narrated.

“If I get the chance to complete my Ph.D. from a foreign university then it will not matter to me what is my age, I will be satisfied with this achievement of completing my Ph.D. from the foreign university”

Therefore, they prefer education over their marriage and their age consequently increases with their education. In our society, most females get married right after their graduation.

In this way, at a later age, women are unable to get good proposals. Women in most cases, do not like to marry uneducated people or less educated people than them. In addition to it, highly educated males in our society prefer teenage girls to marry they prefer teenage girls to highly educated women. In this way, educated females prefer not to marry their whole age.

Some people are against marriage due to financial expenditures and other related customs. One of the whole respondents has an opinion that in developed countries, the relationship of marriage keeps on vanishing, people are now in favor of relationship which is without any bounding. She added everyone needs sexual interaction and for that purpose, there should be no social restriction, but does it make sense that one spends so much wealth on just the regularization of sexual relationships. She further added that marriage is just like a trade; people earn through this ceremony. So according in my opinion marriage is a useless phenomenon. The criteria of marriage in Pakistani society is sorrowful, the girl has to pay dowry which makes economical disorder in her father's family. Along with the high price and huge dowry, another thing is that people take a loan to fulfill the expenditure of marriages. Which causes heavy debt on the family increasing the financial imbalances. Moreover, a person can spend this money on the education of their daughters. Another reason is the existence of the hierarchal system in society, due to this system people tend to reject the proposal on the basis of caste language, religious sect, and economic condition. So, these reasons are enough for justification of negative behavior toward marriage. Education makes a person think differently. A respondent said,

“If I was not educated maybe I would reject more likely to reject people on the basis of their class, caste, or language.”

6. The Effect of Education on the Timing and Age at Marriage

Higher education of females has generally considered the primary means of delaying marriage. The likelihood of marriage at an earlier age is an increase for women lacking higher education. Therefore, education is a very important factor in determining the proper age of marriage. An increase in educational attainment not only significantly affects the age of marriage but also affects the duration of the marriage. Marriage in early life often creates difficulties in married life. In some cases, the possibility of marriage for the less educated female is gradually declined with an increase in age, whereas for the highly educated it increases with an increase in age.

Higher educational levels impact the age at marriage because higher studies consume approximately thirty years. People consider educated females for their marriage but should be younger than males. Lack of marriage proposals along with fertility issues faced by a female who marries at a later age. Highly qualified women are career-oriented, and they are likely to get married after the establishment of a career. Late marriage helps women to become mentally mature and economically stable, therefore, stable relationships occur due to late marriage. Lack of education or less education results in mental and physical health problems as well as financial instability of family.

Although highly educated women get married at later ages, this delay does not hinder their marriage prospects. (Sabbah-Karkaby & Stier, 2017) For women, we expect that higher education increases marriage age because both effects operate in the same direction. For men, however, the increase in marriage age should be less pronounced, because their positive human capital effect reduces marriage age. One of the respondents narrated.

“I am in favor of post-marital education. A girl should marry after B.S honors or master and after marriage, she should provide an opportunity to get education again.”

The current study suggests that majority of highly educated women more likely to marry at a later age, but they want stable and long-lasting marriages.

6.1 Is education a barrier to marriage?

A highly positive correlation between education and marriage age is widely accepted. There is also agreement that higher education is a causal factor for postponing marriage, but education alone is not responsible for the social criteria of marriage is more likely to disturb the rate of marriage. The current study revealed that the stereotypes of society are a major hurdle to marriage. There are some issues, for example, an aged woman might face fertility issues in her later age, amongst others.

Higher education is considered a hindrance to marriage in Pakistani society. Marriage as a social and religious obligation is practiced at an early age of individuals. Nowadays most of the people in our society are in favor of the higher education of females. Parents demand highly educated wives for their sons. On the other hand, they do not want to marry their son with thirty plus years old women. It is a general observation that higher education consumes age and at Ph.D., most of the girls cross thirty years of age. Therefore, the demand for highly qualified females along with the youngest one cannot be fulfilled. Then people opt for the younger daughters-in-law. A respondent said that.

“Ajkl trend change ho raha hai log educated larkion sy apny beton ki Shadi karwana chah rehy hain. Lekin wo es k sath wo unko kam umer

baho bhi chahye. Higher education ap k 30 years consume kr leti hai aur higher education k sath kam umer baho wali condition fulfill nahi ho skti.”

The marriage-related customs and traditions prevailing in our society are the main cause of the delay in the marriage of females. People in our society are demanding expensive things as dowry from a daughter-in-law. A respondent narrated.

“So-called morality of a society is a barrier to marriage. Education promotes positive thinking which is good for a healthy relationship. Costly dowry and other expenditure are the main causes of hurdle in marriage.”

Moreover, respondents also revealed that education by itself, not a barrier because an educated person will prefer educated women. The marriage of a highly qualified male with less-educated females creates compatibility issues. Hence, if an educated male prefers less-educated females and rejects highly educated just on the basis of age, then he is not truly educated he has just got information.

6.2 The Problems Emerge owing to Late Marriage

According to the current study, late marriage creates several issues including psychological problems, infertility issues, amongst others.

6.2.1 Increase in psychological Issues

According to the findings of the study single individuals at later ages are more likely to suffer from depression and anxiety. As a component of personal characteristics, mental health has always been associated with marital satisfaction. Marriage provides individuals mental satisfaction because it is a socially acceptable way to establish a

relationship. Some of the respondents have a view that unmarried women suffer from mental health issues more as compared to married women.

“Those who are more than thirty-five years of age usually suffer from depression so the family should take a serious step to feeling secure and if it is possible then they should be married.”

The participant who was studying psychology said that as per psychology marriage provides a sense of relaxation. Marriage is a basic need and it further addresses the other needs also. Marriage has always won the approval of society and it is the foundation of a family. It is because this prevailing social tradition of marriage is very important to attain emotional needs and social needs. Marriage in ours is an acceptable way to establish physical relations and to have children. Mental health is associated with the marital status of individuals. Marriage as emotional relationships between two individuals provides them mental satisfaction as husband and wife are feeling happy and satisfied most of the time. Mental health leads to happiness and effective wellbeing. The marital relationship also affects the mental health of family members. Parents with higher marital satisfaction have children with good mental health. Successful marriages are associated with caring parents and loving relationships between parents and children. Therefore, due to psychological needs people in Pakistani society prefer early marriages.

6.2.2 Infertility Issues at later ages

Infertility is a major issue that is faced by the female who marries at a later age. This is due to late marriage the reproductive system gets affected, decreasing the ability to produce eggs which leads to infertility of females and leads to complications in conceiving a baby. One of the respondents said.

“There is no biological limit to marriage age apart from fertility because after a specific, the fertility of women no longer exists, so it better to be married before that age.”

Most of the girls after completing their Ph.D. turned to over the thirties. Marriages over the thirties then have some problems for example among some women there should be fertility issues. In our society marriage is done for children. So, when the basic purpose of marriage is not served then one can easily say that higher education creates issues in marriage.

Although age has a tremendous effect on our reproductive health and female who marry at a late age face infertility issues but in this era of advancement in the medical field the treatment of infertility is possible. Women in developed countries are career-oriented and marry after reaching the position of their career. Marrying late does not create reproductive health issues for them due to medical advancement or development in those countries. Pakistan is one of the underdeveloped countries, facing immense challenges in its road to success. The medical field in our country is not advanced as in developed countries; therefore, females are still facing infertility issues when they marry at a later age. Therefore, of these issues, people are more likely to marry at an earlier age to avoid these challenges.

6.2.3 Lack of marriage proposals higher educated female

Education effect marriage in different ways. The early marriage system is the most prevalent system in Pakistani society. An increase in education and age of female create a problem of lack of marriage proposals for females. Firstly, highly educated men favor younger girls for their marriage. Secondly, on the contrary to females, the male often

continues their higher education after their marriage but a female who wants to acquire higher education does not marry before the completion of their education. It is because in-laws in our society do not allow daughter-in-law to get an education after marriage. Even in some cases, women are not allowed a job which is evident from cases of female medical doctors. For instance, parents prefer a doctor's daughter-in-law for their son but right after marriage usually, they do not allow her to continue her job. Moreover, females after marriage are responsible for the duties of the entire household along with the duties of reproduction. These things make women not continue their education after marriage. Furthermore, men prefer traditional women with a traditional lifestyle to marry. Educated females adopt the positive aspects of other cultures including dressing. The dressing of a girl is considered a morality ticket for females. Therefore, traditional families in our society prefer less-educated females for marriage than highly qualified ones. Although this trend is changing it is still existing in Pakistani society.

According to this study, completing a Ph.D. even on good timing does take 28 to 29 years of one's life. This age is generally considered as overage for the marriage. Therefore, after the completion of a Ph.D., females have to face many problems in getting good marriage proposals. A respondent narrated.

“In our society, there is a concept that people prefer or want a female with higher education and every possible good quality in a younger age to compare to a female of an elder age who has everything and has completed her higher education. It is only based on my complete observations that females who keep their first priority marriage and leave their education depending on their lucks are living a happy and successful married life.”

In different scenarios, there are women who face consequences that can be seen, there are females who faced consequences of getting married at an early age with a low level of education. This not only affects the economy of a family but also hinders the development of a country.

Furthermore, the number of higher educated is increasing as compared to highly qualified male. Highly qualified women are less likely to marry an uneducated or less educated male. Consequently, highly educated women in most cases end up with remained unmarried.

“Since women tend to marry upwards, means that wants a partner who is highly qualified than her so this attempt many of these women are forced to stay single.”

At first glance, this is an alternative explanation for the increasing proportion of qualified women never marrying. Like other marriage-squeeze explanations, the argument obviously also presumes as exogenous the existence of certain preferences.

6.2.4 Increase in Immoral Activities Owing to Late Marriage

Early marriage is a prevalent practice in Pakistan to avoid social evils, delinquency, and morality. Pre-marital physical relations in our society are considered as deviance. From a religious perspective, early marriages are encouraged. Therefore, culturally, and religiously early marriages are preferred as it saves individuals from immoral activities. There are severe laws and social control in Pakistan to curb this type of delinquency. The concept of marriage is differently practiced in different societies. In the west, sexual relationships and offspring before marriage are normalized. The majority of people in our society are adherents of Islam and practicing Muslims and Islam promotes early

marriages. To avoid these occurrences, people tend to marry their children at an early age. Some of the participants of this study who are highly qualified individuals have the same view as the general population in our society. As one of the respondents, who is still unmarried, narrated.

“Marriage should be done as soon as possible. Through marriage, we can save ourselves from different immoral activities.”

Another respondent said that.

“Marriage is also a religious obligation. In Islam marriage is very important, and science also shows positive aspects of marriage. Marriage helps us to avoid evil practices”

Some of the respondents have the view that he said that females should be married after completing their higher education but now they think that one can attain education after marriage. So, one should marry as early as possible to abstain from sinful activities.

On the other hand, the majority of respondents have the view that one should get married after completion of education and they believe in their self-control and upbringing of their parents. They have a view that education makes them able to spend their life according to social norms and religious values. There is a diverse point of view among respondents on the increase of immoral activities due to late marriage.

6.3 Perfect age to get married

Women especially women with higher education have a very clear benefit from marrying when they are older. Usually, they establish themselves financially stronger. The current study revealed that when a person realizes that she/he should get married then they should get married after economic self-sufficiency. Further, marriage should take into

consideration when a person gets matured mentally. Everyone needs a life partner with whom they have spent their lives and mental maturity is essential to lead a happy and stable life with a life partner. A respondent said.

“Marriage is considered when a person becomes mentally mature and mental maturity comes after twenty years of age. Not in early twenty but in the late twenties.”

Another respondent said.

“For girls, I think 25 is the perfect age for marriage. If there is a good the proposal, then they should have opted for marriage”

Some of the participants said that the perfect age for girls is twenty to thirty years. Others have a view that the perfect age for marriage is above twenty-five and under thirty. For marriage, a person should be matured enough to know the consequences and fulfill the responsibilities as a life partner. Further, respondents said the ideal age for marriage is twenty-two to twenty-five. At this age, the maturity level of a girl is developed so during this age marriage should be done. During this age, a girl is passing through different psychological processes so the marriage can provide them satisfaction. Physical needs and desires are needed to address for that purpose marriage should be organized. It is the duty of parents to take future decisions into consideration and marry their daughter to a suitable person. The ideal age for marriage is considered 30 years by a majority of respondents. They said that because after marriage drastic responsibilities come into the life of a person it is difficult for someone younger than 30 to handle those responsibilities properly.

6.4 The Positive Impacts of Late Marriage

The late marriage and higher education make women become economically self-sufficient, along with other positive changes.

6.4.1 Late Marriage and Career Establishment of girls

According to the current study for most highly educated females, career is always their top priority. Some respondents said that they prefer education over marriage. Firstly, an individual should be educated then one should develop one's career then marriage should be done. There are so many insecurities in our society. Hence, to avoid these insecurities, an individual should get education properly and establish their career. Females should not be dependent on the husband, father brother, or any guardian for their economic security rather a person should be self-sufficient and should be economically independent. Moreover, education is also important; for example, in case of job loss of husband one can prevent one's children from hunger. A respondent narrated.

“Career, education, and marriage it is all-important. I think it is depended on the situation, but I would say that a good life partner is my first priority, education, and career then. education is very important so it should education and then marriage and career can use as an interchangeable.”

Another respondent said.

“For good marital life, one needs a good career. But as know life is so predictable and career is so uncertain that why sometimes marriage comes first. For example, if a spouse is supportive and well settled then in case of crisis there is hope.”

The establishment help one to support one's family if economic crises occur due to job losses of husband. In case of divorce and death of a life partner, rather relying on other careers help in avoiding financial challenges.

6.4.2 Effect of Domestic Responsibilities on Education

Late marriage helps individuals to complete their education without any stress of responsibilities of domestic work. It can be generally observed that responsibilities on individuals increase after marriage and women are solely responsible for household tasks as well as duties of childbearing and rearing. In some cases, they are often engaged in earning for their family which caused a triple burden on women. According to my respondents, there are diverse opinions on this topic. Some respondents are in favor of early marriages and post-marriage attainment of education. On the contrary, most of my respondents are in favor of higher education and marriage at a later age. My respondent told me that.

“Education does not have any direct effect on a women's life agrp isko sr pr sawar na krain higher level of education is possible with happily married life. Through education I am aware of my responsibilities, I personally know the consequences of marriage. Married life and education should travel on the same track. We have also seen bad cases of women who achieve higher education but have complications in their marital status.”

On the other hand, other respondents who are in favor of post-qualification marriage said that along with education it is difficult for a female to handle domestic

responsibilities. Females with higher education such as MPhil and Ph.D. must face more problems in their married life in managing their time, family, and education.

6.4.2.1 Case Study

It is the case study of a female who is pursuing her Ph.D. from Islamic International University Islamabad. She is 28 years old. Parents wanted to marry her to an illiterate man, but she refused to marriage by saying that she will marry a person who was highly educated than me or having equal education. After completing her master's, she decided to quit education, but her mind changed after one year and she again started her education. Now, she is doing a Ph.D. along with her job as a teacher. She said after completing a Ph.D. she will turn out to be 30 and according to her suitable age for marriage is 30 years. She is not in favor of marriage during education as she said.

“aisi lrkiyan routine bases py issues face krti hain. Unki himmat hy wo kesy handle krti hain apni prhai ko aur apni married life ko. Lrki ko different roles play krny prty hain life main. Ek larki ek maa ka role play krti hy, ek behn ka role play krti hy, ek beti ka role play krti

hy, ek biwi ka ek bahu ka aur us sy related different roles play krny prty hain. Hmari society main ye cheez bht km acceptable hy lrkiyan shadi k bd prhai krain ya job krain. Aisi lrkiyon ko insaan bhi nhi smjha jata jo apni married life k sth apni prhai ya apny carrier ko continue rkhty hain. Yahan hum difference bhi nhi rkhty prhy likhy

aur

un prh logon main dono ko brabar rkhty hain. Prhy likhy aur un parh

logon ka same point of view hy is bary main. Aisi lrkiyon ko bola jata hy agr tum kuch kr bhi rahi ho to hum py knsa ehsan kar rahi ho. Ye bat common hy hmari society main.”

6.4.3 Avoidance of Challenges Created by Early Marriage

At an early age, an individual is not mentally capable of bearing the responsibilities of marriage although one is physically adult. Marriage imposes responsibilities of reproduction and production these both things are difficult for young adults to deal with. Moreover, girls quit their education to handle the responsibilities of the household as well as the duties of childbearing and child-rearing. Therefore, illiterate, or less educated females are unable to earn for themselves and their families. In the case of the death of a husband or divorce, they become helpless due to lack of income. Without proper education and skills, it is difficult to become financially stable in this era of technological advancement. My respondent told:

„meri ek friend thi in Fsc. Us k parents ny us k liye Fsc k bd hi rishty dhndny start kr diye thy. Usny apni education chordi aur uski shadi hogai. Ek bachy k bd us k husband ny usko chor diya. Ab uski life sb lrkiyon k liye sabak ki trha hy aur is bt ki example ya proof hy k aj kal ki society main education ko priority rkhna, important samajhna kitna zruri hy“

Moreover, it also imposes huge responsibilities on the male to provide for their family as men are considered as the sole breadwinner for the family in our society. Like a female, they also left their education to get a job quickly and due to financial responsibilities, they rely on ordinary jobs. This is not only a great waste of talent of two individuals, but

it affects the livelihood of families as they cannot provide all the facilities to their children that are needed in this era.

Further, early marriages severely affect the health of females as early marriages result in early and excessive pregnancies. Which affect the reproductive health of female which often results in the death of the female and pregnancy-related injuries. Moreover, early marriages increase the risk of domestic violence and violence disturbs the mental health of the female. Also, reproductive health issues cause mental health problems for females.

7. Spouse Selection Criteria among Female Ph.D. Students

The selection of a spouse has never been overlooked by society as mate selection is the most important decision of anyone's life. Spouse selection criteria vary from society to society and culture to culture. Age factors, physical appearance, educational factors, religious factors, and economic factors usually focus on mate selection in Pakistan. Further, the process of mate selection is comprising a number of steps where a decision regarding spouse is made through external traits such as appearance, social class or manner, attitude, beliefs, and common values. Other factors determining mate selection include paternal and maternal preferences that predominantly prevailed more in Pakistani society.

Spouse selection criteria of the highly qualified female are different from the general prevailing criteria for mate selection. Highly educated women are less likely to influence the physical attractiveness of spouses. The educational homogeneity, financial stability, responsible husband, and loyalty are the most important factors for the selection of spouses among Ph.D. university students. In addition to it, the age gap with spouse and spouse from their own community are considered as important factors for spouse selection.

7.1 Impacts of education on spouse selection criteria

Education significantly influences the spouse selection criteria among Ph.D. students in Islamabad universities. Highly educated females take into consideration factors such as educational Equality, Physical attractiveness, age gap, the career of the spouse, amongst others, for spouse selection. The concept of each criterion is not universal as the impression of standard in life partner selection different in societies. The notion of criteria for a mate among highly qualified females also changes over time to time. In Pakistani society, there are also different criteria for the selection of mate which vary from area to area and culture to culture. Due to cultural variation and caste and ethnicity, different groups have different norms. But one thing is interesting due to the latest advancement in educational institutions some universal norms have been developed among the educated youth whatever they have caste, sect, and language.

7.1.1 Education of Spouse

Education made individuals think for spouse selection that is different from a typical way. Generally, educated individuals marry other educated individuals. Especially educated women are less likely to marry the less educated or uneducated male. On the contrary, males sometimes marry a less educated female. The impacts of education on spouse selection criteria are more visible than any other thing. Highly educated women argue that may be for uneducated girls the criteria of spouse selection based on physical attributes and wealth. They may prefer handsome boys with a good bank balance, but an educated girl will select her spouse on the basis of education along with other positive qualities. They consider the education of spouse as their top priority because educational equality between spouses or higher education of spouse help them to

understand each other. Education helps in the character building of an individual. The good character of the spouse is the main thing for stability and happy marriage. Further, female university students consider wealth and beauty are a desirable thing, but the character cannot vanish. Table 1 shows that majority of participants are in favor of spouses with equal education while others recommend a highly educated spouse than them for marriage. A few participants do not consider education as an important factor for spouse selection. A respondent narrated.

“Men prefer beauty most of the time, but women have placed education on top. Women are found to be more concerned with education, sincerity, responsibility, and financial stability of their mates.”

People who are not educated or somehow less educated usually force their females whether their daughters or sisters to marry an illiterate or less educated person whom they think is suitable but sometimes the situation could be different, and it can ruin the life of a girl.

Table 1: Educational Homogeneity

| S. No | The factor of Education in Spouse selection | Yes | No | Uncertain |
|-------|---|-----|----|-----------|
| 1 | Educational Equality | 20 | 5 | 5 |
| 2 | A spouse should be more educated | 10 | 13 | 7 |
| 3 | Education is unimportant for spouse selection | 2 | 28 | 0 |

Moreover, students acquiring higher education have the view that their spouses should be educated more than me. It is because they thought that if their spouses are less educated, they will mistreat them. Further, in our society men have a dominant position in their family and less-educated men cannot tolerate women with higher education and position than them. Educational disparity causes many tensions in marital relationships. Marriage between individuals having educational disparity often results in disputes, or unhappiness because of the difference in mentality, lifestyle, and routine. The difference in educational level is an issue that has caused tension in relationships and sometimes led to break-ups. If it is the woman who is more educated, however, tension increases because men are egoistic. He tends to think a more educated woman degrades him even when that is not the case. Hence, people with higher levels of education are less likely to get

divorced as academic qualifications give them intelligence and common sense which are essential in life.

7.1.2 Economic Position of Spouse

The present study shows that for most highly educated females, the financial position of a spouse is considered important for marriages. Most of the people in our society prefer economically stable life partners for them because they provide economic security for females. In the context of parents' selection of life partners for their daughters, the first criteria for mate selection are the financial position of males. A respondent said.

“Personally, I would like a hardworking, kind, and that type of person who helps me in any situation. Stability in the economic condition is more important.”

Indeed, economic condition is much important. As per respondents, their spouses should be employed or settled. A male should wait for marriage until he gets some sort of job or he owns some type of business. In our society most of the students wait for jobs, education did not mean that you must job for your livelihood, but other professions can be adopted. As in our society male is supposed to earn and should be mature enough to maintain the economy of a family well. Although an educated woman can also contribute to the economy the burden on men is more visible.

Furthermore, a husband should be responsible enough to perform his duty properly as a husband and a father. Therefore, in short, education makes a person responsible enough to know his obligations. Students of higher education said the characteristic of responsibility in a husband is more important than anything else. one should marry someone who has a sense of responsibility.

“My sister is married to a highly qualified person. Her husband is a medical doctor. He is very helpful and supportive. Sometimes when my sister feels giddy, he makes breakfast for children.”

Table 2 shows the importance of the financial stability of spouses while selecting a spouse. The majority of highly educated women 25 of 30 prefer the sound economic condition of a spouse while for 18 participants their spouse should earn more than them. Only 4 have no concern about the economic condition of their spouse.

Table 2: Economic Condition of Spouse

| S. No | Economic Stability of Spouse | Yes | No | Uncertain |
|-------|--|-----|----|-----------|
| 1 | A spouse should financially stable | 25 | 4 | 1 |
| 2 | The economic position of a spouse is not important | 4 | 25 | 1 |
| 3 | A spouse should earn more than female | 18 | 2 | 10 |

In our society, husbands are responsible for the financial support of their wives even their wives are employed. Most marriages are done for the financial security of females and it is considered nonsensical to think that women should earn on their own. Women are not responsible for household expenditure. For instance, when a woman gets married, she is often given the impression that the major aim of marriage is to take care of the family. The man is given the responsibility of the breadwinner. In many cases, she gives up her

career for the sake of her family and faces no consequences for choosing family over a career.

However, the situation is gradually changing, as women are considering themselves responsible for their own finances as well as contribute to the household expenditures and they are not merely living off on their husband's earnings. Because it is not better for the whole family to rely on a single breadwinner.

7.1.4 Physical Attractiveness of Spouse

Women while choosing a life partner consider physical qualities and men also give more importance to physical attractiveness. Physical qualities like age, height and weight are important for both males and females. The role of physical attractiveness in mate selection among educated females is predominant in Pakistani society. The females primarily favored well-dressed, tall, fair-colored, and physically attractive old males and living in nuclear families.

On the contrary, Ph.D. university students do not prefer the beauty and style of the spouse as important factors for mate selection. Rather they would prefer hardworking. It is because style and handsomeness cannot provide a proper meal for the family, therefore, he should be a highly educated and hardworking man to provide for their family. A respondent said.

“I do not care how he looks or does he have a sense of fashion. I think these qualities are demanded by educated girls she argued. The quality of education is much important which nurtures the way of thinking.”

Another respondent said.

“Your spouse should be a person whom you know first, and he should be

your psychological companion also. It does not matter how he looks, or he has hair or not. By the way, mera mangetar ganja hai.”

Many students of higher education rely on their parents for spouse selection. The decisions of parents and other family members are considered highly important in this regard. The mate selection standards differ from family to family based on their unique way of thinking. Physical attractiveness along with economic stability is the top priority of parents. Table 3 expressed that only 5 of 30 females consider physical attractiveness for spouse selection and 26 of 30 participants have a view that physical attractiveness is a top priority while selecting a spouse. 26 of 30 participants can marry a spouse who is not good-looking.

Table 3: Physical Attractiveness of male

| S. No | Physical Attractiveness of spouse | Yes | No | Uncertain |
|--------------|--|------------|-----------|------------------|
| 1 | Male physical attractiveness important in mate selection | 5 | 24 | 1 |
| 2 | Male prefer physical attractiveness of female | 26 | 3 | 1 |
| 3 | Willing to marry spouse not good looking than them | 26 | 5 | 0 |

7.1.6 The Age of Spouse

Age is one of the most important factors for the selection of a marriage partner. As previously mentioned, men are the breadwinners for the family. A person earns more when he gets older; therefore, women prefer older men over young. In Pakistan, the age gap between spouses at marriage has remained relatively stable and men are usually older than the women they marry. The age of a spouse does not matter for students of higher education whether he is twenty-five or thirty-five. A respondent narrated.

“The age gap of spouse should be more than five years. I will select my a spouse who is at least five years older than because society usually does not accept female who is older than male.”

A few respondents have different on the age gap between the spouses. According to them, the spouse should age fellow. One of the respondents said.

“People think that males should be five-six years older than females, personally, I do not think so. I do not believe in the age gap. If your partner is your age it is very good. Age fellows can be a good partner because they are the same age so they could better understand the needs of each other, and responsibilities will better be performed.”

According to some respondents, the age gap with a spouse is not their concern and there should be no gap with the spouse. Other respondents have a view that age difference with a spouse should be as minimum as possible. A respondent narrated.

“Girls prefer men who a few years older than her. So, I must say that males should be two to three years old. My fiance is thirty. He is two

older than me.”

There should be an age gap with a spouse. The male should be a few years older than the females. It will make the relationship more suitable. Male a few years older can understand and address the problems more accurately. More than five years of gaps can create troubles in the future because there will no proper discussion about problems and somehow relationships will be more formal which is not acceptable.

Most of the respondents have a view that the age difference between spouses is should neither much nor less. There should be a balance for example males should be slightly older than females. Table 4 indicates that 15 of 30 participants are in favor of 2 years of age difference with a spouse, 8 participants prefer 3 years older spouse, three are in favor of the same age and only one is in favor of age difference with a spouse.

Table 4: The age of Spouse

| S. No | Age Difference | No. of Respondents |
|--------------|----------------------------------|---------------------------|
| 1 | A spouse should be 2 years older | 15 |
| 2 | A spouse should be 3 years older | 8 |
| 3 | A spouse should be 4 years older | 3 |
| 4 | A spouse should be 5 years older | 1 |
| 5 | A spouse should be of equal age | 3 |

7.1.7 Sincerity and Loyalty of Husband

In marriage relationships, the existence of loyalty and sincerity is paramount. It not only contributes to the success and stability of the relationship but also reveals the character of an individual. Sincerity and loyalty are the foundation of marriage and promote long-lasting marriage relationships. Sincerity and loyalty are taken as top priorities among highly educated females for spouse selection. According to some respondents, most males are not usually sincere in matrimonial relationships. Moreover, the character of the spouse is more important than the economic condition of the spouse. Marriage is a relationship between two individuals based on mutual trust, sincerity, and loyalty. Participants express that, females should not compromise in case of cheating by husband and should not forgive him for this act. While females should compromise on small issues like being late. Furthermore, the trait of patience is also considered very important while selecting a spouse. Education is compulsory along with other traits like sincerity and loyalty in marriage One respondent narrated.

“A person should be honest, trustworthy, and kind. I have no concerns with money or physical appearance. If a person is physically smart but cruel or he lacks trust so should I do with him? If he has no money, then it is ok.”

Marital disloyalty leads to the detachment of two individuals from each other. The absence of sincerity and loyalty in marriage mostly leads to unhappy marriages, even in the destruction of marriage relationships. Table 5 indicates that 28 of 30 respondents

consider loyalty and sincerity as a prior factor in spouse selection. No one considers these factors as least important while selecting a spouse and it does not matter in relationships

Table 5: Sincerity and Loyalty of Spouse

| S. No | Sincerity and loyalty | Yes | No | Uncertain |
|--------------|--|------------|-----------|------------------|
| 1 | Sincerity and loyalty prior factor in mate selection | 28 | 0 | 2 |
| 2 | Sincerity is the least important factor in spouse selection | 0 | 25 | 5 |
| 3 | Sincerity and Loyalty does not matter in marital relationships | 0 | 30 | 0 |

7.1.8 Spouse from own community

Most of the people in Pakistan marry their children into their own community or sect. In the case of a male, they can marry the girl of other sects and religion after converting females into their own religion; moreover, they prefer foreigners to marry to get citizenship of developed countries. Inter-faith and inter-sect marriages are prohibited for females in Pakistan. Also, arranged marriage remains the most common system for Pakistanis to find spouses, this process is accomplished by the parents of individuals. Marriage without the consent of parents is considered against culture and social values. Parents always try to find spouses for their daughters from their own community. If parents give freedom to their daughters to choose their life partner, they restrict them from marrying a partner from another community. The 20 participants of 30 of the current study said that they are restricted by their parents to not marry in other

communities. While 10 participants stated that their parents have no issue in marrying in other communities. One of the respondents said that.

“My father never intervened in my personal matters. He has given me the freedom of choice, he has no concern about spouse selection, he never demanded that your husband should be of our community.”

Respondents said that their parents believe that education makes their daughters capable of exercising decision-making authority to select their spouses.

Table 6: Community of spouse

| S. No | Community factor in spouse selection | Yes | No | Uncertain |
|--------------|---|------------|-----------|------------------|
| 1 | A spouse must be from the same ethnicity | 15 | 10 | 5 |
| 2 | A spouse should have the same religion | 28 | 0 | 2 |
| 3 | Spouse Should have the same religious sect | 24 | 4 | 2 |
| 4 | Religion does not matter in spouse selection | 2 | 28 | 0 |
| 5 | Ethnicity does not matter in spouse selection | 10 | 15 | 5 |

8. Summary

Marriage is the culturally, legally, and religiously recognized union of two individuals, man, and woman, which imposes immense responsibilities and obligations on them. Education in this era of globalization and technological advancement is considered a life survival strategy. Education educates people on how to survive and sustain life in this era. This development created a huge gap between educated and uneducated people. It is because an educated individual can understand different things easily and education make one able to do things in a more efficient way. Unlike to present, in the past, the role of education was not that crucial. The people who were not educated were successful in their lives. Therefore, our forefathers were successful in their lives. The attainment of higher education substantially influences the institution of marriage. The attainment of proper education helps in understanding the cultural, social, and religious significance and importance of marriage. Marriage is the most important decision of one's life because it is not just a sexual relationship, but one's whole life depends on the choice one made for the spouse. In Pakistani society, marriage is an essential institution and religious and social obligation. It is necessary to fulfill the responsibility and commitment of this social contract. Education creates a sense of responsibility among educated females that how to act as a wife, and mother. Unlikely traditional uneducated female, highly educated women can support their partners in every sphere of life. A highly educated woman can serve the country, society, and family.

This research aimed to explore the relationship between education and marriage that how education influences personal to social life as well as the development of a country. Also, how age factors along with education impact the institution of marriage and changing

spouse selection criteria among highly qualified female university students. Data was collected by employing qualitative methods such as focus group discussion, case study method, participant observation, and in-depth interviews, etc. Thirty individuals were selected as research samples who are attaining higher education in Universities.

Education and marriage are interlinked with each other. Attaining a low level of education means the early marriage of girls while attaining higher levels of education means marriage at a later age. Education positively impacts the personality of an individual. Further, education influences the childbearing patterns, family, and social life of an individual. Education enables females to understand the obligations and responsibilities of marriage. Education enables women to create an environment of tolerance in the family. Highly educated women are career-oriented and higher education increases the likelihood of their economic independence. Higher education of females has generally considered the primary means of delaying marriage. The likelihood of marriage at an earlier age is an increase for women lacking higher education. Therefore, education is a very important factor in determining the proper age of marriage. An increase in educational attainment not only significantly affects the age of marriage but it also affects the duration of the marriage. Marriage in early life often creates difficulties in married life. In some cases, the possibility of marriage for the less educated female is gradually declined with an increase in age, whereas for the highly educated it increases with an increase in age. Higher educational levels impact the age at marriage because higher studies consume approximately thirty years. People consider educated females for their marriage but should be younger than males. Lack of marriage proposals along with fertility issues faced by a female who marries at a later age. Highly qualified women are

career-oriented, and they are likely to get married after the establishment of a career. Late marriage helps women to become mentally mature and economically stable, therefore, stable relationships occur due to late marriage. Lack of education or less education results in mental and physical health problems as well as financial instability of family.

The selection of a spouse has never been overlooked by society as mate selection is the most important decision of anyone's life. Spouse selection criteria vary from society to society and culture to culture. Age factors, physical appearance, educational factors, religious factors, and economic factors usually focus on mate selection in Pakistan. Further, the process of mate selection is comprising several steps where a decision regarding spouse is made through external traits such as appearance, social class or manner, attitude, beliefs, and common values. Other factors determining mate selection include paternal and maternal preferences that predominantly prevailed more in Pakistani society. Spouse selection criteria of the highly qualified female are different from the general prevailing criteria for mate selection. Highly educated women are less likely to influence the physical attractiveness of spouses. The educational homogeneity, financial stability, responsible husband, and loyalty are the most important factors for the selection of spouses among Ph.D. university students. In addition to it, the age gap with spouse and spouse from their own community are considered as important factors for spouse selection.

9. Conclusion

The higher level of education of females significantly impacts marriage. Education shapes the personality of females in a way that they can easily bear the burden of marriage. It makes them capable of child-rearing in an effective manner. The highly educated female plays an essential role in the family as well as social life by bringing change in these two spheres. Additionally, they play a major role in the development of a country not only by preparing good citizens of the country, but also participate in the economic activities of a country.

The fact that education increase the timing or age at marriage cannot be ignored. Higher levels of education require almost 28 to 30 years of marriage. Marriage during education is not considered a good option in Pakistani females. So, highly educated female marries after completion of their higher studies. They focus to stabilize their career after achieving it as well as economic independence so that they cannot remain dependent on husband in this patriarchal society. There are different benefits of later marriage, but there are many issues as fertility issues are faced by the highly educated female after marriage.

The spouse selection criteria among Ph.D. students is based on economic condition, sincerity, and loyalty of spouse opposite to that of looks, smartness, body, etc. A responsible husband is also a trait for the spouse selection, amongst others. While physical attractiveness is considered unimportant for mate selection in highly educated females.

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APPENDIX

INTERVIEW GUIDE

Name:

Age:

University:

Marital Status:

Sexual Preference:

Employment:

Current Income:

Religious Affiliation:

Q. How do you perceive marriage?

Q. How did you perceive marriage 3-5 years ago?

Q. Generally define education and specifically higher education in your opinion?

Q. At what age would you prefer to marry and why?

Q. What is the best marriage age for a woman?

Q. What is the level of significance of marriage, education and career in your life?

Explain all the concepts both separately and comparatively.

Q. Up to what education level women continue education before getting married?

Q. What do you think the role education play in getting married?

Q. Do you think that the higher educational level of woman influences her marriageability or a barrier in getting married timely?

Q. In your adult life, do you value marriage as an imperative step?

Q. Do you want to get married?

- Q. Do you wish you were already married?
- Q. Do you think there is a connection between female education and marriage behavior?
- Q. If yes, how do you define the relationship between education and female marriage?
- Q. Do you think your higher education prevents you to get married?
- Q. Are you satisfied with your current marital status?
- Q. Do you ever feel a fear of remain single?
- Q. How do you feel about marriage as you move towards higher education?
- Q. Does your desire to get married get stronger, weaker or remain unchanged?
- Q. Do you prioritized higher education over marriage? If yes, why?
- Q. On what basis or reasons you choose a single status till now? Why do you think you are unmarried?
- Q. Do you think education and marital timing of females are interconnected? How?
- Q. Does your education have an impact on your choice of delaying marriage? If yes, what and how?
- Q. If no, what are the things you think prevent you from being currently married?
- Q. What is a marriageable man?
- Q. What are the preferable characteristics you want in your spouse?
- Q. What were the characteristics you wanted in your spouse 3-5 years ago?
- Q. Do you think your spouse selection criteria has changed with time? If yes, what are the possible reasons and experiences?
- Q. Do you think your criteria for spouse selection has changed with the attainment of higher education?
- Q. How do you like to select your spouse? Through which medium or way?

- Q. Do you ever consider matrimonial ads in the newspaper? What is your general perception of them?
- Q. How much age difference you prefer between you and your spouse?
- Q. When choosing a spouse, it is essential for him to have education as you?
- Q. Do you think that the educational level of a man influences his marriageability for women?
- Q. On which basis, usually you reject a marriage proposal?
- Q. On which basis, you are rejected from a marriage proposal?
- Q. Do you prefer a man with financial potential, Living background, Socio-economic status, caste, similar religious affiliation?
- Q. As you are getting a higher education, do you prefer to be the primary wage earner after being married?
- Q. What is your family views about your higher education and single status? Do they link both of them?
- Q. Do you feel pressure from family or society that due to your education you are unable to select a spouse?
- Q. What type of pressure you experience in your decision to delay marriage?
- Q. Does your education provides you the awareness that helps you to determine reasonable criteria for spouse selection?
- Q. Do you think your standards for selecting spouse increased with the increase in the educational level? If yes, how and why?

Q. It is a general perception that women after getting higher education have made unrealistic standards of mate selection so men cannot approach them, consequently they remained single. What are your views about it?