

Antecedents and Consequences of Elopement in Pakistani Society: A Qualitative Exploration

Binish Ikhlq¹, Dr. Shehla A. Yasin², Dr. Gull-I-Hina³, Dr. Aftab Anwar⁴, Amna Ilyas⁵

1. Binish Ikhlq

Lecturer, University of Poonch, Rawalakot, Kahuta Haveli Campus. binishikhlaq000@gmail.com

2. Dr. Shehla A. Yasin

Assistant Professor, Department of Gender & Development Studies, Lahore College for Women University, Lahore. shehlahmad@gmail.com

3. Dr. Gull-I-Hina

Assistant Professor, Department of History, Lahore College for Women University, Lahore. gul.Hina@lcwu.edu.pk

4. Dr. Aftab Anwar

Assistant Professor, Department of Economics, Division of Management and Administrative Science, University of Education Lahore. aftab.anwar@ue.edu.pk

5. Amna Ilyas

Research Scholar, University of Sargodha, amnailyas233@gmail.com

Abstract- *Elopement is an alternative form of marriage practice in Pakistan other than love and arranged marriage. It is ratio has been increasing under the male dominated structure where the head of the family is entitled to select a spouse for their children. Youngsters have no say in selecting their spouse or companion. At times they make decision to escape to espouse their chosen companion without informing their parents which is known as eloped marriage. This paper is enclosed under qualitative research, which aimed to identify or highlight the factors and reasons behind elopement. What kind of impact this marriage has on an eloped couple's forthcoming life and what type of consequences they have to face after marriage? We also aim to analyze that are factors and reasons of elopement differ based on geographical location? Therefore the sample for interviews was taken from multicultural city Lahore and half were taken from Haveli, Azad Kashmir. In depth interviews sample was (n=8) 3 females and 5 males. Thematic Analysis (TA) was used to investigate the collected information. The results reveals that endogamy, social structure, media, parental disapproval and siblings' influence are factors and reasons which initiate the thought of elopement in young individuals. Marriage by elopement becomes a source of damage to the social status of the couple especially for women. As a consequence the women and their families are publicly perceived as dishonorable and characterless.*

Key Words: Elopement, Marriage, Endogamy

I. INTRODUCTION

There is a general social belief in society to standardize the life through marriage institution, where two people can form a family to practice social arrangements. Marriage is considered a standard procedure to validate a family structure (Sheikl, Rehman & Naz, 2013). Constructing a family and marriage is not the same in different civilizations and cultures. Particularly, in the three sub states of Asia where customary familial structure and traditions vary (Retherford et al., 2002). Marital proceedings in different cultural groups and nations vary highly. In Pakistan three conjugal types are exercised. Arranged marriage is the marital type where parents choose life partner for their children. Then love marriage with parent's consent and third is love marriage without parent's consent which is also known as elopement (Arif & Fatima, 2015). Elopement is the marriage which couples perform without parental permission and after running away from their homes (Merriam Webster dictionary, 2017). Generally in Asian countries elopement is considered an indecent and immoral act. On the other hand, elopement in Philippines is acknowledged as an authorized marital institution which general public mainly follows. Young couples get together, elope from their houses for a number of days with the aim to secure forceful approval from their parents (Retherford et al., 2002).

In Pakistan family network is entirely patriarchal where usually men are considered as family head who have control and authority over any kind of decisions (Habiba, Ali & Ashfaq, 2016). In patriarchal based cultures, the life partner of youngsters are selected by head of the family members exclusively and autonomously. Children usually do not have a say in selecting their spouse. At times they prefer to run away and get married without their family's consent which is recognized as elopement. The incidence of abduction and elopement are two diverse notions but generally are used comparatively. Although elopement befall when adults run away and get married without their family's consent, abduction is while female get married without her consent after taken hostage (Doubt, 2012). Mostly when elopement happens people have no clue if the woman got abducted or she ran away with someone willingly. Some confidently proclaimed that they eloped but a few woman fervently try to paint their run away as kidnapping so they can verbally recover their flawed reputation (Hart, 2010). As a result of elopement females experience negative development in their social reputation. Regarding eloped marriages girls deal with precarious aftermaths as their social standing turns into unethical and corrupt. Run away marriages affect females public reputes from being unmarried to marital status which is at the same time disarranging and rearranging her life (Doubt, 2012). In different areas of Pakistan eloped marriage or love marriage without parent's consent is cumulatively a rising concept (Sheikl, Rehman & Naz, 2013). Despite that, generally there is disparity among parents and children regarding spouse selection which results in elopement. Usually it has been observed that elopers are mostly youngsters in of age 20 for boys and 15 for girls (Naz, et al., 2015).

Status of elopement in Pakistan

Contrast of marital practice revealed that there occurs a dissimilarity in conjugal contentment established on the base of the marriage type. The percentage of love marriages done with family's rejection is extensively lesser than the percentage of weddings done with parent's consent (Arif & Fatima, 2015). In Pakistani beliefs and culture eloped marriages are generally not admissible for instance in Chitral it's considered a disgrace if an individual's sister or daughter flees and practice her right to get married on her own discretion. The women who run away to get married, her close relatives, parents and siblings do not go to local community zones and markets but diverse views and attitudes exist between residents, though minor. A small set of folks consider that eloped marriages are not autonomously performed as imprudent teenager instead it is as a result of generation gap and being a bad parent where uneducated parents are not able to recognize the requirements of their literate kids, whereas few others consider that according to Islamic codes and ethics eloped marriages are permissible (Marsden, 2007).

Consequences of elopement

There exist a hierarchical structure in all cultures where each person has his particular duties and position. Similarly a precise number of actions exist that are categorized as rebellious, disgraceful and unlawful. These are attached by definite punishments however these punishments are different in every social structure liable upon the type and level of dishonor attached. In the same way, honor crime is classified among the punishments for eloped marriages which is viewed as shameful deed in certain cultures (Singh, 2014). In most cases, barbarous penalties are set for couples who eloped by their tribes or parents and mostly eloped couple's family members pay the same price (Marsden, 2007). These penalties are generally viewed as crime of honor. Honor crime is an ancient convention to reclaim family repute or status through which males are authorized to slay the woman of their family for besmirching the tribe and family name. The behavior and deeds considered 'dishonor' are opposing the decision of family head, marriage by choice, being in relationship (after or before marriage) and demand divorce (Akbar, 2010).

In Pakistan honor crimes are growing as stated in report (2008) of Human Rights Commission of Pakistan (HRCP). In year 2004 about 469 couples were murdered for getting married by their choice and additional 14 were slayed as a result of illicit copulation. 2007 recorded leading number of honor crimes for love marriage whereas 2009 was marked as the year with major numbers of collective honor crimes. However, the percentage of honor crimes over marriages by choice had decreased during the same year (Zia Ullah, 2010). Slaying for the sake of honor does not merely occur in Pakistan. It exists around the globe recorded in different European and Asian nations for instance Germany, Egypt, Bangladesh, Iraq, Turkey, Brazil and India. Apparently, per year across the globe family members killed around 5,000 females and girls for the sake of honor (Singh, 2014). Despite the fact that there exist legislative measures that forbid honor crimes, still a huge number of women are murdered every year. Countless cases are not even listed which results in offenders roaming free, still at large. An approximate 2,773 crime of honor cases were reported from 2008 to 2012 but only 2% of honor crime were formally registered (Pakistan Human Rights Report, 2013).

Experts defined that there are numerous reasons and grounds for crime of honor, however the main ground found in several studies are getting married into diverse religion or caste, eloped marriage and illegitimate relationships before or after marriage. Honor crimes are led by men with the purpose to respond to female family members for inflicting disgrace and humiliation on the family. At times even a minor distrust or suspicion is sufficient to permit honor crimes regardless of any proof or confirmation whether the female was genuinely engaged in any of the above stated activity or not (Singh, 2014). There are further costs that eloped marriage couples experience. First of all, no one can predict the aftermath of eloped marriage for that reason women cannot ask their parents for help in grim situations for example maltreatment by in-laws, financial issues, and domestic violence etc. men can also not complain to his family for his spouse's obscene behavior because he got married by his own choice without his parents consensus. As a result stress increases on both partners which ultimately leads to misunderstandings, conflicts, separation or divorce. Therefore family members do not do any favors for couples at this point because these are result of their autonomous decisions that they have to deal with on their own no matter what (de Jong, Ghimire, Thornton, & Pearce, 2006).

In few cases our general public show no tolerance for love marriages and specially eloped marriages as our customs, culture and beliefs do not approve run away marriages. In the record of Pakistan's history eloped couples are penalized by death in case their family members or clan finds their hideout. As a result of elopement couple's families sometimes also declare complete separation or renounce them. However in Kalash the region of Pakistan, after a short period of time eloped couple's families ultimately accept their marriage and welcome them in family because the children who generally eloped are in their twenties 20 (boys) or teens (girls) (Naz, Sheikh, Khan & Saeed, 2015).

Literature Review

Pakistani culture is developed on men's governance and authority, the modes and connotations of domestic agreements follow subjugation and reliance of women on men. Accordingly families entitle men as the head and prominent figure of power and supremacy. Mothers voluntarily or involuntarily create a gender difference among children which increases the chances of inequality in gender through the means of socialization since an early age (Habiba, Ali & Ashfaq, 2016).

There are few cases reported in which not only male but female family members as well are impartially involved in assault. A young Pakistani girl Zeenat's murder case was disclosed on 9 June 2016. Her mother murdered her because Zeenat eloped and married Hassan Khan by her choice without her parent's approval. Her family convinced her to return home for a proper marriage ceremony. When Zeenat returned home they assaulted her and her mother burned her to death instead of the wedding ritual they promised. In the same month before Zeenat died, a young woman named Maria did not agree to get married by her family's choice and died as a result of violence ("Pakistan: Zeenat Rafiq", 2016). People do not only receive death as a result of elopement but divorce is also a relatively common outcome in eloped and love marriages. Jones and Kurz (1976) in their research "Limbu women, divorce and the domestic cycle" organized an

investigation in three different towns of Limbu about three types of marriages which concluded in divorce. The outcomes of their chosen sample revealed 14% of divorce level in eloped marriages. Indeed these events are not only witnessed in Pakistan but also recorded in other male controlled cultures as well. Such as on 25 March, 2016 an Indian news portal reported Mega star Chiranjeevi's daughter Srija second wedding ceremony who had previously eloped with her boyfriend and got married without their family's consent but just a few years later they got divorced ("MegaStar Chiranjeevi", 2016).

It is extremely inadmissible and serious if juveniles get married by disregarding social standing established in social order, grounded on biases of caste structure. On August 1, 2012 in Peshawar high court a case was registered by Aziz ur Rehman, afghan citizen, intended for the matrimonial rights on Maryam. Afterwards it was learned that Maryam eloped with Hewad and got married. She testified that she and Aziz were not married however she had been forced by her parents into this conjugal because of caste system they follow. Then she eloped with Hewad to evade this marriage.

March 2011 in the area of Haryana India, 88 proceedings in the time period of one week were handled by the juries from eloped couples demanding safety and security after marriage. In the same region in December 2011 these digits amplified to 122. In accordance to these figures, the expected cases within a year will be average on 5,250. After examining more researcher found out that elopers were in the age group of 18-20, women were 18 years whereas men were 20 years. Likewise, in the group of 21-24 the women elopers were 21 years and men were 25 years old. This revealed that these people had been in a close affinity for almost 5 years since they were teenagers. Majority stated that parental disapproval and caste system became a cause of their elopement (Dhanda, 2012).

The incidents of Honor killing takes place as an outcome of extra marital affair, eloped marriages and having relations with opposing sex. It has been observed in different states as well where girls are killed by the men to endorse the domestic integrity, for instance Palestine, Jordan, Morocco, Bangladesh, Egypt, Brazil, Turkey, Iraq, Pakistan and India. U.S and Europe are also included (Zia Ullah, 2010). Jon Boone in Kabul, Afghanistan on 15 April 2009, briefed that a young inamorata eloped and was executed by a firing squad. In rural community called Lokhi, 21 year old couple Gul Pecha and Abdul Aziz were killed by firing a squad on the order of their parents for the reason that they eloped and desired to marry by their choice ("Taliban execute eloping", 2009).

In few cases Jirga issues instructions for homicide of those who had eloped and married without parent's consensus. It exhibits in what manner clannish male control cultures, females are barely known to be given chances to select a person to marry (Zia Ullah, 2010). In Pakistan on May 5, 2016 BBC news stated that 16 year adolescent name Amber, resident of Abbottabad far in countryside region was killed on the commands of area's communal heads for providing assistance to her friend in elopement and helping her get married by her free will.

At times, in order to halt daughters, fathers chose to take the case into courts to nullify the connubial by claiming abduction and abused them. For underage girls this works and does not provide them legal right of acceptance in wedding or sensual relationship. To fathers, police force provides assistance in

carrying out such purposes to keep the order of patriarchy in society. If the girl failed in order to prove her legitimate right to select her spouse through proof of her definite age, then father's statement about daughter being underage will be acknowledged and judiciary will pronounce judgment in father's favor and announce girl's guardianship back to her parents (Agnes, 2010). Dawn news reporter Malik Asad reported another underage girl elopement case from Chakwal on 29 January 2012. She eloped with 22 years young man and was held at a checkpoint by Islamabad police. The girl claimed to be 19 but after contacting her family they provided evidence which showed that she was just 14. The girl's father took this matter in court by claiming that her daughter was kidnaped. On the other hand the boy's parents refuted the claim by mentioning that the girl decided to come on her free will for the reason that her parents were coercing her to get married with a boy she did not want to. They demanded that the girl's guardianship should be bestowed to them so that authorized marriage can be carried out. The court announced to handover the girl to Dar-ul-Aman up until she reaches age of 19 because of the predictable hazard to her life by her family ("Runaway girl to stay", 2012).

In Pakistan the Honor crimes are mostly not reported, which is the central concern about females in our culture. It also leads to gender disparity. Selecting spouse on your personal fondness is a right every person has as it concerns their entire life. However, the freedom of people particularly women is dismissed by the social order of Pakistan and the notion of independence and free choice of females is not approved. The rash practice of honor crime is still predominant for the reason that the general public has not taken actions to break this and because of the nonexistence of primacy of law. Barely 20% of honor killings committed are considered as murder. The law stands ineffectual considering the offenders are family members of the sufferers offering them right to resolve the issue as an agent of the sufferer. As a result, once a close male relative engages such an atrocious deed, together other family members resolve the matter amongst them before this issue might be taken to the court for additional inquires. Even in case of taking matter to court, later the family members either deny involvement or withdraw the case under pressure to settle with the perpetrators (Akbar, 2010).

Rationale

As soon as eras transform the societal developments and drifts also transform, so does the selections of people living in that culture. Marriage is unique such development that is persistently shifting because of an individual's choice. In the same way, in Pakistani culture styles of marriages are varying these days. Youth these days have a preference to pick their spouse on their personal fondness although earlier regarding this matter parent's shared verdict was reflected more significant and concluding. As Pakistani culture is based on patriarchy, generally females are not allowed to select a spouse of their own personal fondness. Still nowadays this is reflected as the core reason of rising number of eloped marriages. In existing study, researcher aims to explore the main reasons and causes of young adults' intractable behavior that leads to elopement. Many youngsters make this choice in obduracy against their families who do not agree with their spouse choice and prevent them to marry by choice (Hart, 2010). This issue has been the subject of relatively few research in Pakistan;

consequently, this study will be a significant contribution to the literature and provide a new perspective. Two samples were selected by the researcher from district haveli Azad Kashmir (slightly less advanced) and Lahore (an advanced metropolis) to investigate and relate whether topographical location create any difference in youngster's behavior. This research is of paramount importance as it would deliver an enhanced knowledge of why elopement occurred and what are the influences that made youngsters to take such action.

Method

The present paper was planned to find out the main factors and reasons which forced youngsters to elope. Researcher used purposive sampling as obtainability of the sample and participant's consensus was tough.

Research Questions

What are the consequences and reasons of elopement in Kashmir and Lahore?

What are the aspects behind elopement?

What kind of influence elopement have on the future life of eloped couples?

Sample and Research Instrument

The researcher chose 3 female elopers and 5 male elopers age 18 to 40 (Berk, 2007) from diverse districts of Haveli Azad Kashmir and Lahore. The demographics of research participants were marital status, age, sex, income, education and geographical location. Inclusion criteria for this study was eloped couples who have been married for five years. Exclusion criteria for present study was the elopers who were not effectively married either one mate was killed because of Honor crime or were taken back home to be wedded to their parent's chosen one. To acquire the facts about the reasons, factors and penalties of elopement, in-depth semi structured interviews were conducted with the participants.

Procedure

Participants' approval and agreement was taken. The privacy was assured. Before interviews the reasons and objectives of the research were informed to the participants. Total number of interviews conducted was eight, with females and males. With participants' approval interviews were audio recorded. Recorded interviews were transcribed and major themes and connecting themes were explored by using Thematic Analysis.

Results

Following picture depicts the major themes extracted from the interviews.

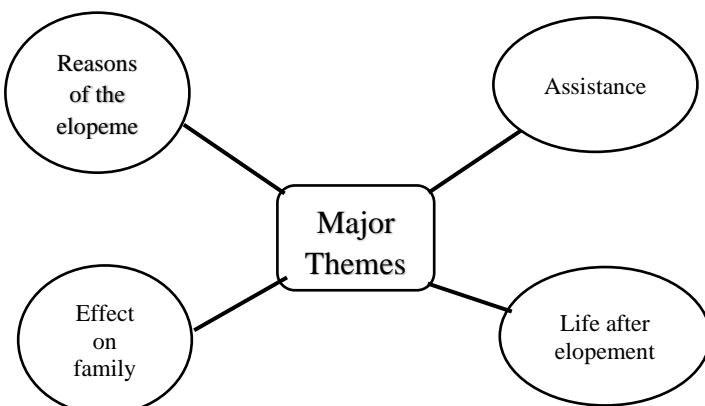


Figure 1

Illustrative depiction of key themes of conducted interviews (from Azad Kashmir and Lahore)

Subsequently examining focus groups the next phase was qualitative analysis of in depth interviews to obtain facts regarding the factors and penalties of elopement. Eight interviews were carried out from diverse areas of Lahore and Haveli, Azad Kashmir. To examine data Thematic Analysis (TA) was used. Themes were drawn from interviews and altered into major sets. Five main themes were generated from all eight interviews of eloped marriage participants. The outcomes show that both girls and boys have similar elopement reasons. Reasons of elopement was the first main theme extracted from interviews, in participants opinion social structure was the core reason of elopement. They would not have eloped to marry if their parents would not force them to marry against their will or prefer caste system. It had collective themes like parental reasons, upbringing, lack of consideration, siblings influence, exploitation and abuse, religious concerns, independent decisions, and confidence in choice. As stated by participant that:

KP1: "My family rejected the first proposal since we do not marry outside of our family. Additionally, It is impossible for us to leave each other."

KP2: "I... It was impossible to be married with an older man on the pressure of my family. they didn't pay much attention to me since we don't marry outside of our caste or family. So, this doesn't give them carte blanche to marry me off to any old man."

LP1: "As a Christian, my family flat-out rejected her..."

Approximately all respondents accepted the social construction as an element which provide them reason to elope but two participants from Lahore said that parental reasons, exploitation and abuse are the major reasons of elopement for instance participant mentioned that:

LP2: "When their parents hit their children and make them to accept their decisions, young people elope."

KP2: "I first made a lot of effort to persuade my family. I spoke to my mother instead since I was unable to talk to my father, and she concurred, saying that it would never happen. They outright rejected the proposal when it was received, noting that we don't get married outside of the family. I tried again a year later in hopes that they would accept it, but they merely continued to claim that it was impossible."

Poor upbringing was also described as a main reason which leads to elopement as participant stated that:

LP1: "Children may elope for a variety of reasons, including a single parent home where children are not given proper attention by parents."

Parental disagreement was another connecting theme. Which mean that rejection of proposal, girl's parents not approving for marriage, all interview participants stated the similar factor of their elopement.

KP1: "As i was in love, and you know that love is blind, I did it for that reason. We eloped when proposal was refused by family of girls. She and I really came from different families, and because I had to get married to her since her family had previously rejected my proposal, I did."

LP4: *“My family had no issues, however her parents turned down my proposal. She left her family to marry with me.”*

Excluding one female participant from Lahore region who stated that her reason elopement was sibling's influence.

LP2: *“My older sister four years older than me was the inspiration for this. She having an affair at the time and this made me think that if she could make such a choice for herself, choose her own good and evil, and plan her own destiny, why couldn't I?”*

Lack of freedom of choice was as well on of the main factor which trigger teens to elope such as participants from Haveli Azad Kashmir described that:

KP1: *“In our area, nobody ever asks the girl her opinion. They never gave me right to rejected or to choose the proposal. It forced us to make such decisions. We would have never done it if our relatives had listened to us. They were disfiguring me in a place I didn't want them to.”*

KP2: *“In our area, it is uncommon to ask girls about their about viewpoint. Everyone agrees to the family's decision, whatever it may be.”*

Confidence in choice is next relating theme of reasons of elopement. In most cases the reason which misguided youngsters for elopement was blind trust on companion. Considering that they have faith in their companion that they will assist them and do not measured the penalties of their decision. All interview participants stated that they had on doubts and complete believe in their partner. As revealed below:

KP1: *“I had no doubt that he would do anything bad to me. I made such a big step because I was pretty sure he would support me and treat me well.”*

LP3: *“I had more trust in my partner than I did in myself because I could perceive how much she cared for me and that she would stand by me when we spoke.”*

LP2: *“I did not have any reservations about him since... I had not had a lot of time with him. I made a mistake here. This was childish whatever it was. If I had spent more time with him, I may have learned whether or not I could spend the rest of my life with him and whether or not he was speaking the truth.”*

Next associated theme of reasons of elopement was lack of consideration, explained by participants that there was no attachment with family members and they did not have concern regarding their decision's effect and aftermaths on their family. Elopers mentioned they merely had any distress. As described by participant that:

LP1: *“Actually I have not such idea at that moment I had hope that everything would work out hat would my family or others think or what will happen.”*

KP1: *“I did not think about it since your main concern at the moment is being with the person you love. This choice cannot be made if additional considerations are considered. When you consider what will happen to those who are behind you as well as what will happen to you in the future, you are unable to make a decision.”*

Second main theme was assistance. Participants discoursed regarding the help and support they received from cousin, lawyer and friends. As described by participant that:

LP2: *“I did not accept assistance from anybody, although my spouse did from his acquaintances. They are supposed to do everything..”*

LP1: *“Obviously, I hired a lawyer for assistance.”*

Excluding two interview participants stated that they received no help from any cousin or friend.

Life after elopement was third main theme. It had associated themes like stressful life, humiliation, center of suspicion, unexpected hurdles, lack of basic needs, family boycott, life threat, unreasonable demands reconciliation and satisfaction. All interview participants approved that they handled rough life, increased burden, financial and health issues, abduction accusations, coercion, man hunted/chased and threats of honor killing after elopement. For instance participants mentioned that:

LP2: *“Because he was jobless and it took him four months to locate a low-paying job, he was unable to provide me with basic needs.”*

KP2: *“My parents' refusal to financially assist us after our marriage has left us in a precarious financial situation. When I got married, I just had a high school diploma, and it was extremely difficult to obtain a reasonable job. But I began with manual work.”*

KP4: *“It was a major issue since her family suspected me of kidnapping her. My wife was questioned by the village council whether I had coerced her into marrying me. Due to her backing, it was determined that the girl, i.e. my wife, would remain with me. Life after elopement's connecting themes were enmity, honor killing and family fights. Described by participant that:*

KP3: *“I was oblivious of the implications. We later learned that they were going to murder us, but we were fortunate to escape. When we returned home, everyone was furious, and my dad and her relatives battled.”*

Further associated theme was reconciliation. Excluding one, all of the participants from Lahore and Kashmir region stated that after eloped marriage they remained in different city for short period of time. Later on their parents accepted them. As described by participants:

KP4: *“We were married after fleeing. We were only in Lahore for about a week before heading back to Kashmir. Our family embraced us once the village council determined that I had not kidnapped the girl and that she eloped with me voluntarily.”*

LP2: *“My in-laws accepted my invitation to visit them in exchange for agreeing not to provide for us financially. My spouse, who was jobless at the time, will be responsible for covering all costs.”*

Despite elopers and their families' reunion woman confront in-laws ridicules and taunts. For that reason couples have disputes and it arouses stress, for instance participant described that:

LP5: *“I got call from her insiting to go Karachi to live separate after when there has been fight.”*

KP1: *“I have to face harsh attitude of taunting and jibes from my in lwas during first two year of marriage but they accepted me start respecting me after the birth of my son.”*

LP3: *“When there is a quarrel or disagreement at home, my sister-in-laws will make fun of her by saying that she left her family to marry me, but these things happen often and are not a huge concern.”*

Next connecting theme of life after elopement was center of suspicion. Young couples were not acknowledged by society after elopement, they confront disgrace, embarrassment and turn into the center of suspicion in their community. Such as participant described that:

LP1: *“After getting married, the first issue we ran into was finding a place since people assumed we were unmarried runaways. Second, when you reside someplace and your family or relatives*

do not even come to visit, you start to have suspicions about the neighbors.

KP2: "I was aware that society would not recognise our marriage and would curse over us."

Another associated theme of life after elopement was people's opinion. Participants described that they for them people opinion does not important, they also knew the consequences they have to confront and had no concerns for family. For instance:

LP1: "I never bother people about my decision results."

LP2: "It was decided by me at that time that remarks of people have no worth for me."

KP3: "I was very well aware of negative remarks from people, but at that time have no other option I was aware to the consequences that people will talk bad about us but I have left no option."

Next associated themes of life after elopement was dissatisfaction and satisfaction. Described by participants that they are satisfied in independent choice, their decision was right and they were settled. Some of the participants described that once doubted their decision of elopement however are satisfied now as they are settled. For instance participant stated that:

KP3: "I am happy and satisfied with it. When I made this choice, as time passed on, I began to feel that it was the wrong decision as everyone was criticising me, but he stood by me. I now have a kid, and I am happy with my choice."

KP4: "In spite of financial problems I am still very confident and happy for decision I made."

Two Lahore participants stated that they feel remorse regarding their elopement choice however after a while divorce was their right choice they made. At the moment they are pleased and overpowered their foremost stress. As stated below:

LP2: "The decision I decided for me was eventually wrong, whereas the one my father made for me after my wedding was perfect. Even after such a grave mistakes, he continued to support me. It was the greatest choice to divorce because now that I have grown, seen and lived the world, I could never have been able to live with that man."

LP4: "My decision to elope was a mistake, but now that it is over, I am content since there are no more arguments."

Effect on family was another main theme. It had associated themes such as social boycott, public image, damage to sibling's future, humiliation and problems for family. As participants mentioned that:

KP4: "I did not think about how my choice or decision might affect my family. I was aware that my family would be the subject to derogatory remarks from others."

LP2: "Most often, people predicted that my siblings would follow me or the same line if I eloped. People would labeled my family as shameless."

Fifth main theme was future apprehensions. Associated themes related to future apprehensions are trust issues and unreliable marital life irrespective of its type. For instance participant stated that:

LP1: "Even when my parents chose it. If our marriage fails, I would be responsible, and it would be difficult to trust anybody again, but life would carry on."

While inquired regarding the reaction just in case of disloyalty from companion, majority of them mentioned that at the time of elopement they had not calculated the probability of disloyalty or

perfidy at all. Male participants of the study from Kashmir described that:

KP3: "I have already decided that if he deceived me or anything occurred, I would have committed suicide because I could not do him any damage."

KP4: "If she deceived or refused to marry me, I have thought to shoot her."

LP2: "You may call it my folly/stupidity/whatever, but I did not consider what I would do if this person betrayed me at the moment."

Therefore all elopers whose connubial life is prosperous affirmed blind faith while LP2 did not.

To indicate the consensus of participants towards major themes, following table is formulated.

Table 1

Frequency table of major themes

Major Themes	P 1	P 2	P 2	P 4	P 5	P 6	P 7	P 8	Total no of frequency
Reasons of elopement	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	8
Assistance	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	8
Life after elopement	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	8
Effect on family	-	✓	✓	✓	✓	-	-	✓	5
Future apprehensions	-	-	-	-	✓	-	-	-	1

Above table show the frequencies of major theme of interviews. The major themes reasons of elopement, assistance, life after elopement have frequency of 8. Effect on family have frequency of 5 and future apprehensions have 1.

Discussion

The human rights declaration (1948) offers the essential rights to all women and men to select spouse of their own personal fondness. Though, in Pakistan females are influenced to supremacy by men as the nature of the social order is patriarchal. However, throughout the interviews it revealed that traditions, customs and social structure are impacting both genders, yet women hear more than men. During discussion of reasons of eloped marriages; our social system seemed to be one of the principle themes which involved forced marriages, parental disapproval, caste system, parental reasons and religious concerns. Forced marriage is the main concern women still faced. Female participants from Haveli Azad Kashmir stated that elopement took place for the reason that their beloved's marriage offer was refused and their families tried to marry them by force with someone they are not fond of. Literature also approved this theme as in several cases described previously as on August 1, 2012 in Peshawar high court a case was registered by Aziz ur Rehman, afghan citizen, intended for the matrimonial rights on Maryam. Afterwards it was learned that Maryam eloped with Hewad and get married. She testified that she and Aziz were not married however she had been forced by her parents into this conjugal. Then she eloped with Hewad to evade this marriage.

In the society we live people have preconceptions built on grounds of caste which is that few social classes are higher than others and people do not think it worthy to marry with an

individual who belongs to the caste that has lesser social standing. Selecting a spouse who belongs to a different caste leads to parental disagreement since in most families out of caste nuptials are not permitted. Participants from Lahore emphasized that caste system is quite resilient particularly when considering children's conjugal pronouncements. Participants from Kashmir too stated that grounds of caste in Kashmir are very strong and females have no autonomy of decision or freewill. Occasionally forced marriages or caste system are not merely the reasons rather influence of parents, elder siblings or close family members matters as majority participants said that eloper were of age 14 to 21 at the moment when they decided to run away to get married. Children are mostly not mature at that stage, elder's action or behavior and family environment has an effect on them.

Generally there is discrepancy among parents and young children. Parent's disagreement concerning children's opinion to select spouse is what typically leads them to elope. All male participants from Kashmir and Lahore stated that refusal of the girl's proposal is the main reason of elopement, girl's parents reject for the reason that they do not prefer to marry in different caste. That repudiation forced couple for elopement. Previous research also backs the main theme of parental disapproval. In research by Dhanda (2012) it is pointed out that most respondents described that their reason of elopement was parental disapproval and caste system. They tried to convince their parents for so long however ultimately came to the decision to elope when family disagreed with them.

Ethnic disparity, religious and family feud are also causes of eloped marriages. In accordance with participants, among the causes of eloped marriages parent's resilient disapproval because the two clans are in a conflict that has continued down through generations is as a big factor. Marriage among such type of clans is excluded for the reason that it is believed consorting with the nemesis. The ethnic and religious disquiets were also referred to as a reason where parental disagreement of conjugal because girl and boy are associated with an entirely diverse race or religion. Lack of consideration arises when an individual does not care what will happen to their siblings and family after such an extreme move is made and what emotional impact it will have on them. It could be stated that such choices cannot be carried out without self-centered motives and merely distressing about receiving what they want. Few participants stated that they had to make a choice of elopement for the reason that they had not any other option. When an individual has complete faith in their partner, they believe and support one another's choices too. Faith is an element which encourages youngsters to take a decisive step of elopement. Most of the participants stated that they had faith in their companions. They have conviction and assurance in their selection too. When inquired about their reaction just in case of disloyalty or double cross from companion, majority of the participants mentioned that they had not carefully thought about the probability of disloyalty at all. Azad Kashmir male participants mentioned that in case she double crossed or declined at the moment of nuptial then they would shoot her.

Further we observe that majority of eloped couples got assistance at the time of elopement. It is utterly evident that accomplishing the elopement strategy, couple requires outside support. Most of them pursue guidance and help from lawyers and friends in place of finding an ally in family who perhaps sustain

their conjugal. Afterward it revealed that elopers did not give thought to the difficulties and hurdles they will confront in future. All participants stated that they were in their late pubescence stage at the moment of elopement. Since they did not receive advance education and give up on school at the time of elopement which amplified the burden of financial problems and to fulfill core requirements they made it harder to get employment with decent wage. On top of that however they have to confront taunts, oppression and kidnapping accusation from girl's family. Murder on the name of honor is not the only penalty of marriage by elopement. As stated in literature survey, break ups and separation too occurs as an outcome of elopement. The unpredicted hardships of lack of basis needs and no proper house also disturbs their affairs adversely which drives to divorce. From Lahore two participants stated that the reason of their divorce was that they could not survive with lack of basic human needs after some time they get the point even though it was with an individual they have affection and love.

In the majority of cases later on couples reunited with their parents as was also supported by literature survey. Saeed, Khan, Naz and Sheikh (2015) in their study mentioned that in the regions of Kalash Pakistan, if youngsters eloped to get married, their parents proclaimed that they no longer have family relation among themselves and stay isolated from family however for short time period. In the long run elopers' parents accept them for the reason that at the moment of elopement their children were in their teens phase age 15 to 20 as participants stated that at the moment of their elopement decision they were too in their teen phase age of 14 to 20. Usually in laws and parents approves their marriage however they failed to receive respect at home. They have to confront derisions, have disputes and parents also does not provide them any assistance financially. Their public image after marriage gone off the deep end. They move to a different place to live people of that community become distrustful and suspicious of the couple and they confront public humiliation.

When you are not adequately matured and living in fantasies to predict the results and consequences of your choice at that point public's view also make no difference. Further dissatisfaction is the connecting theme of life after elopement. On occasions individuals are not pleased with their choices. Once time flies they became aware of that they were mistaken regarding certain things. They should never have made such choice as from Lahore two participants described that their choice was not right however the choice to get divorce was worthy and few individuals face up to their responsibilities even when their choices are erroneous or they confront hardships.

Effect on family was last main theme. Majority of the participants stated that as a result of couple's elopement their families endure hardship. In society they confront dishonor and mortification, taunts from relatives and social boycott. Future of their siblings is destroyed, people state that like their sister/brother they will elope too. They are acknowledged culpable with link.

Conclusion

This current research paper was carried out to discover the factors or reasons in result of which elopement took place and consequences couples faced after elopement in view of elopers. The reasons and factors of elopement which trigger teens as defined by participants are: upbringing, social structure, media,

siblings' influence and parental disapproval are the causes. They decide to elope when their parents do not agree with their choice of spouses. Life became challenging for couples after elopement so for their family members but it was much harder for females and their families. Females are more underprivileged as our society's patriarchal structure allows it and often they are the only ones condemned if they take any such step and girl's family is the only one accused of poor upbringing, character etc. Subsequently sometimes families reinstate relations with eloped couples however these are some blessed ones. Facts and figures specify a grim depiction of females who are murdered in the name of Honor. On the other hand our study participants mentioned that they at first did not consider the risk of being murdered by their family members. As soon as they grasped the situation that their families sent a chasing company after them, they started to make them lose the lead by dodging and effectively did lose them. They went back home once a few months had passed and ultimately reunified with their families. Hence, not all the elopement cases end in honor crimes.

Limitations

This research has restricted generalizability in the way the selected sample was limited and comprised merely from Haveli Azad Kashmir and Lahore. For advance study various regions could be chosen to gather a wider and better sample. The major limitation was the inadequacy of prior researches on this subject as this subject has not been reconnoitered before because of its offensive status. In confirmed eloped marriages cases, couples at first claimed to have married without parents' consent and were hesitant to talk about their current state of affairs and decision out of distress of regenerating the abhorrence they confronted in the past.

Implications

In spite of restraint, results are helpful for individuals who are planning to get married and for families those who are in near future going to make arrangement for their offspring' wedding, in such a degree to deliver them awareness and understanding that your responsibilities are acknowledged but children's personal fondness regarding marital decisions are also important. Parents and children's mutual decisions will ultimately bring satisfaction in their lives. The outcomes are also supportive for premarital counseling and in understanding the changing aspects of matrimonial satisfaction in Pakistani culture.

Notes & References:

- [1] Agnes, F. (2010). Marriages of Choice: Articulation of Agency, State Interventions and Feminist Locations. *UW Law School*, Madison, 3-14.
- [2] Akbar, N. K. (2010). *Honor Killing in Pakistan: The Case of 5 Women Buried Alive, Political manipulation in human rights violation*. Retrieved from: <http://www.humiliationstudies.org/documents/AkbarHonorKillinginPakistan.pdf>.
- [3] Arif, N., & Fatima, I. (2015). Marital Satisfaction in different types of Marriage. *Journal of Social and Clinical Psychology*, 13(1), 36-40.

- [4] Asad, M. (2012, 29 January), [Runaway girl to stay in Darul Aman for love](https://www.dawn.com/news/691790), Dawn news. Retrieved from <https://www.dawn.com/news/691790>
- [5] Boone, J. (2009, 15 April), Taliban execute eloping young lovers in Afghanistan, *The Guardian*. Retrieved from <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2009/apr/15/afghanistana-taliban-lovers-elope-nimroz>
- [6] De Jong, J. A., Ghimire, D. J., Thornton, A., & Pearce, L. (2006). Developmental Idealism and Changing Models of Marriage. *Population Studies Center, institute for social Research*, (9), 20-26.
- [7] Dhanda, M. (2012). Runaway Marriages A Silent Revolution? *Economic & Political Weekly EPW*, 11(43), 67-100.
- [8] Doubt, K. (2012). Elopements of Bosnian Women, Wittenberg University. *Anthropology of East Europe*, 30(2), 91-98.
- [9] Elopement. (2017). In *Merriam-Webster.com*. Retrieved from <https://www.merriam-webster.com/words-at-play/read-this-before-you-elope>
- [10] Hart, K. (2010). The Economy and Morality of Elopement in Rural Western Turkey. *Ethnologia Europaea*, 40(1), 58-76.
- [11] Marsden, M. (2007). Love and elopement in northern Pakistan. *Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute*, 13(1), 91-108.
- [12] Mega Star Chiranjeevi Second Daughter Srija Second Marriage (2016, 25 March), All India Roundup News Portal. Retrieved from <http://allindiaroundup.com/news/chiranjeevi-second-daughter-srija-second-marriage/>
- [13] Naz, A., Sheikh, I., Khan, W., & Saeed, G. (2015). Traditional Wedding System and Marriage by Elopement among Kalasha Tribe of District Chitral, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Pakistan. *FWU Journal of Social Sciences*, 9(1), 59-69.
- [14] Pakistan: Zeenat Rafiq who was burnt for eloping is buried (2016, 9 June), BBC News. Retrieve from <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-asia-36486974>.
- [15] Pakistan elders 'ordered girl's killing' in Abbottabad (2016, 5 May), BBC news. Retrieved from <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-asia-36212080>
- [16] Retherford, R., Westly, S., Choe, M. K., Brown & Mason, A. (2002). "Tradition and Change in Marriage and Family Life". *East- West Center*, 29-40.
- [17] Sheikh, I., Rehman, U.-H., & Naz, A. (2013). An Ethnographic Study of Marriage System and the Runaway Brides of Kalash. *Middle-East Journal of Scientific Research*, 16(10), 1393-1402. doi: 10.5829/idosi.mejsr.2013.16.10.11990.

- [18] Singh, S. D. (2014). Honour Killings in India: A Study of the Punjab State. Department of Political Science, Guru Nanak Dev University, Amritsar, India. *International Research Journal of Social Sciences*, 3(6), 7-16.
- [19] Ume Habiba, U., Ali, R., & Ashfaq, A. (2016). From Patriarchy to Neopatriarchy: Experiences of Women from Pakistan. *International Journal of Humanities and Social Science*, 6(3), 212-220.
- [20] Zia Ulla, M. (2010). *Honour killings in Pakistan under Theoretical, Legal and Religious Perspectives: An Analytical Study of Honour killings Abuse and Disconnecting Islam from This Ancient Brutal Tradition* (master's Thesis). Malmö University Malmö, Sweden.