

AN EXAMINATION OF THE KASHMIR DIVISION, THE HAZARDS ASSOCIATED WITH LATE MARRIAGE, AND THE CAUSES AND EFFECTS ON SOCIETIES

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ABSTRACT

The social norm that permits two people of different genders to cohabit is marriage, not only the formal union of a man and a woman. As a result, it upholds the social order by establishing the family unit. The practice of delayed marriages has become more and more common in Kashmiri society during the past 20 to 35 years. The rise in late marriage is among the most concerning trends in Kashmiri society in recent years. Regarding marriage, a significant portion of Kashmir's male and female population has reached marriageable age and is above 50. Marriage is the social norm that allows people of different genders to live together, not just the official union of a man and a woman. Consequently, it creates the family unit, which maintains the social order. In Kashmiri society, postponed marriages have grown in popularity over the previous 20 to 35 years. The increasing prevalence of late marriage in Kashmiri society in recent times is one of the most alarming trends. In terms of marriage, a large proportion of Kashmir's male and female population is currently above 50 years old and has reached marriageable age. According to a recent poll by the nonprofit organisation Falahul Muslimeen, about 50,000 women in Kashmir are older than the typical marriageable age.

Keywords: Late marriages in Kashmiri society: reasons, impacts, and implications.

OVERVIEW

A marriage is a legally binding agreement between two people that is accepted by society, customs, or both. It serves as the cornerstone for the family's rise to prominence as a vital social unit and the cornerstone of a strong community. Marriage has certain basic norms that are widely considered to be followed for it to be functional for society in the genuine sense, even though the customs and traditions associated with it vary among communities. They include the age requirement to become a member of this significant organization, which was either set too early in the past or set too late in the present. Marriage and the family have undergone significant transformation in both industrialised and emerging nations in recent decades. In recent decades, new patterns have emerged, like mixed-race families and an increase in divorce rates. The distribution of family structures throughout economic and social groups changed during this period as deliberate childlessness rose and fertility declined. Significant changes in women's social status and roles in society have coincided with this revolution in values. Like any other nation, Kashmir has seen an impact from modernity, materialism, and cultural diffusion on the average age of marriage. New trends have surfaced in the last few decades, such as the rise in divorce rates and mixed-race households. During this time, intentional childlessness increased and fertility decreased, causing a shift in the distribution of family structures across economic and social groups. This revolution in values has corresponded with significant changes in women's roles and social standing in society. The average age of marriage in Kashmir has been impacted, like in any other country, by modernization, materialism, and cultural dispersion. The acquisition of a respectable job and a greater social standing comes first and foremost. For this reason, both men and women, but mainly men, devote a significant portion of their lives to finishing postsecondary education, followed by a brief period of work. Another significant factor in Kashmir's late marriage rate is the dowry system. The Tehreek-e-Fahalluh-Muslimeen Trust performed a survey in the downtown area of Srinagar in 2016 and 2017. The results showed that around 10,000 girls had reached or exceeded marriageable age, but their parents were unable to provide a dowry. A terrible and cruel reality is that educated people are also expected to pay dowry. A significant financial burden is placed on marital rituals, in addition to the dowry scheme, by the exchange of presents such copperware, jewellery, wazwans, and other items. The requirement of dowry by educated individuals is regrettable and inhumane. A significant financial burden is placed on marital rituals, in addition to the dowry scheme, by the exchange of presents such copperware, jewellery, wazwans, and other items. The awful and harsh truth is that educated individuals are also expected to contribute to dowries. In addition to

the dowry system, the exchange of gifts such gold, wazwans, and copperware adds a substantial financial burden to marriage customs. The sad and cruel thing about educated people is that they demand dowries. In addition to the dowry system, the exchange of gifts such gold, wazwans, and copperware adds a substantial financial burden to marriage customs. The terrible and unpleasant reality is that educated people are also required to pay dowries. The exchange of presents such gold, wazwans, and copperware, in addition to the dowry system, significantly increases the financial burden of marriage rituals. The desire for dowries by educated individuals is a sad and nasty trait. The exchange of presents such gold, wazwans, and copperware, in addition to the dowry system, significantly increases the financial burden of marriage rituals. The awful and sad truth is that those with education must also contribute to dowries. The cost of marital customs is significantly increased by exchanging gifts such gold, wazwans, and copperware in addition to the dowry system. It is a sad and ugly characteristic of educated people to want dowries. The cost of marital customs is significantly increased by exchanging gifts such gold, wazwans, and copperware in addition to the dowry system. As a result, late marriage deepens the generational divide and heightens disagreements over beliefs, values, and perspectives. The connection between a husband, wife, and child in a household may suffer as a result of this generation gap.

OBJECTIVES

- To research late marriage's causes and effects in Kashmir.
- To research the effects of modernization, destructive norms and traditions, and a generally irreligious mindset on the rise in the average wedding age.

TECHNIQUES

Primary and secondary data are also used in this study. The primary data was gathered through a scheduled interview process based on random sampling. The study also concluded secondary data from a select group of well-known members of Kashmiri culture and welfare organizations to learn about their perspectives and cross-reference or validate them with the research findings. Data was also gathered from government and census statistics, as well as reports from research cells and NGOs, as background information to create the study's backdrop.

REASONS BEHIND A LATE MARRIAGE:

When an individual reaches adulthood in all spheres of life (mentally, financially, religiously, and physically) but remains single, it's usually because they are unmarried or for some other reason. This circumstance is known as "late marriage." For a young man and woman, choosing "the right one" to marry will be a difficult decision that fills them with much doubt. More and more late-married couples are experiencing infertility, as the medical establishment in Kashmir has recently warned the public. When someone matures psychologically, financially, religiously, and physically yet stays single, it's typically because they're not married or for some other reason. We refer to this situation as "late marriage." A young man and woman will have many doubts and struggle to decide who "the right one" is to marry. The medical community in Kashmir has recently alerted the public about the growing number of late-married couples who are facing infertility. It's usually because they're single or for some other reason when someone matures physically, financially, mentally, and religiously but remains unmarried. We call this kind of relationship "late marriage." A young man and woman will struggle to choose "the right one" to marry since they will be plagued with doubts. Recently, the medical community in Kashmir has made the public aware of the rising incidence of infertile late-married couples.

LATE MARRIAGE'S AFTEREFFECTS:

In the twenty-first century, late marriage is becoming the norm. Many factors, such as women's increased educational attainment and financial stress, are causing people to marry later in life. Even though it's a personal decision, getting married later in life might have drawbacks. Matching late has adverse effects. People are unable to synchronize their actions and routines because of this. Parents might now delay their children's development and have insufficient contact with them. It's best to avoid getting married later in life to avoid these harmful consequences.

- The most significant effect on children's development is the age difference.
- Socially and familiarly, late marriage is harmful. With their offspring, they might not share the same generation. Moreover, the children still need to go to school even when their parents are going to retire. The children who have a source of income would still receive financial support.
- Even though children are at a significant risk of developing Down syndrome, delayed marriage is a serious issue. The fundamental cause of the generational divide is a lack of connectivity. A

generation gap may also arise in a household with a restricted age group if there is minimal connectivity. Aside from the previously mentioned, late marriages eventually lead to the collapse of the normative structure and serve as the primary source of "waywardness" in society. Young people who have had their marriages postponed swimming with wheels, running with the air, soaring with the sky, and sleeping in the clouds. There is a great deal of wind and strain right now. Marriage is therefore seen as a half-faith (eemaan) in Islam, absolving followers of immodesty and immorality. Identifying and educating society about the various causes and impacts of this societal issue is necessary. Similar to their function in the case of lousy child marriages, academics and members of civil society, along with the active participation of the public, have a significant role.

- The results of a second study, "Youth in India2022," released by the Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation revealed that Jammu and Kashmir has seen a rise in marriageable age. According to the survey, 29.1% of its young people were single. Other problems, such as infertility, have been caused by the aforementioned wickedness. The 2019–2021 National Family Health Survey results revealed this problem. At 1.4, it was stated that Jammu & Kashmir had the lowest fertility rate overall in India. Therefore, it is imperative that we combat the malevolent factors causing late marriages before they enslave everyone.

RESULTS

In Kashmir, the average age of marriage has increased from twenty-four to thirty-two years old for men and from twenty-one to twenty-eight years old for women over the last two to three decades. This is an amateurish condition. The growing number of young people experiencing instability and despair is a severe cause for concern. It deteriorates the mental, psychological, and physical aspects of all three parts of a balanced life. There isn't a specific element linked to the delayed marriage of either gender. During the past two to three decades, the average age of marriage in Kashmir has risen from twenty-four to thirty-two years old for men and from twenty-one to twenty-eight years old for women. This state is unprofessional. Concern should be expressed about the increasing number of young people who are dealing with instability and hopelessness. It weakens the physical, psychological, and mental facets of a well-rounded existence. There isn't a particular factor associated with either gender's delayed marriage. The shift in social norms from the shared family to the nuclear family has also contributed to this unhealthy process. In nuclear homes, girls' careers are highly prized. They are instructed not to rely on their spouses for sustenance and to be self-sufficient. This unhealthy process has also

been exacerbated by the shift in social norms from the shared family to the nuclear family. The careers of girls are highly valued in nuclear families. They are told to be self-sufficient and not depend on their husbands for food. Tradition is significant in addition to that. A man's parents (bridegroom) demand dowry, which the bride's family labours for years to acquire, ultimately resulting in a delayed marriage.

RECOMMENDED

- To raise awareness of the detrimental effects of marriage at a later age, the media ought to highlight these effects.
- In order to help disadvantaged and jobless youth get married, the government ought to give them some financial support.
- When a child reaches a suitable age, parents should let them get married.
- In this way, community leaders, non-governmental organisations, and religious institutions may all play a significant role in eradicating the negative effects of late marriage from our society.
- To create awareness via online, offline programmers/seminars at social, educational and civil platforms.

CONCLUSION

Kashmir's social fabric has been severely impacted by the recent surge of late marriages, putting the area on the verge of a social catastrophe. In Kashmir, severe famine, unemployment, dowries, modern education, and over 20 years of conflict are some of the critical causes of late weddings. Since the caste system in Kashmir is based on occupations and can prevent intercaste marriages, the dynamics of caste there differ slightly from those of the caste system in India. There are psychological, social, and biological ramifications to late weddings. The trend has had terrible consequences, including psychiatric problems, suicides, drug usage, pre- and non-marital relationships, sex scandals, and a decline in divorce rates, according to a new paper by Kashmir University. Pre-marital sex, mental depression, an increase in the suicide rate, a decrease in the number of people in families, and a drop in family size are some of the consequences of late marriages, according to the survey. In the Kashmiri community, men marry at an actual average age of 31.53 years, which is significantly older than the 23.6-year median. Compared to the predicted 20.7 years, the average age at which females marry is currently 27.8 years old. Since Kashmir's youth are often of marriageable age, the political unrest in the valley

has a significant impact on the delay in marriages in the region. The bulk of these poor people in Kashmir are dependent on their parents due to rising unemployment rates, and they are afraid of burdening their families by getting married and taking on more responsibilities. The offspring of these families are also being significantly impacted by the pattern of late marriages in Kashmir, including genetic problems like Down syndrome. Many congenital abnormalities have been found in the Kashmiri community as a consequence of recent research conducted by the Sheri-Kashmir Institute of Medical Sciences (SKIMS). These abnormalities are most likely the outcome of mid-wife marriages. The children of people who marry later in life tend to have the highest prevalence of Down syndrome. The onus of resolving the issue of late marriage in Kashmir rests primarily with faith organizations. People must know the dangers of delaying marriage and the benefits of getting married at a respectable age. NGOs and other organizations ought to organize grassroots initiatives and provide financial assistance to those in need. The government should also give them financial support to avoid making young women wait long to get married. The benefits of getting married at a respectable age and the risks of postponing marriage must be known to the public. NGOs and other organizations are responsible for planning community-based projects and giving financial support to needy individuals. Additionally, financial support from the government is necessary to prevent young women from having to wait a long time to get married. The dowry system should be challenged by strict legislation.

Late marriage and its terrible effects might be discussed in publications and on social media. And last, it is the responsibility of every Kashmiri to reject all customs and norms that have made marriage unaffordable and prohibitive for the lower and middle classes. There comes a point at which the demographics of Kashmir itself could be threatened if the trend of late marriage continues.

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