

**THE PRACTICE OF DOWRY AND ITS RELATED VIOLENCE IN DISTRICT  
SWAT**

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**ABSTRACT**

*This study aimed at finding the association of dowry practices in Pakhtun culture (dependent variable) with violence (independent variable). The study was conducted in three villages of District Swat, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. A sample size of 331 respondents was selected through simple random sampling. Data was collected on a three level likert scale interview schedule. The association of study variables was tested by using chi-square test statistics. The association of dowry practices in Pakhtun culture was found significant with dowry is the marriage phenomenon ( $p=0.000$ ), bride is often physically admonished when she did not bring dowry to her groom family in the marriage and dowry practices in pakhtun culture. ( $p=0.000$ ), bride mentally tortured for not accompanying the dowry along herself in the marriage( $p=0.000$ ), tussle between the marrying families is imminent in case of low or no dowry from the bride ( $p=0.000$ ), continuous fighting between the marrying families couple leads to separation ( $p=0.000$ ), consistence quarrels and infighting usually ends at divorce ( $p=0.000$ ), women with low or no dowry are seldom accepted as wife in-laws in the in-laws home( $p=0.000$ ), low dowry usually takes the married women to set in their fathers home due to least respect in the in-laws home ( $p=0.000$ ), due to fear of threats from groom the bride's family is compelled to give dowry on desired date and dowry practices in pakhtun culture.*

**Keywords:** Dowry, Culture, Violence, Practice

## INTRODUCTION

Dowry included not only cash payment rather also certain number of clothes for in-laws and other relatives. Dowry relates the provision of property, or gold ornaments etc. (Haveripeth, 2013). Dowry is usually consisted of number of things i.e. crockery, furniture, spoons, pillows, bedcovers etc. It could further be expected from the parents-in-law in the forms of car, motorbike or a built house (Tazeen & Ali, 2013). In case, when dowry is not offered by the bride then she is usually humiliated by her husband and as well as in-laws and often lead the spousal relationships to divorce (Sharma, 1993). When bride is divorced then it is very hard for her to remarry in and leading her to a hopeless life (Negi, 1997). The ritual is detained or held dependable for an amount of difficulties move out against the country's females. It may include comprising dowry payment though force or violence which may bride boiling or burning, and bride killing. Incident of violence and killings of spouses due to matters of dowry has the history earliest to be described in the early 1980's. Stories established of females who were scorched burned to passing to death, crushed or beaten and ill-treated, killed, and who committed suicide because of families-in-law whose ruthless treatment put the wives at stake, were linked to not bringing enough dowry. By 1994, the Household Monitory's Nationwide Crime Record Bureau clocked a 'dowry death is passing' at every 102 minutes in India (Sheel, 1999). In the current situation dowry method as it is practiced in India, it has become a tool of suffering for the wife and her parents and household (Gangrade and Chander, 1991). Majority of females are suffered from violence at domestic level and national level as they could not bring sufficient dowry along themselves. All segment of society do prefer dowry irrespective of their economic and education backgrounds. Although major class were found to be involved in demand for dowry and subsequent violence women with no or lesser amount of dowry, but people from lower and middle classes had high rate of involvement. Almost out of four women commit suicide. Almost forty percent of dowry had co relative with domestic violence in India. One of the most desired urged for dowry is the demanded for property by grooms family, which had gained the shape of a culture in Indian society (Kumari, 1989, Kelkar, 1992 and Rastogi and Therly, 2006). The demand for dowry has given impetus to the emergence of the culture of violence and torture, abusing of woman and demanded from the grooms family for high expenditure, lesser respect is extended to women with little dowry and always vulnerable to

subjective delinquencies and violence putting the women position to a number wrongdoings with each passing day (Banerjee, 1999, Haveripeth, 2013 and Singh, 2005). Wedding is a favorable sacred ceremonial which bonds two figures and depths into one and it's not only attachment of two persons but a durable bond that brings two clans or families organized according to their custom or culture in arranged weddings. Giving dowry is a necessary part of organized or arranged wedding in Baharat cultures. Dowry concern violence can happen rapidly or sometime after the wedding where the request of the dowry looks or seem to be dislikable to the husbands household or family. These forms of delinquency happen almost in the all cultures, it has no social group, class or the religion. As we are living in the 21st century, still females are physically or psychologically stressed or abused in a man ruling society like ours (Shetty & Rao, 2012).

### **LITERATURE REVIEW**

In the present time, female in Nepal are facing numerous difficulties like vehemence, child delinquency, poverty, insufficiency, joblessness, criminality, drug pushing, impunity, etc. Among these difficulties, violence against females in the form of national violence, rape, sexual misuse, trafficking is on increasing day by day. Among these, one violence which is extended towards female in Nepal is dowry related violence which is also deep rooted in our nation is the problem of dowry structure. The dowry method is one of the instances of ill abuse exercise to females in our society and has come to be a culture. Dowry is the currency, goods or status that wife brings to bridegroom household in her wedding. It was planned to deliver brides safety and elementary necessities but its meaning has different, Dowry present day can be well-defined as enforced economic and material arrangement to be paid by the parentages of the wife to the parents of the bridegrooms as a necessary situation of the wedding. It is one of the social immoral but still exercised in our society as a culture.

Dowry, social evil that exists in Nepali civilization is today attached with the social position and esteem of the household. Even the well-educated peoples or families start saving up for their daughter's wedding as soon as she is born. While in our culture when boy is born parents, in-laws are extremely joyful while when a baby girl is born that cheerfulness turns into sorrow and anxiety for the household members. The cause of several parents do not want to have daughter's or girls, is because of the form of dowry they will have to give for during her wedding, and the pressure they go through due to not ever finishing request or demands from her in-laws. The dowry system or approaches is reasonable to a massive range for child

wedding and differentiation against daughters or girls. The wife parentages have to accomplish the request of husband and it's not only of the marriage ceremony time or period and many areas. In several cases, husband family requests dowry in form of currency, motorcycle, jewels, etc. and when their requests are not fulfilled the females are psychologically, physically tortured and even murdered by their in-laws. The painful or cruel of dowry comes to notification in the civic eyes only afterward an innocent female lost her worth life. The incident comes in the social or electronic media and parents complain to police department when the torture given by the in-laws are insufferable or intolerable. Most of the happenings are unseen by the family due to terror or fear of losing esteem in the society and culture as well (Hayward, 2000).

## MATERIALS AND METHODS

This study was carried out in three villages namely Hazara, Guljaba and Maloch in District Swat, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Pakistan. Total population (House hold heads) of potential respondents came out to be 2400. For a population size of 2400 a sample size of 331 suffices as per criterion devised by Sekaran (2003). The study design was single-shot and data was collected through interview schedule covering both the variables. A conceptual framework was devised comprising of two study variables i.e. dowry practice in Pakhtun culture (Dependent Variable) and violence (Independent Variable) (Table 1). For the measurement of study variables the attitudinal statements were pooled from the existing literature and three level likert Scale was constituted for each study variable. The indexed dependent variable (dowry practice in Pakhtun culture) was cross tabulated with independent variable (Violence) to measure the association between study variables. Chi-square test was used to test the level of association between these variables at bi-variate Level.

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

**Table 1 Conceptual Frame Work**

Independent Variable	Dependent Variable
Violence	Dowry Practice in Pakhtun Culture

## Objectives of the Study

- To ascertain the degree of violence for not paying dowry in the study area
- To ascertain the various practices of dowry in Pakhtun culture
- To measure the association between violence and practices of dowry

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### FREQUENCY AND PERCENTAGE DISTRIBUTION ON THE BASIS OF VIOLENCE

Families have witnessed various kinds of violence and break up of relationship, whenever and in most cases whenever, the brides are denied little amount of dowry across Pakistan Pashtun culture, through consider women as human, but has also gone fluctuations in adopting the general culture of Pakistani society.

**Table No. 1.1. The Practice of Dowry and Violence**

S. No	Attribute	Yes	No	Uncertain	Table
1	Bride is often physically admonished when she did not bring dowry to her groom family in the marriage	199(60.1)	119(36.0)	13(3.9)	331(100)
2	Bride mentally tortured for not accompanying the dowry along herself in the marriage	266(80.4)	58(17.5)	7(2.1)	331(100)
3	Tussle between the marrying families is imminent in case of low or no dowry from the bride	246(74.3)	57(17.2)	28(8.5)	331(100)
4	Continuous fighting between the marrying families couple leads to separation	261(78.9)	55(16.6)	15(4.5)	331(100)
5	Consistence quarrels and infighting usually ends at divorce	208(62.8)	99(29.9)	24(7.3)	331(100)
6	Women with low or no dowry are seldom accepted as wife in-laws in the in-laws home	206(62.2)	104(31.4)	21(6.3)	331(100)
7	Low dowry usually takes the married women to set in their fathers home due to least respect in the in-laws home	171(51.7)	138(41.7)	22(6.6)	331(100)
8	Due to fear of threats from groom the bride's family is compelled to give dowry on desired date	145(43.8)	166(50.2)	20(6.0)	331(100)

Table 1.1 show that majority of the respondents 60.1% endorsed that bride is often physically admonished when she did not bring dowry to her groom family in the marriage.

Although, 36.0% negated the statement while 3.9% were neutral views about it. Further, majority of the respondents 80.4% were agreed to the statement that bride is mentally tortured for not accompanying the dowry along herself in the marriage. On contrary, 36.0% did not support it and 3.9% were found undecided about it. It has been a common practice in India and Pakistan (mostly in Punjab that women are forced to live a very hostile condition after marriage, when she could not bring a healthy dowry in kind and cash. She is often subjected to physical beating and public admonishing in certain case even they are burnt alive by taking the law into their hand Parentages give households items to their daughter or girl, so that she can be self-sufficient and currency so she can spend easily. These findings of the study were found in line with the work of both Saeed (2013) and Kumari (1989) elaborate that in case of low dowry, the bride is always exposed to inferior treatment subjected violence including not only in physical lives but in verbal and psychological maltreatment as well. The insufficient dowry was not acceptable for her in-laws and if the bridegroom family prefer high level dowry then the situation is to very critical for spouse and her family. Her husband even did not support her stay in his house due to low amount of dowry. These cases have been seen in subcontinent.

Similarly, majority of the respondents 74.3% had agreement to the statement that tussle between the marrying families is imminent in case of low or no dowry from the bride. On the other hand, 17.2% had opposed it and 8.5% had neutral views about it. These findings were in consonance to (Singh, 2005). Most of the cases have been seen in different places in India about the evil practices of dowry. Bridegroom's families had high expectation of dowry from the bride's families during at the marriage time. When she is unable bring sufficient dowry to bridegroom family, it led to the occurrence of tussle with in the marrying times, such tussles in some instance also lead to committing suicidal as part of the bride.

Table 1.1. further explored that majority of the respondents 78.9% admitted that continuous fighting between the marrying couple leads to separation. Although, 16.6% negated the statement and 4.5% were neutral to it. These findings are supported by Shetty and Rao, (2012). Who disclosed that tussle starts between in two families when the bride is unable to give enough dowries to her groom family. Some time she could face severe difficulties from her in-laws family because of the lower cost or no dowry those hand ships

include rape, sexual misuse and so on. Such practices, eventually ends at the terminative of relationship in the bridegroom family and starts living both at the present's home.

The data also disclosed that 62.8% divulged the statement that consistence in quarrels and infighting usually ends at divorce. While, 29.9% opposed the statement and 7.3% were unable to disclose the information. These findings had close resemblance to Hayward (2000). That due to least dowry or no dowry the situation gets dangerous for bride and bride family most of the cases in subcontinent because of the lower cost of dowry. Majority of the groom families have want more dowry and expectation,' from bride family at the time of marriage. When brides don't bringing enough dowries to their families a continuous occurrence fighting of gets starts between them, finally the bridegroom's families and ultimately ends at divorce. Likewise, majority of the respondents 62.2% disclosed that women with low or no dowry are seldom accepted as wife with in-laws home. While on the contrary, 31.4% negated the statement and 6.3% were uncertain. It could be in earthed from these findings that acceptance of bride without dowry though prevail but in low profiles as pointed out his Banerjee, (1999). In support to the earlier findings majority of the respondents 51.7% disclosed that low dowry usually takes the married women to set in their father's home due to least respect in the in-laws home. Similarly, 41.7% negated the statement and 6.6% had no idea.

These findings of the study are in support to Shetty and Rao, (2012), who found that large number of families wants the high level of dowry from brides and her families. When bride is unable to bring complete dowry could land the bride in troubles. These troubles come emanate in the shape of teasing, physical beating and psychological maltreatment including verbal accuses. The husband could also get indifferent in such cases, which eventually lead to her coming back to parents home. In addition, majority of the respondents 50.2% expressed themselves that due to fear of threats from groom the bride's family is compelled to give dowry on desired date. Correspondently, 43.8% were disagree to the statement and 6.0% had neutral views about it. Has explained in his study that Kumari, (1989). These types of cases have been seen in subcontinent and still existence when brides were not bringing enough or more dowries then these newly family was not acceptable.

# ASSOCIATION BETWEEN VIOLENCE AND DOWRY PRACTICES IN PAKHTUN CULTURE

From the last few decades dowry related violence has been increased in many societies including Pakistan. An insufficient dowry puts life of female at risks and they have been vulnerable to number eventualities at the groom's family. Relevant research studies attributed high rate of separation to the evil dowry practices.

**Table No. 1.2. Association between violence and dowry Practices in Pakhtun Culture**

Violence	Perception	Dowry Practices in Pakhtun Culture			Total	Chi-Square (P-Value)
		Yes	No	Uncertain		
Bride is often physically admonished when she did not bring dowry to her groom family in the marriage	Yes	166(8.4)	33(16.6)	00(0.00)	199(100.0)	X <sup>2</sup> =60.609 (0.000)
	No	106(89.1)	13(10.9)	00(0.00)	119(100.0)	
	Uncertain	3(25)	9(75)	1(8.3)	13(100.0)	
Bride mentally tortured for not carrying the dowry along herself in the marriage	Yes	227(85.3)	39(14.7)	00(0.00)	266(100.0)	X <sup>2</sup> =52.708 (0.000)
	No	45(77.6)	13(22.4)	00(0.00)	58(100.0)	
	Uncertain	3(42.9)	3(42.9)	1(14.3)	7(100.0)	
Tussle between the marrying families is imminent in case of low or no dowry from the bride	Yes	225(91.5)	21(8.5)	00(0.00)	246(100.0)	X <sup>2</sup> =74.956 (0.000)
	No	41(71.9)	16(28.1)	00(0.00)	57(100.0)	
	Uncertain	9(32.1)	18(64.3)	1(3.6)	28(100.0)	
Continuous fighting between the marrying families couple leads to separation	Yes	222(85.1)	39(14.9)	00(0.00)	261(100.0)	X <sup>2</sup> =37.330 (0.000)
	No	47(85.5)	8(14.5)	00(0.00)	55(100.0)	
	Uncertain	6(40.0)	8(53.3)	1(6.7)	15(100.0)	
Consistence quarrels and infighting usually ends at divorce	Yes	183(88.0)	25(12.0)	00(0.00)	208(100.0)	X <sup>2</sup> =69.134 (0.000)
	No	86(86.9)	13(13.1)	00(0.00)	99(100.0)	
	Uncertain	6(25.0)	17(70.8)	1(4.2)	24(100.0)	
Women with low or no dowry are seldom accepted as wife in-laws in the in-laws home	Yes	193(93.7)	13(6.3)	00(0.00)	206(100.0)	X <sup>2</sup> =84.059 (0.000)
	No	77(74.0)	27(26)	00(0.00)	104(100.0)	
	Uncertain	5(23.8)	15(71.4)	1(4.8)	21(100.0)	
Low dowry usually takes the married women to set in their fathers home due to least respect in the in-laws home	Yes	155(90.6)	16(9.4)	00(0.00)	171(100.0)	X <sup>2</sup> =27.758 (0.000)
	No	104(75.4)	34(24.6)	00(0.00)	138(100.0)	
	Uncertain	16(72.7)	5(22.7)	1(4.5)	22(100.0)	
Due to fear of threats from groom the bride's family is compelled to give dowry on desired date	Yes	129(89.0)	16(11.0)	00(0.00)	145(100.0)	X <sup>2</sup> =25.042 (0.000)
	No	134(80.7)	32(19.3)	00(0.00)	166(100.0)	
	Uncertain	12(60.0)	7(35.0)	1(5)	20(100.0)	



A high significant association ( $p=0.000$ ) was established between bride is often physically admonished when she did not bring dowry to her groom family in the marriage and dowry practices in pakhtun culture. The fate of a married women is uncertain, if she has not brought enough dowry along her middle and class brides had chances of vulnerability to their uncertainty they included their beating and hostile attitude at grooms family. These reports were supported by Chander (1991) and Kumari (1989). That, number of bridegroom families has desired more dowries for her from her parents. Most middle or lower class households were selecting a high class girl only for dowries even if she not is beautiful. When she did not bring sufficient dowry then brides were facing, different type violence in her in-laws home. The present dynamics of dowry is originated in India. Low dowry could generate sufferings for brides in the house of groom. These findings included physical beating low feeling and other type of violence in social mental and physical manifestation including verbal teasing. However, the demand for dowry is still in prevalence in the most parts of sub- continent. Medium class families 55% and 33% which is quite worrying such sufferings have also a direct manifestation in low happiness low prestige inferiority in treatment in the social fabrics of life.

Correspondingly, high significant relation ( $p=0.000$ ) was confirmed between bride mentally tortured for not accompanying the dowry along herself in the marriage and dowry practices in pakhtun culture. All those women, who don't accompany themselves a huge dowry, are highly prone to violence. This assumption is for all cultures prevailing in the area including Pashtun culture as reported by Sheel, (1999). That majority of females had been seen in Pashtun culture, suffering from in-laws on account of lower cost of dowry. They were mentally subjected to violence in their newly home and are tolerating the various kinds of violence like, mental, physical and verbal.

Likewise, a high significant association ( $p=0.000$ ) was found between tussle between the marrying families is imminent in case of low or no dowry from the bride and dowry practices in pakhtun culture. Low amount of dowry has always become a reason of conflict and time of contention between the marrying families. Low amount of dowry but not necessitates be a harbinger of cordial relationship with in-laws. These results were discovered by Banerjee (2013) and Banerjee (1999). That when bride did not or bring low dowry then that situation could be very toys and hostile for her and bride parents as well.

This is due to in because most of Pashtun people have wanted an anticipated amount of valuables dowries from her family. A social doctrine, pertaining to this essential aspect of life, married women could undergo a number of hostile circumstances, including forcing to commit suicide ever. It has been reported that almost-8618 women faced a detrimental end to their marital life in 2013 above this statistics may go to extreme member, if continued for a decade and would be horrible in ramification provided agonies associated it, were taken into account. Similarly, a high significant association ( $p=0.000$ ) was detected between continuous fighting between the marrying families couple leads to separation and dowry practices in pakhtun culture. Infighting between the married couple is not a good woman to a stable family set up. It usually shades the mutual trust and replaced with distrust and prevalence of doubt upon one another. Moreover, such uncertain situation, could even, not be cordial and conducive to the kids brought up. These results were in lines to Shetty and Rao (2012). That numbers of brides were sitting in their parents' home due to lower paying dowries and still these cases have existences in Pashtun culture. When male and female gets married it would certainly indicate towards a cohesive land of relationship between her married families which as culture obligation well. Dowry one of the marriage practice, is displaying a ceremonial and emotional attachment to this practice (marriage). Dowry contributes in two dimension, stability and instability to marrying couples. Low dowry makes disliked by the marriage instable and volatile, whenever, high amount of dowry signifies a standard everlasting relationship. This phenomenon is so strong that development in social, economic and industrial patterns of life, could even not after its social impacts over families and clan in 21 century in India.

Likewise, a high significant association ( $p=0.000$ ) was established between consistence quarrels and infighting usually ends at divorce and dowry practices in pakhtun culture. It goes even beyond separation and usually end ups at divorce, when mechanics of marriage consist all the time of marriage fail to deliver. Sidra (2015) also revealed. That these cases have been seen with poor brides they have no potential to paying more dowries then bridegroom families were making excuses for brides and finally divorced then due to no or low dowries associated to bride only. A woman is proven to divorce, when she failed to bring an acceptable amount of dowry in relative terms. In most of the cases the reality of consequent and blood relationship does not coincide with the assumption of stability to marrying couples. Most of the brides, after separation or divorce, start living with their

parents. She prefers looking at another opportunity to cease for a marriage, for which start from the basics again (Tazeen, 2013).

In the same way, a highly significant association ( $p=0.000$ ) was confirmed between Women with low or no dowry are seldom accepted as wife in-laws in the in-laws home and dowry practices in pakhtun culture. These reports were also explored by Rao (2012). Who concluded that a few cases had been seen regarding in sufficient or no dowry on put of marriages when her life is going very well these families provided a good and congenial attitudes prevail about bride and her beauty. These factors may include her background in caste and social standing perspectives, which is still in prevalence in pakhtun cultures. However, Nepali social and economic dynamics are in liaison with social position of a person and his/her household possessions. Most of the educated and well off people start saving for their daughter's marriage soon upon her birth. In some of pakhtun culture, a son is preferred over a daughter through explicit feelings associated to their birth; a male is cheered and celebrated, while a woman in existence is expressed with sorrow and grief. A grim reality of woman birth is significantly associated to the foreseeing cost of marriage and her volatile to get- adjusted in her laws after marriage. This fragility could be the due to dowry demand either low or more (Hayward, 2000).

Correspondingly, a high significant relation ( $p=0.000$ ) was found between low dowry usually takes the married women to set in their fathers home due to least respect in the in-laws home and dowry practices in pakhtun culture. Dowry practice had been increased in Pashtun culture and growing day by day with high indications amongst- majority of the families, at the time of marriage. When bride didn't bring desired amount of dowry then her in laws family give least esteem on account of low dowry. The Reports were revealed to Kelkar (1992). Successfully explored through pictures research studies that every 1/5 women is proven to suicide due to enormous psychological stress and vulnerability to physical torture. Torture of the female is associated with non-provision of jewelry, gifts and other daily use items. Indian history is rich of women violence soon after marriage. All such cases were directly related to dowry related disputes particularly focusing on property shift through dowry. Similarly, a high significant association ( $p=0.000$ ) was established between due to fear of threats from groom the bride's family is compelled to give dowry on desired date and dowry practices in pakhtun culture. In this regard, several evidences also increase the chances of quarrel and infighting between husband and wife and wife and other relatives of

the groom. Such cases also included verbal teasing and violence of different mode and manifestation. Such fear of insecurity and instability could trigger end up of this vital land of human life. The dowry in cash and kind may include giving of gifts, jewels. However, non-fulfillment of such desirous demands could land a women in psycho- social imbalance, which often them the social equilibrium of the family life (Hayward, 2000).

### **CONCLUSION**

On the basis of the results it is concluded that dowry has very serious and unexpected consequences. People adjudged the dowry as a significant tool of strength to the newly established bonds (marriage) by reducing the chances of separation and divorce while giving a social boast to marrying woman in her in laws. The study further revealed that non-payment or low dowry could put the life of a woman at stake with high chances of exposure to physical and verbal abuses, mental torture, tussle between marrying families, and continuous infighting with lowest chances of stability for her at her in laws home. The consequences of not paying dowry were found very serious and intolerable due to the social acceptability of prevalent practice of the ill-custom.

### **RECOMMENDATIONS**

There are following recommendations are made on the basis of study findings.

- Society needs to assume the matter very seriously that how the practice of paying dowry is immoral for poor families.
- Government has to pass act or law to eliminate the so-called practice of dowry and victim is to be guaranteed with security and culprit is to be punished with heavy fine/charge.
- Local Mashraans (community elders) rationally decide whether dowry practice has roots in our religious basis.
- Lawyers are obliged to explain the practice of dowry in the light of legal principles in order to halt the practice of dowry.

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