

Economic Imperatives of Marriage: Emerging Practices among Youth in Kashmir

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Abstract—Today's era is an era of youths. Due to the nature of the demographic transitions, the youths are indulged in late marriages all over India especially in J&K. Nowadays, delay of marriages became a norm due to certain reasons like dowry, unemployment, poverty etc. It has also been observed that more males are practicing late marriages than girls because of religious beliefs. The financial costs surrounding marriage like (dowry, jewellery, clothes, food etc) themselves may be the reason of late marriage as these youths and their parents wait for years to accumulate the huge sum needed to marry. It has been found that 10 percent are practicing marriage below 25 years and 34-40 are practicing marriage between 25 to 35 years and the rest are practicing above 30 years.

Keywords: Marriage, Youth, Kashmir, Demography.

Introduction

Marriage is the single most important economic transaction and social transition not only in the lives of young people but also in the lives of old people who lost their life partners by any reason. Very little is known about the economics of marriage in much of the developing world. This paper examines the economic imperatives of marriage in Jammu and Kashmir. Marriage can be understood as the basic social and economic unit which joins two families together. It marks the transition to adulthood (Hoodfar 1997; Singerman and Ibrahim 2003). Even the words used to describe females pivot on marriage. Females are girls until they marry, and then women (Sadiqi 2003). Adult roles, including engaging in sex, childbearing, and independent living are essentially exclusively reserved for married individuals (El Feki 2013; Hoodfar 1997; Singerman and Ibrahim 2003). The quantity of resources invested in this vital transition often exceeds than any other inter-generational transfer including inheritances (Singerman and Ibrahim 2003). New empirical evidence is presented on the economic imperatives of marriage and explaining how individuals characteristics and ability to pay shape bargaining power and marriage outcomes, including age at marriage, marriage costs, consanguinity, and nuclear residence.

Although marriage has always been one of the most important contracts and opportunities for wealth transfer in an individual's life, marriage was not traditionally the subject of

economic analysis as it seems nowadays. The gains from marriage, based in part on complementary spousal labour, also encompass the quantity and quality of children resulting from the union. There are other costs recognizes the inherent uncertainty in selecting a spouse and search costs. Marriage outcomes are determined through bargaining between two families rather than two individuals. Asymmetric rights favour men once the marriage has taken place. While engagements can be broken off by both sides, divorce, although uncommon, is easily initiated by men, but more difficult to obtain for women. If it occurs, divorce is much more harmful for women, both socially and economically. Marriage is not just a physical union. It is also a spiritual as well as emotional bond.

Importance of marriage

The following points can clear the importance of marriage:-

1. Marriage is the beginning of the family and whole life commitment. It also provides an opportunity to grow in selflessness as you serve your wife and children and enhance the relationship with new people. It also becomes the support for living the life in the old age.
2. When two persons get married, the one becomes clothes for the other so two become one. Marriage is a bond between wife and husband which remains for whole for life. It gives us such a life partner which always remains shoulder to shoulder to compete the challenges of life at all times..
3. Marriage is designed for purity. We face temptation from all sides. The bond of marriage gives us the support to defeat temptation by engaging in deep, satisfying love—a love that gives to, and receives from, our mate physically, emotionally, and spiritually.
4. When a marriage produces a child or receives a child through adoption, it is one of life's greatest blessings.. The effects of that fact are staggering. Father absence causes increases in mental and behavioral disorders as well as criminal activity and substance abuse. But when children

are raised in a healthy marriage, they get a front row seat to see and experience the lasting benefits of a strong family.

5. Marriage is designed to mirror our creator's unconditional love for us. It is a love that will always be there and will never leave us or forsake us. When a man and woman love one another unconditionally, contentment and joy follow. Through statistical, economic, political, and anthropological data, this paper first highlights the financial pressures that marriage places on young people and their families. The paper argues that we must conceptualize the political economy of youth through the lens of the "marriage imperative" because the financial investment in marriage takes years to accumulate and influences other key transitions of adolescence, including schooling, employment, education, and identity formation.

Review of Literature

Some of the topics had drawn particular attention and focus on trends such as the age at marriage which has been increasing and prevalence of marriage, which has been relatively universal in the region, especially in contrast to areas such as South Africa (Eltigani 2000; Mensch 2005; Nosseir 2003; Salem n.d.). While the median age at marriage has been rising, this phenomenon has been met with mixed feelings, as delays in marriage also delay adult roles, and create a period of 'wait adulthood' or 'waithood' (Dhillon et al. 2009; Singerman 2007). Although there has been a popular portrayal of marriage as a declining and increasingly expensive institution in the region (El Feki 2013; Salem n.d.) as we show below, there is limited empirical support for such claims. The costs of marriage have also received some, primarily descriptive, attention in the literature (Nosseir 2003; Salem n.d., 2011; Singerman and Ibrahim 2003; Singerman 2007), as have issues such as nuclear residence (Nosseir 2003; Salem, n.d.; Singerman 2007). Finally, the high consanguinity levels in North Africa have received some attention in both the economic demography and health literatures (Ben Halim et al. 2013; Casterline and El-Zeini 2003; Elbadawy 2007; Mensch 2005; Mokhtar and Abdel Costs of marriage). The costs of marriage are the most substantial investment young North Africans make. These costs have been identified as a substantial contributor to the delay in age of marriage, and a barrier to adult life (Amin and Al-Bassusi 2004; Assaad et al. 2010; Assaad and Ramadan 2008; Dhillon et al. 2009; Rashad et al. 2005; Singerman 2007). One way to quantify the costs of marriage is in terms of how many months of earnings it would take a groom to cover the entire up-front costs of the marriage. (Fattah 2001). This has been welcome news to many policy makers who targeted early marriage as particularly detrimental to the relative power, education, and labour force participation of women. Improving women's education and labour force participation rates also were instrumental to declines in fertility and improvements in maternal health (Ali 2002).

1. OBJECTIVES

1. To assess the costs on marriage in Kashmir.
2. To examine the reasons for late marriages.

Methodology

Both primary and secondary data has been used for collecting the data. Primary data has been collected through a well framed questionnaire and Secondary data has been collected from Directorate of Economic and Statistics and Internet etc.

Sample

The Simple random sampling technique has been used to draw a sample of 20 respondents from the District Srinagar. All the respondents were married. Due representation has been given to both males and females.

Analysis of data

Cost components

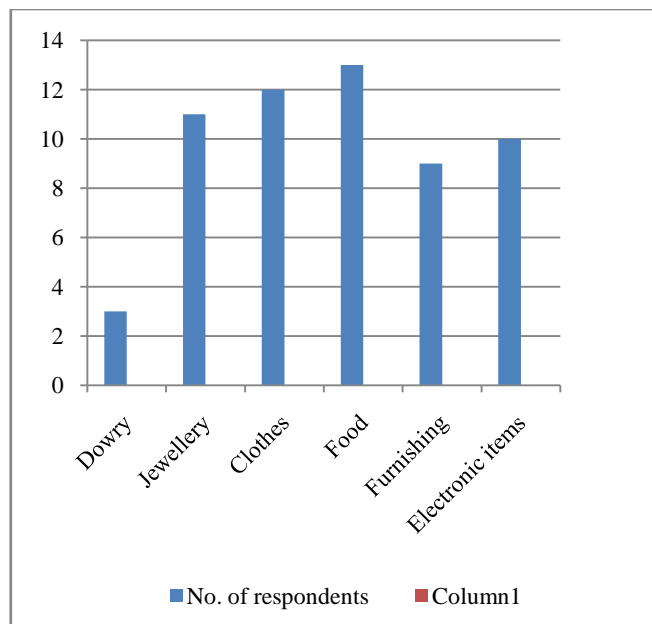
The cost components involved in the marriages in Kashmir which became burden for late marriage are depicted in the following Table 1

Table 1

Cost components	No. of respondents	Percentage
Dowry	3	15%
Jewellery	11	55%
Clothes	12	60%
Food	13	65%
Furnishing	9	45%
Electronic items	10	50%

Source: Field survey

Table 1 reveals that food is most burden factor for causing late marriage among youth, as 65 percent respondent are in favour of this cause. Further 15 percent respondents have shown dowry as the problem of the marriages, 60 percent respondents have shown clothes as the reason. Simultaneously 50 percent have shown electronic items as the reason and last percent i.e., 45 percent have shown furnishing as problem. The above analysis can be explained with help of following diagram



Cost on marriage

Average amount of money spend on each item of single marriage in the study area has shown in Table 2

Table 2

Items	Male Families rs in lac.	Female Families
Jewellery	3	2
Clothes	0.50	1
Food	3.5	4
Furnishing	2.5	1.5
Electronic items	0.25	1
Others	0.80	0.60
Total	10.55	10.05

Source : Field survey

Table 2 reveals the average amount of money spend on each family on single marriage of their child. It is clear from the table that maximum costs are borne by male families as compared to female families. It shows the gap of 50 thousand rupees between the families. The average cost of male families is 10.55 lakhs and female families is 10.05 lakhs. The table further reveals that maximum costs are incurred on food items and the least costs are on electronic items from the male families and others on female families. Age at marriage of sample respondents in the study area

Age at Marriage

The Table 3 shows the age span of different respondents in the study area.

Table 3

Age at Marriage	No. of respondents	Percentage
20-25	2	10
25-30	4	20
30-35	7	35
35-40	6	30
40 above	1	5
Total	20	100

Source: Field survey

Table 3 reveals that majority of the respondents practicing marriage at an age 30-35 i.e., 35 percent of respondents, 30 percent are practicing marriage between 30-35 years. 20 percent manage marriage between 25-30 years and 5 percent above 40 years.

Summary and findings

1. There is only sample of 20 respondents in the study area.
2. The main cost components are food, jewellery, clothes, dowry, electronic items, furnishing and others which are included in the paper.
3. Maximum costs are involved on food items i.e., 65 percent and least costs are spent on electronic items i.e., 50 percent.

Conclusion

In the sequel, we can say that marriage is the most important relationship between two people and two families. The connotations of marriage varies around the world not only between cultures and between religions, but also throughout the history of any given cultures and religion, evolving to both expand and constrict in and who and what is encompassed, but typically it is principally an institution in which interpersonal relationships, usually sexual, are acknowledged or sanctioned.

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