

# Forgotten

Dowry: A socially endorsed form of violence in Pakistan



**SACHET**



United Nations Entity for Gender Equality  
and the Empowerment of Women



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## Abbreviations

<b>AGEHI</b>	Advocates of Gender, Education and Health Information	<b>PIMS</b>	Pakistan Institute of Medical Sciences
<b>ASF</b>	Acid Survivors Foundation	<b>POF</b>	Pakistan Ordnance Factories
<b>CEDAW</b>	Convention on Elimination of all forms of Discrimination against Women	<b>RGH</b>	Rawalpindi General Hospital
<b>CSO</b>	Civil Society Organization	<b>RHRC</b>	Reproductive Health Response in Conflict Consortium
<b>EVAW</b>	Ending Violence Against Women	<b>SACHET</b>	Society for the Advancement of Community, Health, Education and Training
<b>FAD</b>	Fight Against Dowry	<b>UN</b>	United Nations
<b>FADAN</b>	Fight Against Dowry Advocacy Network	<b>UNDP</b>	United Nations Development Programme
<b>FGD</b>	Focus Group Discussion	<b>UNFPA</b>	United Nations Population Fund
<b>GBV</b>	Gender-Based Violence	<b>UNIFEM</b>	United Nations Development Fund for Women
<b>GDI</b>	Gender Development Index	<b>UN Women</b>	UN Women (United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women)
<b>GEM</b>	Gender Empowerment Measure	<b>USAID</b>	United States Agency for International Development
<b>GJTMA</b>	Gender Justice through Musalihat Anjuman	<b>WHO</b>	World Health Organization
<b>GOP</b>	Government of Pakistan		
<b>GRAP</b>	Gender Reform Action Plan		
<b>HDI</b>	Human Development Index		
<b>HPI</b>	Human Poverty Index		
<b>HRCP</b>	Human Rights Commission of Pakistan		
<b>ICPD</b>	International Conference on Population and Development		
<b>IDI</b>	In-depth Interview		
<b>JPMA</b>	Journal of Pakistan Medical Association		
<b>LJCP</b>	Law and Justice Commission of Pakistan		
<b>MHHDC</b>	Mehboob-ul-Haq Human Development Centre		
<b>MOWD</b>	Ministry of Women Development		
<b>NCSW</b>	National Commission on the Status of Women		
<b>NESCOM</b>	National Engineering and Scientific Commission		
<b>NGO</b>	Non-Governmental Organization		
<b>NPA</b>	National Plan of Action		

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## Local Glossary

<b>Jahez</b>	Dowry	<b>Bahoo</b>	Daughter-in-law
<b>Dajj</b>	Term used for dowry in Sindh	<b>Saas</b>	Mother-in-law
<b>Wari</b>	Term used in Hindko and Potohar regions for the gift brought for the bride by the bridegroom which is on display for the guests on the wedding day	<b>Talaaq</b>	Divorce
<b>Dahaiz</b>	Term used for dowry in Punjab	<b>Susur</b>	Father-in-law
<b>Walvar</b>	Term for money the bridegroom has to pay to the bride for marrying her in some parts of the NWFP, the Tribal Areas and Balochistan	<b>Tashadud</b>	Violence
<b>Labb</b>	Brahvi for custom in which the bridegroom bears the wedding expenses	<b>Khandaan</b>	Family
<b>Karo kari</b>	Sindhi word for honour-killing Swara/wan Swara in NWFP / Tribal Areas, and wani in Mianwali/ Southern Punjab is the handing over of a girl to the rival party in order to settle a dispute	<b>Shohar</b>	Husband
<b>Hudood Ord</b>	A law related to sexual offences, among other offences	<b>Bivi</b>	Wife
<b>Katal karma</b>	To commit murder	<b>Tohfa</b>	Gift
<b>Wanoh</b>	In Sindhi culture, the girl sit in a room for seven days before marriage	<b>Waleema</b>	Dinner hosted by the bridegroom on the day following the wedding
<b>Nikah</b>	Marriage agreement	<b>Rukhsati</b>	The departure of the bride from her parental home on her marriage
<b>Baradari</b>	The extended family/clan	<b>Choola phatna</b>	Bursting of a stove
<b>Maklawar</b>	The married couple's visit for few days to the bride's home after wedding	<b>Jalana</b>	Burning
<b>Zaat</b>	Caste	<b>Mar kutai</b>	Physical violence
<b>Aaboajdad</b>	Ancestors/elders	<b>Acid phainkna</b>	Acid-throwing
<b>Rasmain</b>	Traditions		
<b>Susral</b>	In-laws		
<b>Maika</b>	Bride's parental home.		
<b>Rawaj</b>	Custom		
<b>Warasat</b>	Inheritance		
<b>Moashra</b>	Society		
<b>Tanay</b>	Taunts		



# Contents

<b>I</b>	<b>Background</b>				
1	Context of Violence against Women in Pakistan	3		16.7	Dowry after Marriage 33
2	What is Dowry?	4		17	Discussion on Impressions and Findings 33
<b>II</b>	<b>Introduction</b>			<b>VI</b>	<b>Way Forward</b>
3	Objective of Study	7		18	Recommendations 39
4	Methodology	7			
5	Process of Inquiry	7		<b>References</b>	43
6	Limitations and Biases	8		<b>Annexures</b>	
7	Value addition of Study	9		1	Burn hospitals in Pakistan and Centers under Study 45
<b>III</b>	<b>Research Case</b>			2	Dowry and Bridal Gifts (Restriction) Act 1976 47
8	Historical Evolution	13		3	The Research Team 49
9	Practice of Dowry in Pakistan	13		4	In-depth Interviews and Focus Group Discussion Guidelines 50
<b>IV</b>	<b>Literature Review</b>			5	Data Collection Form 52
10	Global Review	17		6	Information on Technical Burn Injuries 53
11	South Asia Review	18			
12	National Review	19			
13	Concept of Dowry in Islam	22			
<b>V</b>	<b>Research Findings</b>				
14	Burn Centres	27			
15	Sampling	29			
16	Impressions and findings	30			
16.1	Marriage Rituals	30			
16.2	Importance of Dowry	31			
16.3	Is Dowry Social Protection	31			
16.4	Factors for High Dowry Demands	32			
16.5	Role of Media and Religious Figures	32			
16.6	Links between Dowry and Violence against Women	33			





# Background



## 1 The Context of Violence against Women in Pakistan

Pakistan is characterized by low scores of development and demographic indicators, constant political instability, cultural heritage and traditions reflecting centuries-old patriarchy and selective male-friendly application of the dominant religion, Islam.

However, that cannot be generalized. In fact, there is not a homogenous Pakistan in this respect. There is an urban Pakistan and a rural Pakistan. There is a Pakistan of masses and there is a Pakistan of classes. Considering the diversity of Pakistani society, the female plight and predicament has different interpretations for women from different strata. However, they do suffer in different ways. Institutional and individual violence are not unknown phenomena for practically all Pakistani women.

### Box 1: Some key development indicators of Pakistan<sup>1</sup>

S#	indicator	Value/rank/score
1.	HDI (Human Development Index)	136 <sup>th</sup> out of 177
2.	GDI (Gender Development Index)	152 out of 156
3.	GEM (Gender empowerment Measure)	82nd out of 93
4.	Percentage of population living below poverty line	32
5.	Percentage of young people	65%
6.	HPI (Human Poverty Index)	77 out of 108

The custom of dowry is prevalent in Pakistan, India, Bangladesh and Nepal - the patriarchal belt of Asia. Each year, in South Asian communities, thousands of young brides lose their lives over dowry disputes. They are burnt, killed or maimed by husbands and in-laws whose material demands remain unfulfilled (Menski, 1998).

This study follows an analysis of 30 days of newspapers coverage (in May 2002), revealed that out of 206 news clips on different issues of women (113 only satisfied the definition of GBV), only 23 reflected any aspect of dowry. The study further pointed out that not only the married girls or those in the marriageable age experienced some form exploitation, abuse or violence because of the customary practice of dowry, but the fathers of such daughters, the brothers of such sisters and the families in general are the sufferers.

Based on a study conducted in 2008-2009 by AGEHI SACHET, this report focuses on Pakistan, finding the custom as a thriving yet unacknowledged form of

social injustice, which qualifies as crime, abuse and violence.

The silence on this urgent concern cuts across all classes. Lack of understanding of the causes and consequences of dowry, both among the uneducated masses and enlightened minds have resulted in not seeing a patriarchal consensus and elitist consensus on dowry, hence dowry violence is neither identified nor labelled as such.

Although there is increasing attention being given by successive governments to gender issues including violence, there is no concentrated effort geared to the understanding of the complexities and prevalence of dowry. This is as true of development sector funded initiatives of service delivery, advocacy, research and communication interventions as of state machinery. The Ministry of Women Development in Pakistan has yet to acknowledge dowry and dowry-violence as a serious gender issue (Perveen, 2002).

There could be two possible reasons for this convenient forgetfulness. One is the conspiracy of silence and sharam (shame), which implies that woman-related issues must not be taken out of the premises of home for the sake of honour. Second is the fact that attention to the role of dowry in our marriage system has not gained attention of international donors. Therefore, comparable social problems like child labour or environment overshadow a traditional area like dowry.

SACHET Pakistan is the first non profit that has approached the problem by identifying it as a form of violence against women and men both<sup>2</sup>.

<sup>1</sup> Sources: UNDP Human Development Report, 2007-2008, country fact sheets, page Pakistan, [www.hdrstats.undp.org/countries/country\\_fact\\_sheets/cty\\_fs\\_pak.html](http://www.hdrstats.undp.org/countries/country_fact_sheets/cty_fs_pak.html)

<sup>2</sup> Many Pakistani charities and welfare organization have addressed the issue of dowry by actually endorsing the institution, collecting Jahez fund and organizing mass weddings.

## 2 What is dowry?

“Encyclopaedias, thesauruses and dictionaries have explained it beautifully and simplistically. To me it is a form of culturally sanctioned and socially acceptable violence not only against women but men too.” (Perveen, 2002)

Dowry is the money, goods, or estate that a woman brings to her new husband. As against that, bride price is paid to the bride’s parents, and dower is the property settled on the bride herself by the groom at the time of marriage.

In theory, dowry, as a pre-mortem inheritance, is set up to protect property given to women. However, this institution often transforms into one in which these property rights are given to men. Early feminists in Europe attacked the dowry system accurately because they objected to the fact that husbands ended up controlling the funds (Cox, 1995). Now practiced primarily in Asian cultures, dowry payment in its current manifestation typically involves the transfer of wealth from the parents of the bride to the groom and his family, and few have the courage to disown it. Although women and girls are no longer its beneficiaries, some researchers maintain that the practice still confers benefits to the bride by enhancing her status in the marital home. The same culture may simultaneously practice both dowry and bride price.

Dowry is a multi-faceted, deep-rooted gender issue with social, economic and health consequences. What began as a custom to protect and provide for women has grown into being a burden on poorer families as they could not afford to give what a suitable husband or his family might demand, and now compromises the treatment of women.

In sync with societies across the region, mirrored elsewhere across the world, the family structure in Pakistan is patriarchal. Traditional norms persist where the father is the breadwinner and the mother the housekeeper. The mother-in-law and wife are often in conflict over claims over men and their earning power. While social change is palpable on some fronts, some norms remain deeply entrenched, such as the cultural institution of dowry or jahez. Social stigma remains insurmountable for girls who are considered an economic burden and denied their basic rights to education, health, and inheritance because of this practice.

# Introduction



### 3 Objective of Study

The primary objective of this research is to identify the forms and determinants of dowry systems and understand the link between dowry and violence against women/girls in Pakistan. Highlighting customary forms of violence against women, the study intends to reflect the vulnerability of Pakistani women and analyse trends, such as the increase in cases.

It aims to articulate existing perceptions and perspectives of actors including the state, media, local communities and survivors of violence in a situation assessment that would provide the basis for designing future strategies in a culturally sensitive way, and to recommend strategic interventions for ending dowry related gender based violence in Pakistan.

The focus of the study remains on attempting to understand the cultural, social and personal reasons to adopt, adhere and affirm the dowry practice and the apparent silence; rather, non-recognition; of dowry violence even among the ruling and intellectuals elites of the country.

Expected outcomes are:

- Identification of dowry-related issues, particularly in Pakistan.
- Strategies for change and policy recommendations against GBV, VAW and dowry-related issues in Pakistan.

### 4 Methodology

**Literature Review:** A three tiered literature review examines international policy instruments; a review of policies and legislation and key studies on the issue in South Asia; and Pakistan level appraisal of policies and legislation on gender based violence in general and dowry related issues in particular, as well as a review of the response of the public, private and NGO sectors.

**Qualitative Research:** The study includes primary data collected through focus-group discussions (FGDs) and in-depth interviews (IDIs). The topics covered included:

- Tradition of marriage and other rituals.
- Dowry and its importance.
- Is dowry a social protection for women?
- Factors responsible for high ratio of dowry demand.
- The role of the media and religious figures in promoting dowry.
- Continuation of dowry after marriage.

- Suggestions to cope with this social evil.

[for detailed FGD and IDI guidance notes see Annex 4]

The field research was conducted between November 2008 and April 2009 by a team consisting of trained researchers (see Annexure 3 for the profile of the research team).

The sample of in-depth interviews was based on 48 women respondents. The interviews were conducted with women who were survivors of the practice of dowry and were linked to VAW cases. Twelve IDIs were conducted in each province.

16 FGDs were organized in four provinces (two each in the provincial capitals and one each in an interior district) of Pakistan (see Annexure 5 for district profiles). The participants were a control group of people, both men and women, married within the last five years and between 20 to 30 years of age. Each FGD was conducted by three trained social scientists, i.e., one facilitator and two note-takers. FGDs took an average of one-and-a-half hour to three hours, while each FGD was conducted in the local language and recorded through digital voice recorder. Research teams from different provinces conducted the FGDs.

An exploratory research conducted in burn centres in Pakistan was conducted to have a broader and deeper understanding of various dimensions linking dowry issues to violence. It included the primary quantitative and qualitative data collected through a structured questionnaire (see Annexure 6) and observatory visits. There is no official resource from where the primary data about the burn centres and cases can be collected. After identifying certain burn centres in the public and private sector, request letters were sent and a form developed for collecting data to the concerned government health departments as well as heads of private hospitals' burn centres.

### 5 Process of Inquiry

An orientation training session was held with the key researchers along with the technical experts' team before going to the field. The team was conversant with research methodologies and had been gender sensitized.

In keeping with the ethics of research, researchers visited every respondent before conducting the interview, took appointments and verbal informed consent. The participants were informed about the nature and purpose of the study. They were assured of confidentiality and their reservations addressed.

The research was conducted in a natural setting where

a local researcher (male/female) was hired to remove gender biasness. All researchers were well aware of the relevant culture and had full command of the language of the concerned people to communicate with them easily.

Data was documented on the spot, and the estimated time given to each respondent in an IDI was between 60 to 120 minutes, and 90 minutes for each FGD.

The researchers first contacted the representatives of local NGOs for necessary arrangements, who introduced the researchers to the community and helped them in the selection of participants.

Before conducting the IDIs, the informants/respondents were fully briefed about the issue being focused on. After briefing the respondents, they were asked a few questions related to the problem and then their responses were recorded through digital voice recorder as well as through field jotting and field noting. The researchers developed rapport with the respondents and created a friendly, frank and non-hierarchical environment before conducting interviews so that the respondents could express their true feelings.

In-depth interviews were conducted in different cities all over Pakistan. The researchers first contacted the representatives of local NGOs for necessary arrangements, who introduced the researchers to the community. Each interview was conducted by a trained social scientist. Each interview took an average of one-and-a-half hour to three hours, while each interview was conducted in the local language.

A number of measures were instituted to ensure the maintenance of the highest quality standards in data collection. These included: the development of standard operating procedures; clear identification of roles and responsibilities for the study; faultfinding and institution of immediate remedial measures; and adherence to ethical principles. Informed consent was obtained from all the study participants after describing to them the issue in detail. They were also informed that their participation was entirely voluntary. The confidentiality of all participants was ensured, and they were given options to confirm their informed consent through signature, fingerprint or oral consent recorded by digital voice recorder.

For the burns centres' information gathering, the research team made more than 50 visits to the the burn centres in Islamabad, Rawalpindi and Wah, from where we got positive response in terms of support and required cooperation. Telephonic and e-contact

was also employed, not for maintaining contacts with these centres, but with those in other parts of the country. The field team experienced many difficult moments in accessing these centres. However, the end result is the wealth of information that, in spite of gaps and deficiencies, constitutes a valuable starting point for further and future research in this neglected area of immediate concern.

Data was analysed through thematic interpretation of findings. The collected firsthand data was available in three forms, i.e., focus group discussions (FGDs), thematic analysis of the findings through semi-structured /in-depth interviews and field notes based on the observations of the interviewer/moderator. After the presentation of data, the findings were discussed, and then the conclusions and recommendations were brought out. The data obtained from burn centres was quantified as well as qualitatively interpreted.

## 6 Limitations and Biases

The number of FGDs, the category chosen for the FGD participants, the inclusion of only two districts per province, the qualitative interviews and their locations reflect the purposive selection and convenience bias that a result of the resource constraint. However, since the aim of the research was not to opt for a perfect research based on representative sample but to initiate a study on this most frequently forgotten issue in the development agenda, it is expected that the trends and critical pointers would lead to a series of broader researches on the issues of dowry in the complex spectrum of GBV and VAW.

The study excluded the experiences of those boys/men who were supposed to pay a certain bride price in order to get married, a custom in certain tribes in the NWFP (KP), Balochistan and the southern belt of Punjab.

The purpose<sup>3</sup> behind this pioneering study of dowry violence is not to dictate any message, impose any specific strategy, solution or salvation, ridicule and or criticize any traditional or customary practice in any part of Pakistan. Further, the study does not claim the status of perfect research. Therefore, it should not be assumed as comprehensive.

Non-availability of research material in Pakistan and about Pakistan-specific dowry issues led to a reliance

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<sup>3</sup> Due to the personal affiliation of the principal investigator and writer of the report regarding the issues of dowry, it is necessary to elaborate the contextual details of the purpose of the study, rather than simply jotting down the technically phrased aim and objectives only.



on web-based material for literature review. Limited resources did not permit to offer extensive review of this very vast subject, but an attempt has been made to include the key discourse on status of women, patriarchy, harmful traditions/cultural practices, international frameworks and available data on GBV,VAW and dowry violence.

## **7 Value addition of Study**

This is the first study in Pakistan to receive funding and intellectual support from any development sector actor. It attempts to bring the forgotten or neglected issue of dowry and related violence to the center of gender equality initiatives, challenging its treatment as merely a poverty related issue affecting a particular class, and therefore bridges the gap between technical expert diagnosis and actual needs of the masses.



# Research Case



## 8 Historic evolution

Dowry is an ancient custom, and its existence may well predate its records. Historically, dowry was a way of providing a woman with a portion of her family's wealth, which she would not otherwise be entitled to through inheritance. It was believed to be the best way to protect a woman from suffering abuse or ill treatment by her husband. The use of a dowry was combined with a bride price, or rather an amount of money or property the groom would pay to the bride's family in exchange for her marriage to him.

Dowry first came from upper-class families as the wedding gifts from the bride's family to her to help her family or to the husband for his needs. Well after this started, dowry evolved into a type of insurance that was offered along with money for the wedding. The dowry became the property of the husband, whereas the woman would inherit the dowry if she were widowed. Conversely, should the woman die, the dowry, less the cost of the bride price, would be inherited by her natural born children.

Evidence from India, however, indicates that the positive effects of dowry for wives have more than diminished. Once considered a beneficent and even spiritual act observed only by the wealthiest and holiest castes (with the lower castes practicing the more pragmatic tradition of bride price, involving compensation by the groom's family to the bride's family for the loss of human capital), the dowry system today often functions more as a commercial transaction and has been resolutely embraced by the middle and lower classes.<sup>4</sup>

Some studies show that, in Homeric times, the usual Greek practice was to give a bride price, and dowries were also exchanged in the later classical time (5th century BC). Ancient Romans also practiced dowry, though Tacitus notes that the Germanic tribes practiced the reverse custom of the dower. Different studies show that dowry was the symbol of high status in Europe as well; they showed their status by giving dowry to their son-in-law in the form of money, land, etc.

The general pattern seems to be that bride price exists more frequently in primitive, tribal, and often nomadic societies. Several scholars have even contended that dowry marks a transition to more complex societal structures. For example, Hughes (1985) argues that the historical absence of bride price in Greece and Rome was an important demarcation of the complexity of Greco-Roman civilization. This

contrasts with contemporary Indo-European peoples (the Germanic tribes) and also the ancient and more primitive people of the Mediterranean whose legal and religious literature, from the code of Hammurabi to the Bible, records the practice of bride price.

Dowry was widely reinstated in the late middle ages. In medieval Western Europe and later, dowries were common practice, as reported by Anderson. Dowries were also transferred in many parts of the Byzantine Empire until its fall to the Ottomans in the fifteenth century (Patlagaen, 1996). In Mexico and Brazil, dowry payments were prevalent in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries (Anderson, 2007).

In the past, if a woman died without sons, her husband had to refund the dowry but could deduct the value of the bride price.<sup>5</sup> In many ancient cultures, the practice of bride price began to wane, and a transformation to the custom of dowry occurred as these civilizations grew and flourished. In present times, this pattern is reflected in a comparison between dowry-paying India, where the caste system represents perhaps an extreme example of social stratification, and the more homogeneous tribal societies of sub-Saharan Africa that practice bride price.

The high incidence of dowry related violence in Pakistan is generally traced to the cultural influence of Hindu rituals.<sup>6</sup> Dowry and violence against women in South Asia is a South Asian issue, which requires solutions from within specific societies, not magically imported remedies from somewhere abroad (Menski, 1998).

## 9 Practice of Dowry in Pakistan

Estimates of the incidence of domestic violence against women in Pakistan range between seventy to ninety per cent of the total female population. According to the Human Rights Commission of Pakistan (HRCP), the extreme form it takes includes driving a woman to suicide or engineering an accident through the infamous "stove-burning" - usually when the husband, often in collaboration with his side of the family, feels (or is made to believe) that the dowry or other gifts he had expected from his in-laws were not forthcoming or/and he wanted to marry again or he expected an inheritance from the death of his wife.

During 1997, the Lahore press reported an average

<sup>5</sup> Merriam-Webster Online Dictionary

<sup>6</sup> Dowry in India is the payment in cash or/and kind by the bride's family to the bridegroom's family along with the giving away of the bride (called kanyadaan) in marriage. Kanyadaan is an important part of Hindu marital rites. Kanya means daughter, and dana means gift. The practice of dowry started in ancient times as varadakshina and still goes on today. The problem is that it has escalated to a very deadly practice, in Delhi, a woman is burned to death almost every twelve hours. ([www.socyberty.com/Subcultures/The-Practice-Of-Dowry-In-India](http://www.socyberty.com/Subcultures/The-Practice-Of-Dowry-In-India), 2009).

<sup>4</sup> [brokendreams.wordpress.com/2006/12/17/dowry-crimes-and-bride-price-abuse](http://brokendreams.wordpress.com/2006/12/17/dowry-crimes-and-bride-price-abuse)

of more than four local cases of women being burnt weekly, three of the four fatally. Police follow-up on these cases was negligible, with only six suspects taken into custody out of 215 cases reported in Lahore newspapers during the year. In 1997, there was not a single conviction in a “stove-death” case in the country. It remains a mystery for social science researchers as to why stoves burst in susrals (marital homes) only and why the victim is always a bahu (daughter in law).

In Pakistan, in spite of very high frequency of domestic violence and frequent cases of stove deaths, dowry-related violence is neither perceived nor recognized as an accepted form of violence nor documented in social science literature. There has been much unwillingness to admit that there are dowry-related problems of domestic violence and consequent killings of women, but research is beginning to uncover significant levels of domestic violence, which often have little to do with dowry, but damage the women nevertheless (Menski, 2002).

There are certain factors that ensure the continuity of the practice of dowry, such as:

- It is considered an incentive to lure a more suitable match.
- It is submission to the demand of a perceived suitable match.
- It is used as an excuse for denial of inheritance to women (the expenses on dowry and wedding are unilaterally decided by the men of the family as transfer of inheritance by other means).
- It is considered a good support mechanism to help the new couple so that they get a convenient start in practical life.
- It has become a socially enforced practice that is followed and executed ‘with a smile’; notwithstanding how painful it could be to the family.
- Obligatory jahez takes a heavy toll on the family of the bride.

The actors in dowry violence are men and women who are participants in local, regional or national cultures, in religious and social-traditional and yet current and contemporary normative orders that are in the process of being constantly tested and modified.

# Literature Review





## 10 Global Review

According to the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), the term 'gender-based violence'<sup>7</sup> (GBV) is used to distinguish violence that targets individuals or groups of individuals on the basis of their gender from other forms of violence. GBV includes violent acts such as rape, torture, mutilation, sexual slavery, forced impregnation and murder. The United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN Women) considers that the term 'gender-based' provides a new context for understanding violence against women because it reflects the unequal power relationship between women and men in society<sup>8</sup>. Present in all societies; it is a structural phenomenon embedded in the context of cultural, socio-economic and political power relations ... [which] reduces women to economic and emotional dependency, the property of some male protector. Societies organized around gendered, hierarchical power relations give legitimacy to violence against women (Schuler, 1992). It is a serious human rights and public health issue affecting women and girls around the world, across socio-economic classes and cultures.

Gender-based violence thus takes many different forms and there may be distinctive patterns or manifestations of gender violence associated with particular cultures or regions. Virtually every culture in the world contains forms of violence against women that are nearly invisible because they are seen as "normal" or "customary". Gender relations are twisted because of the existence of patriarchy. Each social system or period throws up its own variations on how patriarchy functions and how social and cultural practices differ. The broad principles, however, remain the same, i.e., men control most economic resources and all social and political institutions (Bhasin, 2003).

Dowry is one form of GBV that is practiced in south Asian countries especially India and Pakistan. Husbands and other family members are among the perpetrators of such violence. Bride-burning and other forms of dowry-related violence are among the 16 most common forms of violence defined by women's resource centre (2007). The concept of dowry is prevailing in South Asian countries but it has its roots all over the world.

Scanning across global contexts, it is evident that the amount of dowry varies significantly and tends to be negotiated on an individual basis. Dowry typically arises in complex socioeconomic, non-kinship-based

societies with endogamous marriage practices (that is, where men and women from families of equal social status marry). Dowry then becomes a means to maintain social status by attracting a husband of at least equal standing for one's daughter. As Quale (1988) explains, a high-status husband might mean a Brahmin in India, an aristocrat in Renaissance Europe, or a freeborn citizen in ancient Athens, but the forces tending toward the use of dowry are the same. As a result, the amount of dowry generally increases not only with the wealth of the bride's father, but also with the groom's future prospects (Anderson, 2007).

Dowry and bride-burning associated with it is a complicated issue spreading from unidentifiable seeds in history, mixed with old practices of caste, joint family traditions, male supremacy and misunderstood values like saving the family honour. (Menski, 1998).<sup>9</sup>

According to the UN Secretary General (2006), 89 States currently have some legislative provisions on domestic violence against women, including 60 States with specific domestic violence laws, and a growing number of countries have instituted national plans of action to end violence against women. This is a clear increase in comparison to 2003, when UNIFEM (now part of UN Women) did a scan of anti-violence legislation and only 45 countries had specific laws on domestic violence. However, absence of adequate resources and political will to implement policies continues to hamper progress.

The dramatic changes in norms, laws, policies and practices that address the issue have been matched in recent years by responses from the international community. That has led to a global recognition of violence against women as a human rights abuse. UN agencies have also joined with non-governmental organization (NGOs) and governments to conduct regional campaigns to raise awareness and mobilize community action. UNIFEM (now part of UN Women), as part of its involvement in the global fight to eradicate violence against women, took the lead in coordinating several UN inter-agency regional campaigns in Africa, Latin America, Asia and the CIS region.

Violence against women is a major threat to social and economic development. That was recognized in the Millennium Declaration of September 2000, in which the General Assembly of the United Nations resolved, "to combat all forms of violence against women and to implement the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women." Such violence is intimately associated with complex social

<sup>7</sup> UNHCR, Sexual and Gender-Based Violence against Refugees, Returnees and Internally Displaced Persons, Guidelines for Prevention and Response, 2003

<sup>8</sup> The Issue: Violence against Women and the International Response, 2004.

<sup>9</sup> In-Depth Study on All Forms of Violence against Women: Report of the Secretary-General, 2006.

conditions such as poverty, lack of education, gender inequality, child mortality, and maternal ill health.

## 11 South Asian Review

Dowry-related violence is not only a crime but also an attitude. Sri Sharma<sup>10</sup> raises his concern about the frightening sense of normality that generally coincides with this particular contradictory form of crime. "It's like a vegetarian shooting a duck! A struggle against dowry abuse thus involves changing the mindset of the people."

In South Asia, dowry payments impoverish the bridal family and dramatically affect the lives of unmarried women, who are increasingly considered heavy economic liabilities. The custom of dowry in South Asian countries, especially in India, has been linked to female infanticide and, among married women, to bride-burning and dowry-death: that is, physical harm visited on the wife (sometimes leading to death) to extract promised dowry payments (Rao, 1993).

Rahul K. reported in his article titled "The Evils of Dowry System" that the dowry system is associated with other evils like greed, prejudice against women, ill treatment of girl child, bride-burning, and taking of bribes, so as to be able to give money and other things in the marriage of a daughter. Many young women commit suicide because their parents cannot afford to give dowry.

In many cases, parents borrow money at exorbitant rates of interest to marry off their daughters and spend rest of their lives in great misery, and cannot find a suitable match without it. It has soured relations and there are tensions, ill-will and disharmony in families. Marriage has become a kind of business and exploitation of the parents of a girl. Parents of well-educated and highly-placed boys demand huge dowry both in cash and kind.

Dowry deaths are a common phenomenon in South Asia. The same persons who are legally and socially enjoined to protect them, i.e., their husbands or in-laws, cause these deaths of women. Dowry problems are not an inevitable element of all South Asian marriages, but if dowry demands remain unfulfilled, a young bride may become totally vulnerable and insecure in her husband's family. If her parental family fails to produce the expected goods, she is likely to become the object of taunts and torture. In such a case, in her new home, she walks a perilous terrain, similar to a minefield, with no certainty about when

she might become a victim. She knows that her life is in danger, but she has no means to protect herself against the impending disaster (Kishwar, 1984. p.23).

Anderson has quoted Rao (1993) and Dekkar and Hoogveen (2004) that these payments can be substantial enough to affect the welfare of women and a society's distribution of wealth. Recent estimates document transfers per marriage amounting to six times the annual household income in South Asia and four times in sub-Saharan Africa (2007).

Deaths of young brides through suicide or homicide following disputes over the dowry (gifts given by the bride's family to that of the groom during and after the marriage) are increasingly a feature of Indian society. In India, the Dowry Prohibition Act, 1961, was amended in 1984, 1985 and 1986. Under its provision, even advertising property or money as consideration for the marriages has been made punishable. The offences under this Act are cognizable, non-bailable and non-compoundable. There have been some laws enacted to control such violence against women, such as the Acid Control Act and the Dowry Prohibition Act. However, the level of violence, which continues unabated, demonstrates that such laws do not have the capacity to bring this situation to an end. While such laws are passed under pressure from women's groups and international lobbies, the State often fails to put in place implementation mechanisms to enforce such laws. Within the law-enforcement agencies, there are endorsements regarding the protection of dowry systems and the predominance of males over females is entrenched.

The government of Bangladesh issued appeals to all heads of public and private universities and the Education Board to wage a war against the practice of dowries in the country. However, there does not appear to be a strong social movement to eliminate this practice<sup>11</sup>. The custom of paying a dowry to the future husband's family when a daughter is married is illegal in Bangladesh; but is still practiced by most families living in rural areas. The payment is normally above from 20,000 Taka (around £190 or \$313 U.S.), and since typical earnings are only 100 Taka (94 pence) per day, this can be a major contributor to poverty for many families with daughters, according to Dr. Davis. The government in Bangladesh has already taken positive steps in increasing the enrolment of girls in schools, which should decrease the practice of giving and demanding dowry. Researchers surveyed 2,000 households based in 102 villages across Bangladesh, that were originally interviewed between eight and

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<sup>10</sup> Arun Sharma is the first Indian writer in modern times who has spoken openly on the subject. He is a retired director of All India Radio, awarded the Prix Future Berlin Prize of Germany, and the Asia-Pacific Broadcasting Union Award.

<sup>11</sup> [www.hrsolidarity.net/v](http://www.hrsolidarity.net/v)

14 years ago, to assess the changes in poverty and wellbeing that occurred over time<sup>12</sup>. In Bangladesh, 50 per cent of all murders are of women by their partners.

The law in Nepal prohibits the practice of paying dowry. Dowry is often higher for educated girls because educated girls are considered to be less compliant. This sometimes limits the education a girl's family is willing to allow her since they will have to pay more for her marriage. Women's groups in Nepal are actively protesting against dowry and are trying to ban dowry by voluntary agreement or community enforcement. This is a situation in which having a law against a practice clearly is not as important as changing the cultural practice. However, without laws directly addressing domestic violence, the violent effects on women of dowry issues will likely continue. The Dowry Prohibition Act, 1980, includes the clearest statement against dowry: "Any person giving, taking or supporting the giving or taking of dowry shall be punished with imprisonment for one year or with a fine which may extend to five thousand taka or with both." The National Women Policy, 1999, and Children Repression Prevention (special provision) Act, 2000, both include strong language prohibiting dowry.

## 12 National Review

Pakistan is a signatory to the International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD), the Beijing Plan of Action and the Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW). Pakistan acceded to CEDAW in 1996, making a declaration on the Convention and entering a reservation on Article 29, Declaration: "The accession by Government of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan to the (said Convention) is subject to the provisions of the Constitution of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan." Reservation: "The Government of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan declares that it does not consider itself bound by paragraph 1 of article 29 of the Convention." Pakistan has committed itself to "pursue by all appropriate means and without delay a policy of eliminating discrimination against women". It is therefore obliged to remove "any distinction, exclusion or restriction made on the basis of sex which has the purpose of impairing or nullifying the recognition, enjoyment or exercise by women... on the basis of equality between men and women, of human rights and fundamental freedoms".

In terms of implementation, the ideals of all such treaties are yet to be realized. An international treaty is not directly applicable in domestic law on ratification.

No single covering law was enacted for any of the three main human rights treaties to which Pakistan is party – the International Convention on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination, the Convention on the Rights of the Child, and CEDAW. Existing laws already covered some provisions of these treaties, some provisions have been and are being accommodated through amendment to existing legislation and some have been catered for through new legislation.

Empowerment, access to equal rights and emancipation are still distant dreams for a vast majority of women. However, there are a number of efforts now underway in Pakistan to promote the empowerment of women, such as attempts to refine the National Plan of Action, develop micro credit plans and enhance Khushhali (prosperity) bank, implement UN conventions and develop positive and productive partnerships with civil society, the CSOs and the private sector.

The National Commission on the Status of Women (NSCW), established in 2000, has also announced that violence against women is on the top of its agenda and that honour killings in particular will be a focus of attention in its recommendations for legal reform. It is too early to see any results. However, these are steps in the right direction, as is the decision of the government of Sindh to invite the Citizens-Police Liaison Committee to take over the running of State shelters for women that, to date, have failed to fulfil their function. Similarly, the Family Protection Committees established at the national and provincial levels to address issues of violence against women and children, may well be instrumental in focusing national attention on the violence and brutal deaths that confront women in the name of an 'honour'.

The national-level section specifically focuses on three civil society organizations, namely, Aurat Publication Foundation (AF), Shirkat Gah (SG), and Acid Survivor Foundation (ASF) in view of their focused work on gender based violence. This part also takes into account the multidimensional pioneering work of SACHET<sup>13</sup>.

There had been localized and limited efforts by small-scale welfare societies in the 1960s and 1970s aimed at awareness-raising and motivation campaigns to convince people at the mohalla level to resist dowry demands. However, with the advent of international donors in the 1980s, the CSOs in Pakistan either undertook campaigns against other more visibly anti-women oppressive mechanisms like hudood

<sup>12</sup> Science Daily, October 31, 2008

<sup>13</sup> A short inventory of some Pakistani NGOs focusing on issues of VAW and GBV but not dowry violence is attached as Annexure 4.

ordinance<sup>14</sup> or political marginalization under the Zia regime<sup>15</sup>. Later too, the CSOs have taken up issues of expressed violence, thus being symptomatic, and not delving into the deep-rooted causes of violence against women, dowry being one primary cause (Perveen, 2002).

Pakistan is an Islamic Republic; every rule and regulation in Pakistan is based on Islamic law. But, there are some customs and traditions against Islamic laws which are commonly practiced in Pakistan. The basic unit of Islamic society is the family; and Islam defines the obligations and legal rights of family members. The father is seen as financially responsible for his family; and is obliged to cater for their well-being. The division of inheritance is specified in the Qur'an, which states that most of it is to pass to the immediate family, while a portion is set aside for the payment of debts and the making of bequests. The woman's share in inheritance is generally half of that of a man with the same rights of succession.

Marriage in Islam is a civil contract which consists of an offer and acceptance between two qualified parties in the presence of two witnesses. The groom is required to pay a bridal gift (mahr) to the bride, as stipulated in the contract. While Islam has given women their due rights, men have sometimes used certain aspects of religion to create a patriarchal class system for male domination. This patriarchal oppression mentioned by Dr El Saadawi, which has led to the oppression of women, has been caused by ignorance of the true teachings of Islam<sup>16</sup>.

Kishwar has tackled such a popular belief from several angles. First, the notion of 'greed' is usually linked with the influence of Western consumerist culture. However, greed in the Western culture has not led to dowry demands and to the burning of women, which is particularly a South Asian response. A second related idea is that dowry becomes 'evil' only when the groom's family is unnaturally greedy; the implication being that voluntary giving on the part of the girl's family is acceptable. Kishwar has also discussed the

sense in which such a giving can be termed 'voluntary' in the context of current social expectations (1994). There are evident links between such dowries and the historical practices of female infanticide.

Cases of bride-burning have been reported in Pakistan. The Ansar Burney Trust International says that in some cases, accidents are engineered (such as tampering with a kitchen stove to cause the victim's death) or the victims are set ablaze, and the attack is disguised as an accident or as suicide. According to an Amnesty International report in 1999, though 1,600 "bride-burning" cases were reported, only sixty were prosecuted and just two resulted in conviction<sup>17</sup>.

A growing number of girls have started staying unmarried in Pakistan as parents don't have enough money to meet the 'demands' of the groom's family. The custom for an increasingly elaborate dowry is set by the people who don't even need a dowry from the girls in order to 'run their homes' or 'support' the grooms in any way.

The Constitution of Pakistan has significant human rights content. Any citizen can move any court, which has the relevant jurisdiction, in case his/her fundamental rights are infringed. In practice, these avenues of recourse are not accessible to all citizens equally because of the low level of literacy, particularly legal literacy, and the lack of awareness of one's rights. Approaching the judiciary through a lawyer is expensive in terms of time, effort and finances.

In Pakistan, the conflict between State law and customary, tribal law has been resolved: with the former mimicking the latter, the two are now practically in congruence with each other. This concord between law and custom on the place of women in this society is being consolidated in its courts. Overwhelmingly male, the justices who sit in judgment, predictably, adhere to all the standard shibboleths of patriarchy and are inclined to give men the benefit of the doubt in cases involving the murder, rape, and physical abuse of women as well as in cases where women are accused of zina<sup>18</sup>. This is especially evident in the context of honour killings where a woman's 'immoral' conduct is deemed an acceptable cause (Ali, R. 2001).

The payment of dowry is a rejection of Islamic values and a violation of the 1976 Dowry and Bridal Gift (Restriction) Act. The Act fixed the upper limit of Rs. 5,000 for dowry and Rs. 2,000 as maximum expenditure on meals at a marriage ceremony. Nobody adhered to the legally prescribed upper limit in Pakistan and

<sup>14</sup> Hudood Ordinance, 1979, is a set of five ordinances, forms of punishment and some hadd punishments. Ordinances with the most severe implications for women was the Zina ordinance (enforcement of Hudood) that deals with the offence of rape, adultery, abduction and fornication. This crime carries the maximum penalty (hadd) of 100 lashes in public and stoning to death, and the lesser tazir penalty of between four and 10 years in prison, 30 lashes and a fine, if there is not enough evidence to give the hadd punishment. Hadd has never been carried out in Pakistan, but tazir is frequently given (War Against Rape, 1991). A hadd conviction relies on the evidence of four reliable adult Muslim men.

<sup>15</sup> The Zia regime was a military dictatorship of General Zia-ul-Haq which introduced yet another parallel 'Islamic' legal system in the guise of the Hudood Laws. These laws, based as they are on the most retrogressive interpretation of Islam, have served to confirm the inferior status of women in a deeply misogynist society and, in effect, provided official sanction to their oppression. It is considered a dark era for Pakistani women where the consequences of the Hudood and Qisas and Diyat Laws have been especially devastating for ordinary women.

<sup>16</sup> abolishdowry.wordpress.com

<sup>17</sup> www.dawnnews.com

<sup>18</sup> Extramarital sex includes both adultery and fornication.

dowry continued as an essential part in every social stratum. But, interestingly, the same upper limit of Rs. 5,000 was used by the groom's side at the time of divorce suits filed to recover dowry. Since the upper limit could not exceed Rs. 5,000, the groom's side was not legally bound to pay the rest. There have been many instances of women being deprived of their dowry after divorce as a consequence of legal misinterpretation<sup>19</sup>.

The relevant enactments in Pakistan are the Dowry and Bridal Gift (Restriction) Act, 1976, plus rules made under that act, and the Dowry and Bridal Gift (Restriction) (Amendment) Ordinance, 1980. There is no published specific research on these statutes, but there is a considerable and growing list of decided and reported cases. In 1997, Pakistan has taken further interesting steps to control the inflated expenditure on marriage celebrations by passing Marriage Prohibition of Wasteful Expenses Act, 1997, which did have the effect of bringing many food expenses under control (Menski, 1998).

In 1993, the Pakistan Law Commission recommended amending and updating the 1976 Act and suggested the limit for dowry to be increased to Rs. 50,000 for urban areas and Rs. 20,000 for rural areas. The wedding expenditure was, however, raised to Rs. 25,000 in the urban and Rs. 10,000 in the rural areas. The law continued to be flouted, and in 2003 the Law Commission again announced that it was preparing a draft law on Marriage and Expenses, Dowry and Bridal Gift (Restriction) Act, 2003, to replace the 1976 Act<sup>20</sup>.

At the national level, we see that no study has been conducted to address the issue. There is no mechanism to document the VAW/dowry-based violence cases that could help the institutions for further processing the issue. Some studies have been conducted on the issue of violence, but there is no statistics to measure dowry violence in society. It also shows that dowry violence is not considered seriously in the Pakistani context and is always considered as apart of social customs and norms.

There are several women's organisations working on issues related to violence against women, and giving support to women survivors who become victims of violence and even women imprisoned under accusations of zina.

Efforts made by the mushrooming CSO sector with regard to dowry can be categorised as disappointing. There had been localized and limited efforts by small-

scale welfare societies in the 1960s and 1970s aimed at awareness-raising, as also motivation campaigns to convince people at the mohalla level to resist the mindless following of dowry demands. However, with the advent of international donors in the 1980s, the CSOs in Pakistan either undertook campaigns against other more visibly anti-women oppressive mechanisms like the Hudood ordinance or political marginalization under the Zia<sup>21</sup> regime. Of late also, the CSOs have taken up issues of expressed violence, thus being merely symptomatic, and not delving into the deep-rooted causes of violence against women – dowry being one primary cause.

The government of Nawaz Sharif<sup>22</sup> in the mid-1990s had introduced an ordinance banning grand wedding receptions (an implicit upshot of dowry). However, that was enforced for a short time only, and is now losing its spirit. The Commission on Law and Justice has drafted a new legislation in connection with wedding expenses and dowry. SACHET organized the first-ever national consultation on marriage expenses and legislation on dowry in Pakistan in July 2003. The bill drafted by the Commission (though SACHET had reservations on its endorsement of the dowry practice) was presented to the Senate and approved (see Annexure 1) for presentation before the National Assembly. The National Assembly, however, has so far has been unable to debate it. Meanwhile, a PML (Q) woman parliamentarian, Marvi Memon, presented a private member's bill (Annexure 2) on dowry violence, inheritance law and acid attacks (Agehi, 2009).

The scarcity of research on myriad aspects of dowry systems in Pakistan, as concluded in the earlier two studies<sup>23</sup> conducted by AGEHI-SACHET Pakistan, constitutes one of the foremost reasons and motivating factors for undertaking the current national-level study on dowry, including dowry violence.

### 13 Concept of Dowry in Islam

Dr. Riffat Hasan states, "A woman holds a very high status in the Islamic faith. She is honoured and respected at all times, but many startling transgressions have crept into Islamic practices. These transgressions have been caused by cultural influences that have no basis

<sup>21</sup> Military dictator, Gen. Zia ul Haque.

<sup>22</sup> The twice-elected and twice-ousted Prime Minister of Pakistan, former Chief Minister of Punjab and head of the PML (N). His brother, Shabaz Sharif, on becoming Chief Minister of Punjab, following the election in 2008, has restored the ban on lavish wedding meals in Punjab that had been lifted by the National Assembly during Gen. (ret'd.) Musharaff's regime (Oct. 1999-August 2007).

<sup>23</sup> Perveen, Rakhshinda. Research paper: Dowry - Socio Cultural perspectives from Pakistan: presented at an International Conference, "Dowry: Realities & Strategies for Intervention", British Council, Dhaka, Bangladesh, January 2002. Perveen Rakhshinda - Dowry and silence of the civic society as reflected by the newspaper media- A micro analysis of the invisibility of dowry as a gender issue in Pakistan presented at the 3rd Conference of Population Council of Pakistan, 2002.

<sup>19</sup> abolishdowry.wordpress.com

<sup>20</sup> www.dawn.com

in Islamic scripture. The concept of dowry (jahez) does not exist in Islam. It is purely a cultural phenomenon that is considered un-Islamic. Shariah does not make any expense incumbent on the bride/bride's parents. Even the marriage expenses, it is recommended, are to be borne by the bridegroom. However, the bride can bring from her parental home whatever she wants of her free will, and that will always belong to her."<sup>24</sup>

Instead of dowry, there is a concept of dower or mehr in Islam. Mehr is a kind of gift which is given by the bridegroom to the bride at the time of marriage or afterwards. The difference between dowry and mehr is that the former has no legal or religious basis, while the latter has a religious and legal standing. According to Islam, women have the right to a fixed portion of their parental property. Many other un-Islamic customs have also crept into the marriage ceremony of some Muslims. These customs have either been borrowed from non-Muslim cultures or continue because they were established in the past generations.

The Quran says, "And give women their mehr as a free gift, but if they of themselves be pleased to give up to you a portion of it, then eat it with enjoyment and with wholesome result." (Surah Nisa: 4.)

- a) Mehr must be agreed upon by the marrying partners themselves, not by parents.
- b) Mehr is her right, to which her husband remains indebted.
- c) It is a free gift and not her price.

The mehr may be in the form of cash, kind or non-material consideration (like training or teaching something). It can be paid upfront or in the form of a promise to pay upon demands, but that has to be decided prior to the solemnization of marriage. It can be moajjal (immediate), muwajjal (deferred) or indat-talab (on demand). However, it is highly recommended to pay it before or at the time of the nikah.

In Islam it is the man who pays the mehr (dower) to the woman. The following verses in the Holy Qur'an prove that it is the man who is obligated to pay the mehr (dower) to the woman unless the woman chooses not to take it:

"And give women (on marriage) their dower (mehr) as a free gift; but if they, of their own good pleasure, remit any part of it to you, take it and enjoy it with right good cheer." (An-Nisa':4.)

"Also (prohibited are) women already married, except those whom your right hands possess: Thus hath Allah ordained (prohibitions) against you: Except for these, all others are lawful, provided ye seek (them in marriage) with mehr (dower, a bridal money given by the husband to his wife at the time of marriage) from your property,- desiring chastity, not lust, seeing that ye derive benefit from them, give them their dowers (at least) as prescribed; but if, after a dower is prescribed, agree mutually (to vary it), there is no blame on you, and Allah is All-knowing, All-wise." (An-Nisa':24.)

Islam says nothing about the dowry custom. In Hadith, the dowry of Holy Prophet's daughter is mentioned. The Holy Prophet (PBUH) gave dowry to his daughter Hazrat Fatima (RA) according to his capacity. Cultures that demand dowry from the bride's family are actually practicing the opposite of what Allah has commanded. They have reversed Allah's words in their practice. The bride is forced to pay a negotiated amount to the groom unless the man chooses not to take it.

Maulana Talha has said: "Dowry is a social curse and contrary to Islamic teachings. Yet, it is spreading like an epidemic in Muslim society." It is a bitter fact that in spite of the 'social reforms' and 'Islamic family campaigns' launched by reputed Muslim organizations like the Jamiat Ulama-e-Hind and the Jamaat-e-Islami, the gravity of the problem has only increased.

"The cancerous growth of dowry in Muslim societies is based on ignorance and greed for easy money," according to Maulana Talha.

Maulana Mohammad Salim Qasimi, Mohtamim of Darul Uloom Wakf Deoband, has said, "Demanding dowry is not only a religious evil but also a social evil. It is our religious duty to stop this practice and all of us should work for it jointly." His solution was, "Muslims should solemnize marriages in a simple way. Islam likes simplicity. It prohibits adopting all those practices that give way to evils in society."

Jamia Mazahir Uloom's Maulana Syed Mohammad Shahid Mazahiri has said, "Due to lack of knowledge and greed for worldly possessions, Muslims have come to turn their marriages a difficult and costly affair, whereas demanding dowry and exploiting women on this pretext is contrary to Islamic Shari'ah." He also thinks simple marriages are a solution.

In charge of Jamaat-e-Islami Hind (Saharanpur Unit), Dr. Jamil Manavi, has said, "Poor Muslim girls whose parents are unable to bear huge expenses of marriage sit aside in their homes waiting for eventual marriage,

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<sup>24</sup> Dr. Riffat Hassan, Prof. of Religious studies and humanities give her views in FIGHT against dowry –episode in 2002



but in vain. Should Muslims revert to the Prophet's tradition, the issue can be solved." His suggestion was, "We should immediately pay attention to moral training of our children in order to prevent un-Islamic practices."





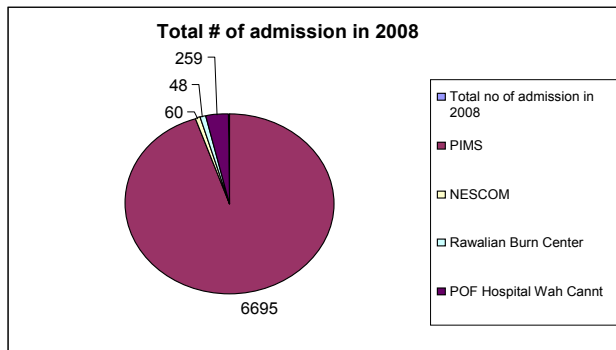
# Research Findings



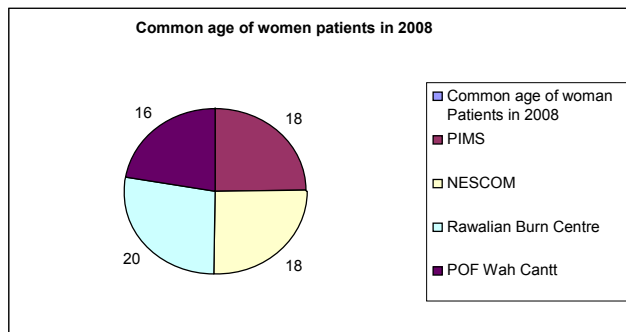
## 14 Burn Centres

This chapter provides an insight into the burn centres. It also analyzes the causes behind burn injuries, especially among females, which are not factually reported. Health facilities for burn cases are not enough for the entire population in the country. There is only a limited number of burn centres established by the government health departments as well as in private hospitals.

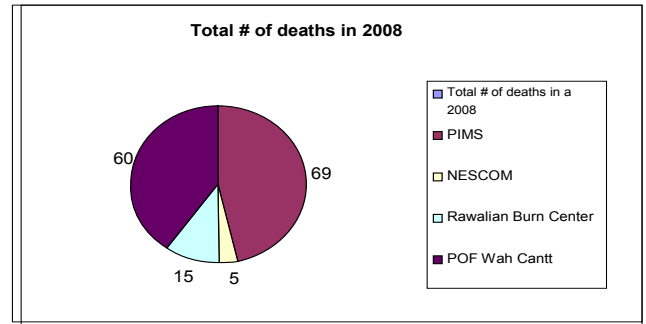
The research team identified twelve burn centres in Pakistan. After visiting each of the centers, four were selected for the collection of data due to their accessibility and cooperative attitude of the concerned officials.



The above pie chart shows the number of patients registered in the year 2008 in the burn centres. Out of them, 6,695 cases were registered in PIMS, 60 in NESCOM, 48 in the Rawalian Burn Centre, Holy Family Hospital, Rawalpindi, and 259 in the POF Hospital, Wah Cantonment.



The above pie chart shows the age of women burn patients in the year 2008 in the burn centres.



The above pie chart shows the number of deaths in the year 2008 in the burn centres. Sixty-nine cases were registered in PIMS, five in NESCOM, 15 in the Rawalian Burn Centre, Holy Family Hospital, Rawalpindi, and 60 in POF Hospital, Wah Cantonment.

General observations:

- It was observed during the burn centre visits that the aspect of gender-based violence is neglected by medical officials.
- There is gender blindness and is no policy to handle gender-related violence in the concerned institutions.
- The medical history documented is limited to the physical cause of burn injury and does not document the socio-cultural causes behind the the incident of violence against women/girls.
- The staff of the burn centres is not gender sensitized.
- Majority of the female victims/survivors of burn cases fall in the age of 18- 25 years and are unmarried.
- They are very reluctant to share the actual burn cause. The attendants of the burn patients are family members, i.e., father, mother, brother, husband, etc.
- Honour and privacy is dominant. Nobody wants to share the actual history.
- There is no formal gender-based training received by the staff of the burn centres as indicated by .the concerned officials.

Specific Observations:

Majority of the country's population is unable to get medical facilities in their existing living conditions. For better treatment, they need to travel from rural to urban hospitals. One burn centre gets patients from across the country.

Burn injuries are very common, but require very

expensive treatment. The average cost of a patient varies from one patient to another because it depends how badly patient is affected by burn injuries. For example, a severely burnt patient's treatment may cost Rs. 4,000 to 12,000 per day. The common physical causes of burn injuries in all the Burn Centres are flame burn, acid burn, accidental scald burn<sup>25</sup>, Gas stove and hot liquids.

Although all the burn centres provide burn-related facilities, but they require more funds (a 20 to 25 per cent burn injured patient requires Rs. 400,000 in less than a month), professionally trained staff, expensive drugs, post-burn rehabilitation, and psychotherapy. Burn injured patients require immediate treatment. If 50 to 60 per cent of the body has been burnt, the patient should be within five to six hours of travel to the nearest burn centre, otherwise, there is little chance of survival of patient, according to the information given by the head of the burn centre at the POF Hospital, Wah Cantonment.

The burn centres treat only caustic agents and the actual causes of burn injuries are not known. There is no monitoring system to investigate the burn cause of the patient.

It was observed that all the burn centres only treat physical causes. At the same time, it is difficult for those medical officers or concerned department heads to get involved in medico-legal cases because they do not want to be a part of police investigations.

The social cause of burn injury is ignored after the admission in the burn centre for treatment. Majority of the burn injured patients are unmarried females as compared to married women. The cases of burn injuries are not reported in their actual way. The patients change their statement on a daily basis. Their initial statement at the time of admission is totally changed within three days due to family pressure. Mostly female burn patients have their sympathies with their families and do not want to face the police. That is why they change their statement. Suicidal cases among unmarried females are high because of several reasons, like illegitimate pregnancy before marriage, refusal of marriage proposal, marriage without consent, etc.

One of the major causes of burn injuries is conflict with in-laws which mostly results in stove burns. The issues

of gender are always neglected, and no attention is paid to addressing and highlighting the gender-based violence and, more specifically, dowry-related violence.

It was observed during the collection of data that domestic violence cases are high in numbers and mostly husbands or in-laws set the married women on fire. Such victims cannot survive because the in-laws deliberately take them very late for medical treatment, and normally 50 to 60 per cent of the body has by then been burnt. The patient's statement at the time of registration of the FIR changes by the time of her death.

It was also observed that the history of the patient is ignored. There is no process of keeping history documentation to know how a person faced the severe kind of violence. In some cases, the burn-injured patients did share the details of the incident of violence, but they requested that the same may not be recorded. That was because of family 'honour' and privacy, and the doctor would follow their instructions because their priority was to save the life of the injured.

The staff of the burn centre is not concerned with recording declaration to find the reason behind the burn injuries, as it would create trouble for them in facing the police department and judicial inquiry if the medical officers pursue the medico-legal case. They simply request for the FIR to be registered. In all the burn centres there were no evidence of dowry-related violence and other forms of violence due to false statements reported during the admission of the patients in the burn centre. The respondents were of the view that there are violence-related cases, but the patients are not willing to share the facts due to fear and strong pressure from the husband, in-laws as well as the victim's own family due to their social standing and honour.

Also, most of the medical staff avoids working with burn centre victims due to the pungent smell from the burn patient's body. Due to the costly treatment of burn injuries and because the families of the patients are not in a position to continue their treatment, they often take the patients out of the hospital without official approval from the doctor, without any idea about the importance of the post-burn treatment.

Another issue is the need for trained and committed medical staff for the proper treatment of the patients. Burn treatment does not end after the initial medical treatment, but it also requires counselling, post-treatment counselling, psychological treatment, post-

<sup>25</sup> Accidental scald is commonly not recorded in its actual way. Accidental burn scalds happening only among females in the territory of home is totally missing. The majority of the accidental burn injuries have social causes, i.e., dowry violence, illegitimate pregnancy, marriage without consent, unsuccessful love marriage, birth of first girl child, desire of second marriage from the male partner, etc. Therefore, the majority of the suicidal burn attempts (so-called accidental scalds) have social causes.

burn problems treatment and another most important factor of nutrition for the patients for them to lead a stable and healthy life.

The following gender concerns and challenges have been summarily documented:

- 1) The staff of the burn centres treats burn injuries and not the patients. Hence, there is an unconscious ignorance of the gender-specific needs as between the males and females. Though there is male and female segregation in terms of their respective wards, the psycho-social needs of male and female patients which are obviously different are never included in routine treatment. It was interesting to note that, according to the medical officers, female burn patients recover much earlier than male burn patients, but females required a lot more of post-counselling and treatment.
- 2) Majority of the burn patients reported were females. Due to the non-availability of female staff, the female patients feel hesitant to share the actual history behind the burn injury. During the admission of the female patients, they do not feel comfortable with male medical staff due to cultural and religious strictness.
- 3) The biological needs of female patients are quite different from those of the male patient, and they are not addressed separately. In our culture, females are shy of sharing their biological problems like menstruation, STD, STI, etc., with male medical officers.
- 4) Majority of the burn centre staff which is directly involved in the treatment of burn-injured patients are males. Female nurses are also providing their services, but their numbers are very low. The reason for the less number of female staff is that they hesitate to work for the burns due to hectic, prolonged and demanding treatment.
- 5) There is no proper system of psychological counselling for the patients in general and in gender-perspective in particular.
- 6) The family members of the victim insist and exert pressure on medical officer not to record the actual patient history and not to take any medico-legal action.
- 7) Officially, there is no policy to record the actual cause of burn injuries before the admission of a patient to identify the kind of criminal act.
- 8) The psychological counselling for females is

insignificant to rehabilitate them during the pre and post-burn phases.

## 15 Sampling in Data

In-depth interviews and focus group discussions

The study revealed that the average age of the victims at the time of marriage ranged between 15 to 30 years, as it is evident in table below:

Sr. No	Age Group	Number of Women	Percentage
1	15-18	12	25
2	19-22	21	43.5
3	23-26	9	19
4	27-30	6	12.5
	Total	48	100

It was observed that 13 cases were of those girls who had been married before attaining the legal age of marriage, but most of the time the girls' parents did not disclose the real age of the girl. These cases were mostly recorded from the NWFP and Balochistan. It was also shown that in case of early marriage, the girls had no decision-making power and had no choice in match selection. All of the respondents said that they had gone through arranged marriages where decisions were made by the family.

### Educational status:

Sr. No	Educational status	Number of Women	Percentage
1	Illiterate	4	8.3
2	Literate	4	8.3
3	Primary	10	21
4	Middle	9	19
5	Matriculation	10	21
6	Intermediate	5	10
7	Graduate	4	8.3
8	Post-graduate	2	4.1
Total		48	100

As seen in the table above, 92 per cent of the respondents were literate and only 8 per cent illiterate. The findings show that though a vast majority of the women were educated, they were still not in a position to oppose dowry violence. The results also show that the demand for dowry exists even in the case of the educated girls due to societal pressures.

The results also show that the caste system is prevalent. That is one of the salient features of Pakistani society that influences the marriage institution. This

system is based on the traditional structure of social stratification. The system is strong among the rural communities, while in the urban communities it is not strongly observed.

The results bring out that VAW/dowry violence is observed among communities/people who have a low economic background. So, this violence has a relationship with the poor and middleclass communities. They are the more vulnerable communities, but even the upper middleclass communities were victims of dowry violence.

### FOCUS-GROUP DISCUSSIONS

Demographic profile of the respondents

Province	Age of the respondents
Punjab 1. Lahore 2. D. I. Khan	1. 21-32 2. 20-30
NWFP 1. Peshawar 2. Mardan	1. 20-30 2. 20-30
Balochistan 1. Quetta 2. Mastung	1. 20-35 2. 20-35
Sindh 1. Karachi 2. Hyderabad	1. 20-35 2. 20-35

### Educational qualifications of participants

Province	Age of the respondents
Punjab 1. Lahore 2. D. I. Khan	1. illiterate-post graduate 2. illiterate-post graduate
NWFP 1. Peshawar 2. Mardan	1. Primary – Intermediate 2. Intermediate – Postgraduate
Balochistan 1. Quetta 2. Mastung	1. illiterate-BSC 2. illiterate-F.A
Sindh 1. Karachi 2. Hyderabad	1. illiterate – FA / BA 2. illiterate - FA

### Socio-economic status of participants

Province	Marital status	Employment status	Socio-economic class
Punjab 1. Lahore 2. D. I. Khan	Married Married	Employed and unemployed	Middle and lower middle
NWFP 1. Peshawar 2. Mardan	1. 20-30 2. 20-30	Unemployed and employed (home-based workers)	Middle and lower middle
Balochistan 1. Quetta 2. Mastung	1. 20-35 2. 20-35	Employed (home-based workers & health workers)	Middle and lower middle
Sindh 1. Karachi 2. Hyderabad	1. 20-35 2. 20-35	Unemployed	Middle and lower middle

## 16 Impressions and Findings

### 16.1 Marriage Rituals

In the interviews and focus group discussions, participants were asked to share their views on the importance of marriage and its rituals. The most frequent responses were variations of the below:

*“Marriage is a Sunnah of the Holy Prophet (SAW), a great responsibility, very important for a girl’s/ woman’s social protection, important for human race, a duty to be fulfilled. Anyway, a woman cannot live alone, and that is why she has to be married. A girl cannot live with her parents for her entire life. We cannot imagine a family without marriage in our society. It’s a beautiful moment of life and a way to fulfil the sexual needs in a legal and Islamic way.”*

The responses evinced that marriage is a challenge because of associated rituals, which require significant finances. Ensuring marriage of children is seen as the responsibility of parents. Girls in Pakistan are supposed to be married at a young age, and if for some reason they cannot, they are subjected to taunts by the society. Men are supposed to be the breadwinners and women the domestic labourers in Pakistani society.

After marriage, if a girl steps out of her domestic sphere to the public sphere, she has to face a separate set of problems based on stereotyping and social disapproval of women’s mobility independence. Social norms dictate that women stay within the home and remain dependent after marriage. One of

the respondents was of the view that marriage in our society is a type of slavery for women because after marriage a woman has to do what the in-laws want her to do. According to her,

*“I think marriage is a conspiracy to turn the woman into a slave.”*

Different rituals are observed during marriages and parents have to spend a lot of money to observe these customary and not Islamic rituals. The most common rituals observed in Pakistan, according to the respondents are, ‘Engagement (mangni), mayoun, mehndi, barat and walima’.

These rituals are observed to avoid the taunts of society without knowing whether they are Islamic or not. According to one of the respondents,

*“People criticize if someone does not observe these rituals.”*

## 16.2 Importance of Dowry

The respondents narrated that when a girl is born the mother starts collecting dowry goods for her and starts the search for a suitable match for the daughter. Discussants in focus groups said dowry normally includes a TV, a refrigerator, a deep-freezer, clothes, gold, furniture, bed sheets, quilts, utensils, carpets, curtains, cosmetics, and other accessories of daily use. Average expenditure on dowry in a middle class family is above 0.3 to 0.4 million rupees.

Ignoring the complications of marital relations if the match is found, the age of their daughters is rarely considered. Parents feel burdened by daughters. According to some of the respondents,

*“People get their daughters married at a very young age just to throw off the burden from their heads.”*

In the FGDs, one respondent narrated:

*“At the time of my marriage I was a minor and had not attained puberty. I was hospitalized for many days because of being ruptured. After I was discharged from hospital, I refused to live with my husband because of the fear”*

Regarding the importance of dowry, most of the respondents were of the view that:

*“It is important for a bride’s security and reputation in the family. Without dowry we do not get respect and love from our in-laws. Many girls belonging to poor families are still sitting in their parents’ home just because of the non-availability of dowry.”*

Through interviews, respondents highlighted there is a strong belief that dowry equals her share in inheritance, after which a girl is no longer entitled to share in inheritance from her father. Their share in the father’s property is taken by the brothers whereas in Islam it is a categorical right of women.

*“Most of the times parents prefer dowry over a share in the property which is not fair.”*

In the FGDs, discussants pointed out that most of the cases, if a girl receives dowry, she cannot claim her share in her father’s property; and if she does so, she has to break her relationship with all her family members. As one respondent argued,

*“If a girl demands her share in the property, she is told ‘agar halal ki baiti ho to hissa math mangna.’”*  
[If you are a legitimate daughter, then don’t ask for your share.]

## 16.3 Is Dowry Social Protection?

Dowry is considered to be a way of earning honour and prestige for a girl in the eyes of her in-laws. Parents arrange dowry for the security and high status of their daughters. Girls with a large amount of dowry are given respect and love by their in-laws. Girls are insulted, tortured, disliked and sometimes even thrown out of homes due to ‘insufficient’ dowry. The most common responses were:

*“It depends on the way the in-laws think, it upgrades a girls economic and social status in front of the in-laws as well as in society; if not given, the girl is subjected to the taunts of in-laws and society; it makes the life of a daughters safe and sound.”*

Dowry helps parents also in finding a suitable match for their younger daughters. If someone gives a large amount to his elder daughter, he is expected to do much more in future for his younger daughters. This way it helps the parents find a suitable match for their daughters. Two of the respondents had the same view:

*“My parents gave me a large amount in dowry and that resulted in finding good matches for my younger sisters.”*

On the other hand, it does not fully guarantee a daughter’s social security, because her security is based on what kind of in-laws she has. According to some respondents:

*“Yes, it may increase her worth, but it does not mean that it secures her marital life. Sometimes the treatment of the in-laws does not change with the large amount of dowry. It is not necessary that*

*dowry will bring happiness in the life for a girl. When I got married, I brought a large amount of dowry but I was still tortured to bring more."*

In the FGDs, discussants pointed out that girls become victims of violence, and face separation and divorce on these grounds. So while provision of large dowries may work to protect individual women under some circumstances, on whole the practice is extremely negative for women.

*"Parents of the bridegroom select the bride through her parent's bank balance rather than her character or behaviour."*

#### 16.4 Factors for High Dowry Demand

The evidence from interviews shows that the demand for dowry is always made in an informal way. The demand for dowry is commonly made by the groom's mother or sister. Nowadays, the bride at times herself demands a large amount in dowry for her social protection. Dowry also helps filling in perceived shortcomings of beauty and age. If a girl is not good-looking or is over-age, the only attraction for other people is high dowry and property. The high status of a girl's father can cover the gaps. The most common responses were:

*"Dowry is always demanded by the groom's family. Sometimes they do not demand it, but they try to state their demand to bride's family indirectly. The examples of other brides in the family are quoted. Nowadays, brides themselves demand dowry; parents arrange it for their reputation as well as for their daughters' reputation."*

In the discussions, people pointed out that the norms are changing as increasingly women are finding paid work outside the home. Nowadays, girls having some source of earning/job are preferred for marriage because she becomes a source of income. Where Islam considers a woman's earnings her own, declaring it a man's obligation to support the family, the current expectation is that she will bring her earning capacity as well as dowry into the marriage, and her income cannot be spent at her own discretion. According to one of the respondents,

*"Girls having jobs are preferred for marriage because they can pay the dowry throughout their lives."*

The FGD discussants stressed the double standards of society that allows women to go out of the home for jobs but restricts them in the name of honour and culture to get control on their lives if they do not have

a job.

#### 16.5 The Role of the Media and Religious Figures

The media plays an important role in promoting the custom of dowry through its advertisements, dramas and fashion shows. Some of respondents of the interviews were of the view:

*"Molvis should spend some time in their sermons on the issue of dowry. The media should not portray the heavy expenses on marriage and dowry; it should not appreciate the VIP culture in marriage; it should highlight the difficulties of the poor regarding dowry. The media should portray the Islamic view of marriage and differentiate between customs and Islam."*

In focus groups, people affirmed that the media, especially electronic, shapes our opinions. Whatever is watched in the media is believed to be true. Everyone wants to be like the hero and heroin portrayed in the dramas and movies. The media plays an important role in promoting the custom of dowry because through dramas, movies and advertisements they portray costly wedding ceremonies, expensive bridal dresses, jewellery and such, and then want to copy them in their real life - parents take loans to give their daughters as much they can and spend their entire life paying them back.

Participants of both, interviews and group discussions said religion plays an important role in the life of Pakistani people. According to some respondents, the religious figures (molanas and ulema) use most of their time in sermons about ethics and very often talk about the social issues people are facing, but where dowry is concerned, the ulema have so far played a very minor role in convincing the public to refrain from the practice. According to one of the respondents,

*"At the time of nikah, the molanas see it it that the the haq mehr (dower) is fixed according to the Sharia but, they never condemn dowry, which is not according to Sharia."*

The religious scholars can play a very vital role in convincing the people by including this topic in their sermons.

#### 16.6 Link between Dowry and Violence against Women

Interviewers were asked about the relationship of dowry with violence, and the most common responses were:



*“Dowry itself is a type of violence against women. Dowry is a form of violence that directly affects women. Women are most vulnerable to violence and it helps others to discriminate against her. Women have to be prepared for the consequences if insufficient amount of dowry is paid; if enough is not paid, women are subjected to the taunts of the in-laws, physical abuse and even being thrown out of the home; the in-laws make her life miserable.”*

In a FGD, respondents pointed out that in some cases, the in-laws do not demand dowry at the time of marriage, but after marriage the girls are tortured, physically and psychologically, to demand it from their parents. For this purpose, most of the parents take loans to purchase the dowry items. One of the female respondents told the story of her sister:

*“After marriage, the in-laws started teasing and beating my sister. When she got conceived, they charged her by saying that she was not a virgin at the time of marriage and denied to own the child. All this was done just to snatch some money from my family.”*

### 16.7 Dowry after Marriage

In the FGDs, it was pointed out that after receiving a dowry at the time of marriage, it does not stop there but continues after marriage in different shapes. The bride's family keeps on giving gifts on different occasions after the marriage, and this shape of dowry continues until the girl's death. Parents are bound to do that in order to maintain their prestige and avoid the taunts of other relatives. Just after the valima function, the bride's in-laws, the bridegroom and his friends are invited to a heavy lunch or dinner and receive gifts from the girl's family. On occasions of religious festivities such as eid, and shab-e-barat, the girl's family have to send gifts to her. If the girl is not given these gifts, she is subjected to taunts by her in-laws.

A participant stated that in some families of District Mardan, NWFP, there is a tradition that if a woman dies, the family of the woman takes the dead body home and arrangements of her funeral are made by them. They do it in the pretext that when the woman was alive she was 'yours' (the husband's), but after death she is 'ours' and we will bear all her funeral expenditure. When a child is born, the girl's family bears most of the charges for the child's clothes and other necessities. They have to present the child a ring or a bracelet made of gold. In many families, even a share in crops is sent to the girl:

*“A girl's family has to pay dowry till the death of their daughter in different shapes.”*

### 17 Discussion on Impressions and Findings

The study pointed out that there are two types of dowry violence; direct and indirect. It creates psychological pressures on girls and their families. There are many customs and traditions that are linked with dowry practices like *Nanak Wali, vaham/Jamma*<sup>26</sup>, these customs create economic burden on girls family and caused customary practices such as vanni, swarra, watta satta, bride price, marriage with Quran and child marriages, stove burning, domestic violence, marital rape, fistula, sexually transmitted diseases, osteoporosis, repeated pregnancies, high maternal mortality rate, anaemia, are different forms and or consequences of GBV that are closely linked with marriage customs and dowry is one of them.

Due to societal pressures and expectations because of which the bride is required to bring dowry to the marriage, the girl child becomes an unwanted child who must be married at an early age without her consent.

Younger and or child brides are in effect sold in the name of marriage. Usually the 'buyer' the bridegroom is an older person richer or in better economic conditions than the girls' family and therefore there is no material demand or dowry demand in its conventional sense as the girl herself is taken as a valuable that can be eventually treated as a commodity or property.

The worries of the mother start with the birth of the girl child and she starts her search for an appropriate match at an early age of her daughter because getting married early is considered socially appropriate for girls. Girls in Pakistan are supposed to be married at a young age, and if for some reason they cannot do so, they are subjected to derision by society.

The dowry system effectively turns women into commodities. Early marriages are favoured in many parts, tribes, baradris and ethnic groups of Pakistan, because families prefer younger brides<sup>27</sup>. The biological family no longer has to support the girl. The husband's family may view her as cheap labour in the household and fields, and more accommodating, in that they do not question their husband's family. The daughter is often declined a share in family property.

<sup>26</sup> Maternal side gifts on the birth of grand children An in-depth exploration and soci-geographic

<sup>27</sup> An in-depth exploration and soci-geographic mapping on this particular aspect was beyond the scope of this research. Similarly the role of media especially TV advertisements and images from Bollywood cinema were brought into discussion with urban and urbanized participants in the FGD but the discussion did not focus on these dimensions which however point out towards the need of examining these crucial determinants of dowry systems.

Dowry is seen as a substitute for a share, and a small percentage of unmarried young women actually favour the practice of taking dowry.

According to the respondents, dowry and violence are interrelated as may be appreciated from their shared experiences and anecdotes on denial of inheritance, haq mehar (dawar), domestic abuse of all forms.

The results have brought out the concept in which girls are considered an economic burden. The girl child is not welcomed due to the expected expenses that the family would have to incur on her in the form of dowry. Hence, girls are deprived of their basic rights to education, health, even proper nutrition.

In many areas of Pakistan, especially in Punjab, the girl's families are considered the victims of dowry violence. Here, dowry violence refers not just to the dowry that is given at marriages, but also to that expected after the marriage and other dowry customs related to marriage practices like *nanak wali*<sup>28</sup>, as well as marital violence.

Large dowries - as well as greater satisfaction with the marriage in the form of more male children - reduce the probability of violence. In Pakistan, marriage is almost never a matter of choice for women; but is determined by social norms and parental preferences.

Testimonies show that a woman rarely retains control over the dowry amount as it is often appropriated by her in-laws. Some of the respondents were of the view that if they get dowry then they have no right to own property. Thus, the practice of dowry deprives women of their inheritance rights in property, especially land.

Such practices exist all over Pakistan, but are more common in Punjab<sup>29</sup> and Sindh<sup>30</sup>. These social pressures develop the concept in which men are considered as custodians of the family's 'name' and women as the family 'honour'. In Sindh and many area of the Saraiki belt, the dowry system has given birth to the custom in which women are forced to enter into marriage with the Quran.

According to the findings, the determinants of dowry system can be grouped as follows:

1. **Gender:** Dowry violence is one of the gender

<sup>28</sup> Nanak wali is come from Punjabi word 'nanakay' which means maternal relations (maternal uncles, maternal grandparents, etc.) and 'nanakwali' means "dowry gifts from maternal side". It is one of the marriage custom practice in Punjab Province where the bride's family not only have to give dowry gifts to their daughters and sisters but also obligated for their granddaughters as well.

<sup>29</sup> In rural Punjab society condemns those women who demand for their inheritance rights from their brothers, because the support of her brothers is given her importance and honour in her in-laws,

<sup>30</sup> This finding also emerge in the research done by Dr.Rakhshinda PERVEEN IN 2001-2002 for her 13-episode advocacy TV series (jahez k khilaf jang) fight against dowry. www.sachet.org.pk

issues that that has its impact on both gender men & women who become the victims and or survivors of this practice. This is an indirect form of violence where members of girl's family are indirectly pressurised to maintain dowry money for their girls.

2. **Society:** Society here encompasses not only values, traditions, cultures and norms determined by it but also the transitions within a society due to industrialization, urbanization, media influx and globalization.
3. **Media:** Media especially electronic media and mainstream popular cinema and soap operas from India have emerged as determinants of influencing dowry systems and wedding plans.
4. **Religion:** Religion, in this case Islam, has been always considered a sensitive entity too sacred to be demystified both by the instructed and the illiterate. The impact of this is perpetual silence on many faces of injustices and violence in the name of religion.
5. **Culture:** Cultural rituals marriage practices and customs like nanak wali strengthen the system. In many areas of Punjab dowry like jahez and nanakwali are very important at one hand it is related to prestige and honour of family that create economic burden on parents of the girls on the other hand it deprives women of their inheritance rights.

These factors are interdependent and in real life they act collectively, with or without the consciousness of the stakeholders.

The study observed that dowry was a phenomenon that went beyond the ritual of marriage. Pregnancy, child-birth and all kinds of religious and family functions are occasions when such demands are made.

Some respondents said that a dowry brought higher status for a woman in her husband's home; some others said that it meant security and good treatment for a woman, and some others said that it was just an insurance against violence.

Notably, several respondents, especially young women belonging to the lower income groups, said that the love and blessings of their parents were enough for them; however, very few of them thought that they could be married without a dowry.

In most of the cities in the four provinces, like Lahore, Karachi and Peshawar, the expenditure on marriages had gone up and the liabilities in terms of debts ranged

from <sup>31</sup>Rs.100000 to Rs. 400,000 among urban parents. For rural families, the quantum is different but equally prohibitive. The starting of a new business, a journey abroad, and even the construction of a house are all occasions to ask for money from the bride's family. In several communities, especially among the tribal people of KPK, the system of bride price was gradually displaced by dowry after migration to cities.

Bride-burning is clearly culpable homicide, cold-blooded murder, perpetuated by identifiable criminals, members of victims' marital family. The dowry system is against the law of equality of men and women. It is a crime to give and take dowry. But these are openly violated. There are thousands of cases of dowry every year; few offenders are actually punished. It shows that laws alone are not enough. Besides laws, we need more social awareness and effective social measures.

The withdrawal of women from the agricultural economy and the lower work participation rates of women even in better-off provinces such as Sindh and Punjab have resulted in a decline in the status of rural women. Also, there is no direct correlation between dowry and the levels of education and employment. Although education and employment are not the determinants but this correlation points out towards an important recognition for policy makers and change managers in the civil society: education and employment are means not an end to reduce gender based injustices including violence. More focused research is required for clarity and better interpretations.

It is not necessary, research has revealed, that a higher level of education necessarily leads to a greater demand for dowry. The practice of dowry has a close link between patriarchies where, traditionally, the custom of dowry has long been entrenched in the male-dominated society.

The dowry system has put women in a helpless position, as they are disempowered in decision-making and never become a part of the discussion regarding spouse selection and dowry articles. Dowries are often a monetary deal between two families: the bride's family that fulfils the demands and the groom's that makes demands. Such cultural arrangements completely violate the dignity of women and the quality of their personal relationships.

The current pattern and practice stand in sharp contrast to the teachings of Islam that emphasize on austerity, simplicity, mehar and the rights of wife<sup>32</sup>. Regretfully, scholarly interpretations of such rare scholars are neither the part and parcel of popular perception nor owned (at least publicly) by institutions and authorities who could reduce the sufferings offered by this preventable form of gender based violence.

Dowry is purely a matter of culture. One should not feel obliged to continue with these un-Islamic traditions. If a culture contains un-Islamic aspects, one should not feel any shame in breaking the culture's traditional practices.

The issue is so deep rooted that new legislation by itself cannot normally solve deep-rooted social problems. Nonetheless, legislation is necessary to exercise educative impact besides providing legal sanctions against this social evil of devastating consequences.

Legislation and other NGO intervention cannot stamp out this social evil unless there is a shift in the attitude of the people. As the roots of the problem of dowry appear to be social, remedies can only be achieved by changes of attitude in society. The same can be attempted by legislation, but will need to be supported by education and legal awareness.

The parents of a bride should understand that by giving dowry they may not be giving their daughter any happiness as they are giving dowry to their son-in-law and his family; and this increases demands. There is a need to educate the parents to safeguard their daughters from economic deprivation and violence by educating them about their rights within marriage as the dower right.

There is growing attention being given by the government to gender issues including violence, but there is no obvious, focused and concentrated effort geared to the understanding of a complex and commonly prevalent issue like dowry. The same is the case in all service delivery, advocacy, research and communication interventions.

Civil society should create a movement and strong public opinion against the system. The movement should be taken to villages and every nook and corner of the country. More leaders, social groups, men and women should be involved in the movement against the evil. People who practice the dowry system should be socially boycotted. Women organizations should hold demonstrations against such people (Rahul,

<sup>31</sup> 1 US\$= 86 PKR

<sup>32</sup> Dr.Riffat Hussain as quoted in the literature review/chapter 2)..(readers may refer to views of renowned scholar Prof.Rafiullah Shahab and Prof.

K.2004).

**Way  
Forward**



## 18 Next steps and Recommendations

The endemic dowry violence cannot be uprooted by a single action by a single actor. Therefore the general recommendation is to establish multisectoral coordination mechanism to identify the issues and respond accordingly. This however, cannot happen without collective ownership of the actors involved or who should be involved.

“Broken Bodies Broken Dreams: Violence against women exposed” (2005) observes that violence against women is not inevitable. Activists are struggling against it and an important part of their work is to identify its root causes. The report further adds that one of the great victories of women rights activists over the last ten years is that “the political climate surrounding the rights of woman has shifted from refusing to admit that violence against women is a problem, to an almost universal understanding that it is the ultimate expression of the subordinate status of women globally.” (Spindel, et al., 2000.)

The gender sensitivity of all organs of the State, including the judiciary, needs to be enhanced. The Ministry of Women Development, (See annex-5 about MOPW) Social Welfare and Special Education is the national focal machinery for the advancement of women and implementation of CEDAW<sup>33</sup>. All efforts should ensure women be given the status of normal human beings rather than being treated as a commodity and property.

The media should play its role in sensitizing people about the issues related to dowry and women rights in general. NGOs should play their role in sensitizing people about the issues during their various projects.

This study outlines the challenges to be faced while addressing the complexities of the dowry system:

- Social endorsement of culture and custom of dowry as indicated by its acceptance as a norm, matter of honour, reflection of values among masses and classes and strengthening of this endorsement by media and absence of law and presence of an unrealistic dowry and bridal gifts restriction Act 1976 (amended in 1993) pose a strategic challenge. The study reveals that general level of awareness among masses and sensitization among classes need to be further estimated for prevention of dowry abuse and responding to the abuse.
- Different areas and ethnic groups in Pakistan follow different dowry systems. Existing data

does not establish direct correlation of harmful cultural practices with the institution of dowry. The data gathered through this study though points out at some areas of correlation but cannot substantiate it. <sup>34</sup>Absence of research based data is thus another challenge that acts as a barrier to establish dowry as a form of violence.

- Responses on need of legislation also raise many challenges. Level of awareness about the current Act is very low and those who know are not clear about it. Should Pakistan go for a realistic amendment in the existing Act or opt for a ban on dowry remains a challenge for the policy and law makers.
- Culture and religion have always been mixed in matters that are directly related to human development specially women development in our society. What is the religious position on dowry the way it is practices today in a country largely consisting of Muslims who are further divided into different sects? What is or should be the strategy and obligations of the state in this peculiar context?

The multilayered issue of dowry justifies its ownership by different sectors in development as it involves legislation, governance, health, education, religion, human rights, media and women development. How to materialize multi-sectoral support and collaboration to prevent and respond to dowry violence when the issue has yet to attain its due position in mainstream discourse on gender, women and national development?

The following recommendations emerged in the process of research, and were suggested by focus group discussants and key interview respondents:

- The government should ban dowry
- Only one food item should be allowed to be served at a wedding meal and the violators of the law should be punished
- Men and women should be sensitized and educated
- Community groups should be formed against dowry

<sup>34</sup> as pointed out earlier in the context and literature review that contrary to the obvious forms of VAW and or GBV dowry could not get established as a form of violence in Pakistan due to lack of attention by the donors, civil society, forgetfulness even by the mainstream gender and women rights experts and activists, glorifying of the custom and eventually institutionalizing of this custom by electronic and print media that survives on advertisement and last but not least the virtual absence of the issue from National Plan of action of the Ministry of Women Development, Gov. (Reference: “dowry socio-cultural perspectives” by Dr.Rakshinda Perveen. 2000. WWW.sachet.org.pk

<sup>33</sup> Post devolution, the Ministry of Human Rights is now the responsible ministry

- Men and family of the groom who demand dowry should be punished
- Khateeb in their sermons should sensitize people against dowry
- Islamic teachings about austerity, simplicity and peace should be taught
- Laws should be strictly implemented by the government
- The media should launch a campaign against dowry
- Girls should be properly educated to cope with these kind of problems
- The government should help the poor in their daughters' marriages

We observe in our daily lives through national newspapers and media channels that the majority of the female victims are burnt alive by their in-laws due to not bringing the demanded dowries. It is strongly recommended that there should be a proper data base system in all the burn centres to maintain the true history of the burn injured patients.

Recommendations specifically for burns centres in hospitals are:

- Burn treatment is one of the most expensive treatments in the health sector. The government should establish burn centres in all hospitals for the facilitation of burn patients.
- Gender training for the burn centre staff is highly recommended. INGOs and NGOs may be involved in this process to technically assist the public departments.
- The burn centre staff should also get training to maintain a proper data base of burn cases.
- Detailed history of the patients should be recorded.
- A qualitative research study is required on the burn centres.

The study concludes with specific sectoral recommendations that build on participant responses and analysis of data generated through its inquiry process.

### **Civil Society Organizations**

Focused attention on raising awareness and sensitization among the masses and policy engagement are required on the part of the CSO.

There is a demand for proper legislation against dowry curse, on the basis of consultation and discussion with intellectuals and policy makers.

### **Donor Groups**

Research with representative samples and remedial actions through sustainable programs in public & CSO sector are required. This cannot be materialized without allocation of resources to the issues of dowry by donor agencies.

### **Media**

Continued engagement of the media and building its capacity to deliver right messages to at least avoid misleading messages to raise awareness about different facets of dowry. Media should play its role against stereo typical behaviors of the individuals and portray a balance picture of society to discourage customary practices

### **Ministry of Women, Religious affairs, Education, Health, Population & Youth**

Dowry and related violence involves religion, legislation, curriculum, health, spousal communication and the young people of Pakistan. Therefore all relevant ministries should work jointly and effectively to introduce transformative changes that would directly improve the condition and position of women/girls in Pakistan besides challenging patriarchal trends of society.



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## Annexure 1

List of burn hospitals in Pakistan

1. The Pakistan Institute of Medical Science (PIMS) Burn Centre, District Islamabad (date of inception: December 6, 2007).
2. Pakistan Ordnance Factories (POF) Hospital Wah Cantonment Burn Centre, District Rawalpindi, Province Punjab (date of inception: 1988).
3. Kharian Burn Centre, District Gujrat, Province Punjab.
4. Rawalian Burn Centre, Holy Family Hospital, District Rawalpindi, Province of Punjab (date of inception: December 2006).
5. Patel Burn Centre, District Karachi, Province Sindh.
6. Friends of Burn Centre, District Karachi, Province Sindh.
7. Civil Hospital Karachi - District Karachi Province Sindh
8. National Engineering and Scientific Commission (NESCOM) Hospital, District Islamabad (date of inception: April 2006).
9. Burn Unit Mayo Hospital, District Lahore, Province Punjab.
10. Burn Unit National Institute of Child Health, District Karachi, Province Sindh.
11. Khyber Teaching Hospital, District Peshawar, Province NWFP.
12. Burn Unit Nashtar Hospital, District Multan, Province Punjab.

### Burn Centers selected as study sites:

#### 1. Pakistan Institute of Medical Sciences (PIMS)

Operating since 2008, the burn centre has a total number of 20 beds. It is providing all categories of services required for burn-injured patients and is well equipped with surgical/medical instruments. An estimated cost of treatment of a burn-injured patient is 4,000 to 12,000 Pakistani Rupees or U.S. \$ 150 a day. The burn centre has 177 staff members for the treatment of burn-injured patients.

The total number of patients admitted in the first year was 6,695. Approximately 557 patients get registered in a month, and 139 patients are registered in a week. Less than 30 per cent of cases are medico-legal in nature, and among these, 26 per cent are acid-burn cases. A majority of burn-injured patients admitted was of unmarried females of age 18 to 25 years. As many as 4,175 were under the age of 18 years and a majority of them were female.

At the time of admission of patients, the most common reason for burns reported were hot liquids, flame and electricity. Mostly, attendants of the patients are family members. The burn centre had records of the dying declaration only in medico-legal cases. The total number of deaths recorded in the year was 69.

#### 2. National Engineering and Scientific Commission (NESCOM)

NESCOM's four-bed burn centre was established in 2005. It is providing multi-speciality services<sup>35</sup> to patients. The total number of patients admitted in a year was 50 to 60 (four to six patients in a month, and one to three in a week). The strength of the staff is 15 to 20. The majority of the patients were unmarried females (18-25 years of age) and children of under five years of age till February 10, 2009. The number of burn patients admitted under the age of 18 was 72.

The most common causes of burn injuries among children was accidental scald burn, and among adults accidental flame burn. The maximum expense borne by a burn-injured patient is around Rupees 25,000 or U.S. \$ 313 a month. The majority of the patients belonged to the very poor class and their attendants were family members. The burn centre has a process of recording the dying declaration, but they do not treat medico-legal cases. Five death cases were recorded in the year 2008, and usually there is one death in a month.

#### 3. Rawalian Burn Centre, Holy Family Hospital, Rawalpindi

The Rawalian Burn Centre was established in 2007. The number of beds is four, and the staff strength is 29. The total number of admissions in a year was 48, five in a month and two in a week. The approximate age of female burn patient was 20 years, and a majority of the patients was married. The most common cause of burn injuries was bursting of the gas stove, and attendants were mothers and sisters. The estimated expense for the treatment of a burn-injured patient in a week is Rupees 10,000 per month (US\$125). The number of deaths recorded in a year was fifteen. The burn centre officials recorded dying declarations. The burn centre provides all required facilities including, plastic surgery, grafting, daily dressing and contracture relief.

<sup>35</sup> Multi-special services include plastic surgery, grafting, SSG (skin split grafting), contracture relief, operation theatre, daily dressing, pre and post counselling.

#### **4. Pakistan Ordnance Factories (POF) Hospital, Wah Cantonment**

The burn centre in the POF Hospital, Wah Cantonment, was established in 1988. The bed capacity is sixteen, and the strength of the staff is five. Between 20 and 25 per cent burn injuries required Rupees 400,000 (U.S. \$ 5,000) in less than one month. The total number of admissions in a year was 259, 22 in a month and five in a week till April 8, 2008. The average estimated age of women patients was 16 to 35 years, and the same ages were recorded for male patient. Majority of the cases reported were those of the unmarried. Most of the children under the age of 18 years were admitted due to scald and accidental injuries.

The most common causes of burn injuries were flame and accidental. Total deaths in a year were 60 (five in a month). The dying declaration is not recorded, and the officials insist on getting the FIR registered, especially for medico-legal cases.

## Annexure 2

### DOWRY AND BRIDAL GIFTS (RESTRICTION) ACT (ACT NO.XLIII OF 1976)

*An Act to provide for restriction on dowry and bridal gifts.*

WHEREAS it is expedient to provide for restrictions on dowry and bridal gifts and for matters connected therewith or ancillary thereto;

It is hereby enacted as follow: -

**1. Short title, extent and commencement.** (1) This Act may be called the Dowry and Bridal Gifts (Restriction) Act, 1976.

(2) It extends to the whole of Pakistan and applies to all citizens of Pakistan.

(3) It shall come into force at one.

**2. Definitions.** In this Act, unless there is anything repugnant in the subject or context, -

(a) "bridal gift" means any property given as a gift before, at or after the marriage, either directly or indirectly, by the bridegroom or his parents to the bride in connection with the marriage but does not include *Mehr*,

(b) "dowry" means any property given before, at or after the marriage, either directly or indirectly, to the bride by her parents in connection with the marriage but it does not include property which the bride may inherit under the laws of inheritance and succession applicable to her;

(c) "marriage" includes betrothal, *nikah* and *rukhsati*;

(d) "parents" includes the guardian of party to a marriage and any person who provides for dowry or bridal gifts and, in the case of a party to a marriage who has no parent, or whose marriage is solemnized in circumstances in which, or at a place at which, no

Parent is present, such party;

(e) "present" means a gift of any property, not being a bridal gift or dowry, given before, at or after the marriage, either directly or indirectly, to either party to a marriage in connection with the marriage or to the relatives of the bride or bridegroom but does not include *neundra* and *salami*;

(f) "property" means property, both movable and immovable. And includes any valuable security as defined in the Pakistan Penal Code (Act XLI of 1860);

and

(g) "Registrar" means a *Nikah* Registrar licensed under the Muslim Family Laws Ordinance, 1961 (VIII of 1961), and such other person as may be designated from time to time to perform the functions of the Registrar.

*Dowry and Bridal Gift (Restriction) Act 1976 (Social Welfare)*

### **3. Restriction on dowry, presents and bridal gifts.**

(1) Neither the aggregate value of the dowry and present given to the bride by her parents nor the aggregate value of the bridal gifts or of the presents given to the bridegroom shall exceed five thousand rupees.

**Explanation.** The ceiling of five thousand rupees specified in this subsection does not in any way imply that the dowry, bridal gifts and presents of a lesser amount may not be given.

2[(1-A) No person shall give or accept, or enter into an agreement to give or to accept dowry, bridal gifts or presents of a value exceeding the aggregate value specified in sub-section (1).

[(2) No dowry, bridal gifts or present may be given before six months or after one month of *nikah* and, if *rukhsati* takes place some time after *nikah* after one month of such *rukhsati*].

**4. Restriction on presents.** No person shall give to either party to the marriage any present value of which exceeds one hundred rupees:

Provided that the limit of one hundred shall not apply to the presents given to the bridegroom by the parents of the bride under sub-section (1) of section 3: Provided further that the President, the Prime Minister, Federal Minister, chief Minister, Minister of State, Adviser, Governor, Speaker, Deputy Speaker, the Chairman or the Deputy Chairman of the Senate,

Parliamentary Secretary, Member of the Senate, National Assembly or Provincial Assembly, Government Servant, or an official serving in any corporation, industry or establishment owned, controlled or managed by Government shall not receive any present in connection with his marriage or the marriage of his son or daughter except from his relations (*khandan*):

Provided further that this restriction shall not apply to a Government or official serving in the scale below National pay Scale 17 not exercising in any manner judicial, revenue or executive authority.

**5. Vesting of dowry, etc. in the bride.** All property given as dowry or bridal gifts and all property given to

the bride as a present shall vest absolutely in the bride and her interest in property however, derived shall hereafter not be restrictive, conditional or limited.

**6. Expenditure on marriage.** The total expenditure on marriage, excluding the value of dowry, bridal gifts and presents, but including the expenses on *mehndi*, *barat* and *valima*, incurred by or on behalf of either party to the marriage shall not exceed two thousand and five hundred rupees.

**7. Display of dowry, etc.** Omitted by Ord. 36 of 1980, section 3.

*Dowry and Bridal Gift (Restriction) Act 1976 (Social Welfare)*

**8. Declaration regarding expenditure to be submitted to Registrar.**

(1) The father of the bridegroom or any other person who arranges the marriage shall, within fifteen days of the expiry of the period fixed under subsection

(2) of section 3 for giving dowry, bridal gifts and presents, submit a declaration to the Registrar solemnly affirming that the total expenditure on the marriage including dowry, bridal gifts, present and entertainment did not exceed the limits laid down in this Act.

(2) The Registrar shall forward the declaration submitted under subsection

(1) to the Deputy Commissioner within fifteen days of receipt of such declaration.

**8-A. Complaints against violation of the Act.** If any person attending a marriage ceremony is satisfied that the provisions of this Act or the rules made there under has been contravened in respect of such ceremony, he may submit a complaint, giving full particulars of the contravention, to the Deputy commissioner.

**9. Penalty and Procedure.** (1) Whoever contravenes, or fails to comply with, any provision of this Act or the rules made there under shall be punishable with imprisonment of either description for a term which may extend to six months, or with fine which shall not be less than the amount proved to have been spent in excess of the maximum limit laid down in this

Act or with both, and the dowry, bridal gifts or presents given or accepted in contravention of the provisions of this Act shall be forfeited to the Federal Government to be utilized for the marriage of poor girls in such a way as may be prescribed by rules made under this Act:

Provided that if both the parents of a party to the

marriage contravene, or fail to comply with, any provision of this Act or the rules made there under, action under this section shall be taken only against the father: Provided further that if the parent who contravenes, or fails to comply with, any provision of this Act or the rules made there under is a female, she shall be punishable with fine only.

(2) Any offence punishable under this Act shall be triable only by a Family Court established under the West Pakistan Family Courts Act, 1964 (W.P. Act No. XXXV of 1964).

(3) No Family Court shall take cognizance of an offence punishable under this Act except upon a complaint in writing made by, or under the authority of, the Deputy Commissioner within three months from the date of *nikah*, and if *rukhsati* takes place some time after *nikah*, from the date of such *rukhsati*.

(4) While trying an offence punishable under this Act, Family court shall follow the procedure prescribed by the Code of Criminal Procedure, 1898 (Act V of 1898), for the trial of offences by Magistrates.

*Dowry and Bridal Gift (Restriction) Act 1976 (Social Welfare)*

**10. Power to make rules.** The Federal Government, in respect of the Islamabad Capital Territory, and a Provincial Government in respect of the Province, may, by notification in the official Gazette, make rules for carrying out the purposes of this Act.

**11. Omitted by Ord. 27 of 1981.**



## Annexure 3

### The Research Team

Sr. No.	Key Position	Names of the Research Team
1	Principal Researcher	Dr. Rakhshinda Perveen
2	Finance Coordinator	Mr. Amin Muhammad
3	Research Coordinator	Ms. Zartash Moomi Mr. Rizwan Latif
4	Research Associate	Ms. Rabeea Shah
5	Provincial Research Coordinators	<p><b>Karachi &amp; Thatta</b></p> <p>Mr. Shahneel Gill Mr. Mehmood Bhatti Ms. Bano</p> <p><b>Quetta &amp; Mastung</b></p> <p>Ms. Farzana Mr. Serjan Mr. Muhammad Noor</p> <p><b>Dera Ghazi Khan</b></p> <p>Mr. Ikrar Hussain Ms. Mahajabeen Mr. Sajjid Alam</p> <p><b>Lahore</b></p> <p>Ms. Attiya Hanif Ms. Neelam Mr. Basharat Ali</p> <p><b>Mardan &amp; Peshawar</b></p> <p>Mr. Asad Ali Mr. Noor ul Amin Ms. Rabeea Hadi</p>

## Annexure 4: IDIs and FGDs Guidelines

- 1- شادی کی ہمارے معاشرے میں کیا اہمیت ہے؟
- 2- آپ کے ہاں شادی پہ کیا رسومات ہوتی ہیں، اور ان رسومات کی معاشرے میں کیا اہمیت ہیں؟
- 3- شادی میں جہیز کی کیا اہمیت ہیں؟
- 4- کیا جہیز شادی کی رسومات میں سے ہے؟
- 5- کیا جہیز ہماری رسم و روایت اور تمدن کا بنیادی بجز ہیں؟
- 6- جہیز کے بارے میں اسلامی نقطہ نظر کیا ہے؟
- 7- آپ کے خیال میں کیا یہ رسم ہونی چاہیے؟ کیا یہ اچھی رسم ہے؟
- 8- کیا آپ کے خیال میں جہیز دینے میں بیٹیوں کا معاشی وقار بلند ہوتا ہے اور ان کی ازدواجی زندگی باوقار اور پُر سکون گزرتی ہیں؟
- 9- کیا شادیاں لین دین کا نام ہے؟ کیا شادیاں لین دین پر قائم ہوتی ہیں؟
- 10- آپ کے خیال میں ایک شادی کا خرچہ کتنا ہوتا ہے؟
- 11- کیا والدین جہیز کو ترجیح دیتے ہیں یا جائیداد میں سے حصہ دینے کو؟
- 12- کیا جہیز دینے کا رجحان بڑھتا جا رہا ہے اگر ہاں تو اس کی کیا وجوہات ہے؟
- 13- کیا ہمارا سماجی، معاشرتی اور معاشی نظام جہیز جیسی رسم کی معاونت ہے؟
- 14- کیا یہ رسم والدین پر ایک بوجھ ہے؟
- 15- کیا آپ جہیز سے متعلق حکومتی قانون سازی سے آگاہ ہے؟ اگر ہاں تو یہ قوانین اس کی روک تھام میں معاون ثابت ہوئی ہیں یا نہیں؟
- 16- کیا آپ کے خیال میں موجودہ قوانین میں اصلاحات کی ضرورت ہے؟ اگر ہے تو کس قسم کی
- 17- کیا آپ کے خیال میں حکومتی ادارے اور مثبت قانون سازی جہیز کی روک تھام کر سکتی ہے؟
- 18- کیا ذرائع ابلاغ کے ذریعے معاشی شعور پیدا کرنے میں کوئی مثبت کردار ادا کر سکتے ہیں؟
- 19- آپ کے خیال میں ہمارے معاشرے میں رسم و رواج بدلنے اور یکجا ہونے سے جہیز کی معاونت کی تصدیق ہوتی ہے؟

- 20- جہیز کیا ہے؟ کیا جہیز اسلامی یا سماجی رسم ہے؟
- 21- کیا آپ کے خیال میں خواتین جہیز نہ دینے کی وجہ سے امتیازی سلوک کا سامنا کرتی ہیں؟
- 22- آپ کے خیال میں جہیز کی رسم صنفی تشدد اور خواتین پر تشدد کو بڑھاتی ہے؟
- 23- کیا جہیز صنفی تشدد ہے؟
- 24- کیا جہیز کی رسم مرد اور عورت کو فائدہ پہنچاتی ہے؟ اگر ہاں تو کتنا
- 25- کون جہیز کا مطالبہ کرتا ہے؟ آپ کا خاندان یا دولہا کا خاندان
- 26- معاشرے میں صنفی تشدد کو پھیلانے کا ذمہ دار کون ہے؟
- 27- کیا جہیز کی رسم بنیادی حقوق، صحت، تعلیم وراثت اور دوسرے حقوق سے محروم رکھتی ہے؟
- 28- آپ کے خیال میں لڑکی کو وراثت میں حصہ دینے سے جہیز کی رسم بہتر ہے؟
- 29- آپ کے شادی کے موقع پر آپ یا آپ کے والدین اور خاندان کو کون سا سماجی دباؤ کا سامنا کرنا پڑا؟
- 30- جہیز دینے کے بعد کیا آپ وراثت میں حصہ کا مطالبہ کر سکتی ہے؟
- 31- شادی کے بعد آپ کو کون سے مشکلات کا سامنا کرنا پڑا؟
- 32- کیا شادی کے بعد آپ پر آپ کے سسرال والوں نے جہیز، رقوم اور تحائف کے حوالے سے دباؤ ڈالا؟
- 33- کیا جہیز دینے کے بعد لڑکی مالی طور پر دوسروں پر انحصار کرتی ہے؟
- 34- کیا آپ کے خیال میں رشتے کے وقت لڑکے والے لڑکی کی معاشی حیثیت کو مد نظر رکھتے ہیں؟
- 35- آپ یا آپ کے خاندان کو شادی سے پہلے اور شادی کے بعد جہیز جیسی رسم کی وجہ سے کون سے ذہنی دباؤ کا سامنا کرنا پڑا؟
- 36- آپ کے پاس ایسی رائے یا آئیڈیا ہے جو آپ کو جہیز، رقوم، تحائف اور جائیداد میں مدد کرے؟
- 37- ہم اس رسم کو معاشرے سے کس طرح ختم کر سکتے ہیں؟

## Annexure 5

Data Collection form of Burn centre

To be filled by a responsible / in charge Medical Officer

Name of the respondent: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Location: \_\_\_\_\_

No. of beds: \_\_\_\_\_

Date of establishment: \_\_\_\_\_

Length of experience at the Burn Centre: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Strength of staff (How many medical doctors, specialists and paramedics)

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Estimated cost of treatment of a burn patient

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Range of health services required

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

This Burn centre receives patients from? (Mention all villages/cities/provinces as per record):

S#.	Questions	Responses
1.	Total # of admissions in a week	
2.	Total # of admissions in a month	
3.	Total # of admissions in a year	
4.	Average estimated age of woman patients in years	
5.	Ratio of married and unmarried woman	
6.	Total # of patients under 18	

7.	Commonest reasons of Burn injuries as given by the attendants at the time of admission	
8.	Who are the care givers (relation)	
9.	Total # of deaths in a year/ month/week (separate)	
10.	Do you record dying declarations?	

Any particular observations:

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Any specific comments:

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

## Annexure 6

### Information about technical burn injuries<sup>36</sup>

Burns are classified in two ways: Method and degree of burn.

Methods are:

- Thermal - including flame, radiation, or heat from fire, steam, and hot liquids and objects.
- Chemical - including various acids, bases, and caustics.
- Electrical - including electrical current and lightning.
- Light - burns caused by intense light sources or ultraviolet light, which includes sunlight.
- Radiation - such as from nuclear sources.

Degrees are:

**First degree burns** are superficial injuries that involve only the epidermis or outer layer of skin. They are the most common and the most minor of all burns. The skin is reddened and extremely painful. The burn will heal on its own without scarring within two to five days. There may be peeling of the skin and some temporary discoloration.

**Second degree burns** occur when the first layer of skin is burned through and the second layer, the dermal layer, is damaged but the burn does not pass through to underlying tissues. The skin appears moist and there will be deep intense pain, reddening, blisters and a mottled appearance to the skin. Second degree burns are considered minor if they involve less than 15 percent of the body surface in adults and less than 10 percent in children. When treated with reasonable care, second degree burns will heal themselves and produce very little scarring. Healing is usually complete within three weeks.

**Third degree burns** involve all the layers of the skin. They are referred to as full thickness burns and are the most serious of all burns. These are usually charred black and include areas that are dry and white. While a third-degree burn may be very painful, some patients feel little or no pain because the nerve endings have been destroyed. This type of burn may require skin grafting. As third degree burns heal, dense scars form.

### TREATMENT:-

The treatment of burns is arguably one of the most expensive and specialized of medical treatments. Burns care requires the combination of a number of surgical and general medical skills, such as paediatrics, plastic surgery, infection control, palliative care and labour intensive critical care nursing. On top of this, burn victims need intensive, one-on-one treatment from allied health professionals such as physiotherapists, psychiatrists and psychologists.

The irony is that countries with the greatest need often lack the facilities to treat and rehabilitate burn victims. While there are no official statistics on the types and causes of burns, figures collected by non-government organizations suggest an increasing occurrence of burns. The majority of burns are accidental and result from contact with gas stoves, lamps, leaking gas pipes, exposed electrical wiring, boiling water, hot oil, etc. Most burns occur in the home, in or around the kitchen. As a result, women and children are most at risk of burns.

There is also disturbing evidence that increasing numbers of burn victims - particularly those described as suicide cases - are young women who have been set alight or had acid thrown on them by their husband or in-laws. Such extreme violence can be severely debilitating for women, who face ostracism because of their scarred appearance and loss of mobility. It is also a form of violence that is frequently covered up by the perpetrators as 'accidental'.

The Human Rights Commission of Pakistan reported that between 1998 and 1999, more than 560 cases of women were burnt in the home in Punjab (Pakistan's most populous state), and that while many of these cases were suspicious, there were only a handful of arrests. The Progressive Women's Association tracked 3,560 women who were hospitalized after being attacked at home with fire, gasoline or acid between 1994 and 1995. Victims of such crimes face special problems in terms of their rehabilitation back into society. Even in the case of accidental burns, women and girls are often rejected by their husbands, in-laws or seen as unmarriageable due to scars and in some cases their limited mobility.

For these reasons, programmes designed to treat burns must incorporate a wide range of specialist services, including education and prevention campaigns, specialist surgeons, counselling and rehabilitation. In particular, there is a need for the professionals involved to structure support services to meet the special needs of female victims. In Pakistan,

<sup>36</sup> Source: <http://209.85.175.132/search?q=cache:X0RBYjYoMB8J:jpma.org.pk/Misc/PDFDownload.aspx%3FDownload%3Dtrue%26ArticleID%3D831+pakistan+ordinanc+factory+hospital+burn+centre&hl=en&ct=clnk&cd=4&gl=pk>

there is no publicly-funded specialized burn centre or hospital burn unit. The only purpose-built burn unit in the country is the Army Burn Centre in Kharian, and this hospital only accepts civilian burn victims who can afford the high fee charged.

(Asian Development Bank; Gender and Development (Pakistan: Burn Care Project, Watan Welfare Society)  
<http://www.adb.org/gender/working/pak001.asp>

## Speak .....

Speak-your lips are free.  
Speak-your tongue is still yours.  
This magnificent body  
Is still yours.  
Speak-your life is still yours.  
Look inside the smithy.  
Leaping flames, red-hot iron.  
Padlocks open wide  
Their jaws.  
Chains disintegrate.  
Speak - there is little time  
But little though it is  
It is enough.  
Time enough  
Before the body perishes.  
Before the tongue atrophies.  
Speak - truth still lives.  
Say what you have  
To say.

(Faiz Ahmed Faiz)

(Translated into English by - Daud Kamal)

## بول ---

بول، کہ لب آزاد ہیں تیرے  
بول، زباں اب تک تیری ہے  
تیرا ستواں جسم ہے تیرا  
بول کہ جاں اب تک تیری ہے  
دیکھ کہ آہن گر کی دکان میں  
شُد ہیں شعلے، سرخ ہے آہن  
کھلنے لگے قفلوں کے دہانے  
پھیلا ہر اک زنجیر کا دامن  
بول، یہ تھوڑا وقت بہت ہے  
جسم و زباں کی موت سے پہلے  
بول، کہ سچ زندہ ہے اب تک  
بول، جو کچھ کہنا ہے کہہ لے!

(فیض)

SACHET operates on the deep conviction that is here to give optimism to the marginalized class of the society. Therefore Faiz' this poem serves as an encouragement to the youth

And deprived class of the society. This poem serves as a vision statement Of the organization since 2001.

**AGEHI Resource Centre  
SACHET- Pakistan**

Society for the Advancement of  
Community, Health, Education & Training

with support from:

**UN Women-Pakistan**

United Nations Entity for Gender Equality  
and the Empowerment of Women