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The Dowry System in Pakistan: A Comprehensive Literature Review of Its Impacts on Women's Health, Socio-Economic Status, and Societal Norms

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Abstract

Background: The dowry system, a traditional practice involving transfer of wealth from the bride's family to the groom's, persists in Pakistan and continues to shape socio-cultural and economic dynamics. Despite its historical roots, dowry system has profound implications for women's well-being and societal structures.

Objective: This literature review aims to explore the multifaceted effects of dowry system on women in Pakistan, with a focus on its associations with domestic violence, early marriage, sexual assault, and mental health issues.

Methods: A comprehensive search strategy was employed to identify relevant peer-reviewed articles, grey literature, and institutional reports. Databases searched included AMA Journals, BMJ Journals Collection, CINAHL Plus, Cochrane Library, ProQuest, Sage, Science Direct, Scopus, Springer, and Wiley Inter-Science. Grey literature was accessed via Google Scholar and institutional repositories. The search terms included combinations of dowry, early marriage, domestic violence, sexual assault, women's mental health, and Pakistan.

Results: The review synthesizes findings indicating that dowry practices are linked to heightened risks of domestic violence, sexual assault, and mental health issues among women. Dowry practices contribute to a cycle of materialism and social discord, with varying impacts across different socio-economic and regional contexts within Pakistan. The review also highlights the roles of various stakeholders, including government bodies and NGOs, in either perpetuating or challenging these practices.

Conclusion: The persistence of the dowry system, despite widespread opposition, underscores the need for comprehensive strategies to address its adverse effects. Cultural and systemic factors play significant roles in sustaining



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the practice, which in turn affects women's health and societal status.

Keywords: Dowry system, domestic violence, early marriage, sexual assault, mental health, women's health, Pakistan, socio-economic impact, societal norms, literature review.

Introduction

Marriage is a pivotal life event that often marks a significant transition for individuals and families alike (1). In many societies, including Pakistan, marriage involves complex cultural practices and traditions, one of the most contentious being the dowry system (2). Traditionally, dowry refers to the transfer of wealth from the bride's family to the groom's family as part of the marriage arrangement(3) (4). This practice, deeply rooted in cultural and historical contexts, continues to impact various aspects of marital relationships and societal structures in Pakistan (5).

Despite the evolving nature of dowry practices(6), which now frequently involve substantial financial and material transfers(7), the practice remains entrenched in many communities(8). Women, in particular, face severe repercussions as a result of dowry demands. The expectation to provide a dowry can lead to significant psychological and financial stress(2), often exacerbating issues such as domestic violence, early marriage, and sexual assault(7). These adverse outcomes underscore the persistent and pervasive nature of dowry-related problems in Pakistani society(5).

In Pakistan, the dowry system extends beyond a mere cultural tradition; it has become a form of economic transaction that influences marriage dynamics and social interactions(9). The pressure to meet dowry demands can lead to severe consequences for women(10), including physical violence, mental health issues, and even suicide(3, 11). The practice also perpetuates materialistic attitudes and social discord, particularly among lower-income families who may resort to extreme measures to fulfill dowry requirements(4).

The complexity of dowry practices is evident in the various forms it takes across different socio-economic and regional contexts within Pakistan(3). For example, in Sindh, dowry is seen as an integral part of marriage but is heavily influenced by social, political, and economic factors (2). The evolving nature of dowry, from simple cash transfers to substantial gifts like jewelry, property, and electronics, reflects broader socio-economic trends and highlights the system's deep entanglement in contemporary marital practices (12, 13).

In essence, the dowry system has transformed from a traditional practice into a significant socio-economic issue that affects millions of women in Pakistan(11). It represents a critical area of concern due to its implications for women's health, economic stability, and overall well-being(4). As this literature review will explore, understanding the multifaceted impact of dowry is essential for addressing the systemic issues it perpetuates and for developing effective interventions to mitigate its harmful effects.

Dowry's impact on Pakistan

Dowry has an impact not only on the bride's life but also on her family's life(2). People seek Dowry to make money and enhance their bank balance(14). Another



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purpose is to brag in front of others (11). This applies to more than illiterate people; educated or elite families do not directly ask for wedding gifts (4). Instead, the groom's family calculates how much the bride's father and brother earn and what she will bring when she visits them(13). Dowry is no longer just a collection of bridal presents and money. It is now covered by several new items, such as a beautiful dinner at all events, excellent wedding planning, and fashionable outfits for the bride and the groom and his family(5). According to related studies, dowries have been linked to domestic violence against married women(2). This showed the flaws of the patriarchal system, with Dowry as the most central issue young women face(4). The harmful repercussions of the dowry system have been highlighted (3, 15). Dowry was determined to be a societal threat that should be prohibited because it is an Indian Hindu custom and a religious requirement for Pakistani Muslims; the dowry system has been ingrained in their blood (12). It is a problem of society that must be dealt with by focusing on the visible issues of Dowry and violence against women (16). Following the 2017 census, federally administered tribal areas were merged into KPK. According to the 2017 provisional census, Punjab was the most populated province; it has 52.9% of the country's population, and Sindh Province has 23%. The KPK area was 14.7%, followed by Baluchistan at 5.9%, FATA at 2.4%, and Islamabad at least 0.96% (15). In modern society, we frequently hear about problems concerning women, such as acid assaults, suicide, divorce, and wife abuse. These are some of the concealed realities in our culture (7). This occurs because the new wife does not meet her husband's or in-laws' demands (3). It finishes with the bride's husband or in-laws insulting, demeaning, and harming her(17).

Shah and Qasim (2016) performed another cross-sectional survey in urban and rural districts in Pakistan's southern Punjab. Dowry is favorably related to factors such as geography; the wife's career and gift provided financial assistance; however, dropping and a wife's education are inversely associated(5). Furthermore, the findings revealed that labor in both sectors positively impacted Dowry, meaning that educated women with employment can better economically and financially support themselves in their married lives(12).

Ali, Arnadóttir, and Kulane (2013) conducted a study to assess women's dowry habits, demands, and viewpoints in the Pakistani city of Karachi, as well as their perceptions of the adverse impacts of Dowry(2). This was a qualitative research study based on focus group discussions of five women. The findings showed that women from all socioeconomic strata of Karachi are aware of the issues and challenges of Dowry's practices. Several concerns have had detrimental implications in Karachi(7).

Right now, it is a new word for Dowry. However, the bride's parents say this is a small present for her daughter (8) and her happiness (14). They are attempting to make their daughter's wedding special, but the truth is that they are also attempting to impress the groom's family(5). Dowry cannot be an urgent issue for the upper class, but it is for the poorer class(18). However, when no one arrives, it all continues until suicide occurs(2).

Preventive measures

The study highlighted the need to maintain and expand the anti-dowry



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movement, which is aimed at principles recognizing the significance of changing marital status(7). A large percentage of the participants acknowledged that Dowry was a severe issue for females; however, they stated that they would continue to pay it because it was the only chance to ensure a "decent" marriage.

The government should take swift action against this behavior, in which women are attacked because they have fewer dowries (QASMI). Every woman has the right to live independently and make her own decisions. The Nongovernmental Organization Societies for the Advancement of Community, Health, Education, and Training (SACHET) should play an active role in improving the lives of Pakistani women. I believe Pakistan's youth should be (3) and aware and sharpen their minds against the dowry system (14)We can reduce the psychological, sociological, and physiological difficulties caused by Dowry if people adjust their attitudes and thought processes about it (11). We should also engage media and family members in speaking out against the dowry system(10). Southeast Asia has the highest incidence of suicide among any World Health Organization (WHO) area (13.4 per 100,000 people). In 2019 (World Health Organization) Southeast Asia accounted for an estimated 39% of all suicides in low- and middle-income nations(6).

Aims of the Review

This literature review aims to comprehensively examine the dowry system's multifaceted impacts on women and to identify the key factors that perpetuate these issues. The dowry practice, a deeply rooted tradition in several countries, including Pakistan, India, China, Bangladesh, Nepal, and the United States, has significant implications for women's well-being and social status. In Pakistan, despite a lack of formal records of dowry violence, the practice remains pervasive and causes severe psychological and financial distress among women and their families (8).

In South Asia, including Sindh, the dowry system is a contentious practice with roots in Hindu traditions, particularly among Rajput Hindus, and has since expanded to affect Muslim families and individuals across socioeconomic backgrounds (2).The dowry system is associated with a range of adverse outcomes, including violence, financial strain, and social devaluation, particularly for women from lower-income backgrounds. This review seeks to investigate how dowry practices contribute to these harms and explore the underlying factors that sustain this practice.

The Review Question

The literature review will address the following research question:

- How does the practice of dowry contribute to psychological, social, and physical harm experienced by women, and what are the key factors that perpetuate these issues?

Methodology

Search Strategy

The search will employ relevant search terms and subheadings of keywords about dowry, early marriage, domestic violence, sexual assault, child labor, women's suicide status, and mental health problems. Truncations (*) and Boolean



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operators will be used as per the specifications of the databases searched. Various databases for peer-reviewed and grey literature will be explored using subject headings and the following keywords:

- (Dowry OR Early Marriage)
- AND
- (domestic violence)
- AND
- (sexual assault)
- AND
- (women's suicide status OR mental health problems)
- AND
- (Pakistan OR lower middle-income countries OR middle-income countries OR Asian countries).

Researcher thoroughly searched various databases, including AMA Journals, BMJ Journals Collection, CINAHL Plus with Full Text, Cochrane Library Pro Quest Dissertation & Theses, Sage, Science Direct, Scopus, Springer, and Wiley Inter-Science. We also searched for grey literature on Google Scholar and accessed scholarly articles from the University of Punjab and the Pakistan Journal of International Affairs. To ensure everything is transparent and accountable, the researcher kept a search log and updated it regularly to catch any newly published articles.

Figure 02 PRISMA CHART (2007-2023)

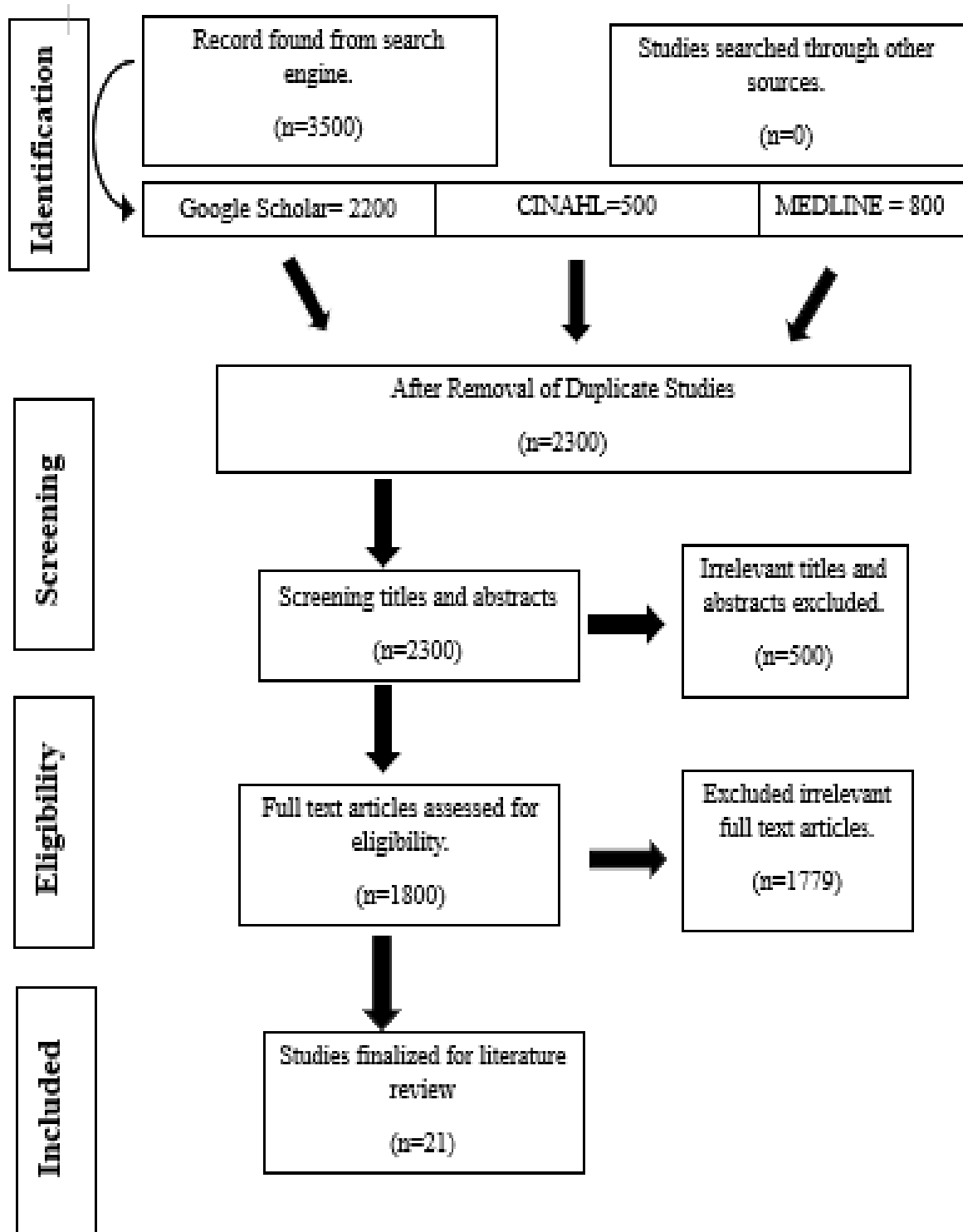


Figure 02 PRISMA CHART (2007-2023)

Study design

In the literature review section, researchers systematically outline their approach to gathering and analyzing relevant literature (PRISMA-P) reporting guidelines (Moher et al., 2015). This typically involves detailing search strategies, databases utilized, inclusion and exclusion criteria, and data extraction and synthesis



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methods. This review will include qualitative and quantitative evidence from peer-reviewed articles, mixed-method studies, and grey literature. To avoid duplication, we searched Google Scholar, MEDLINE, and CINAHL to ensure that no previous literature reviews on dowry have been conducted.

The inclusion criteria for this review are as follows:

- It included peer-reviewed articles, dissertations, books, book chapters, working papers, technical reports, and discussion papers published between December 2007 and December 2023.
- Only studies published in English with full text available will be considered.
- The search terms used are violence, dowry, Pakistan, domestic violence, women's suicide rates, and mental health issues.

A thorough and methodical approach was taken in the laborious process of conducting a systematic literature evaluation for this study, which involved sifting through a broad spectrum of prior studies. The approach began with a thorough search of academic databases and credible source sites, which resulted in an amazing 3,500 registrants. On closer investigation, Google Scholar provided the most to this developing collection with 2,200 entries, followed by CINAHL and MEDLINE with 500 and 800 high-quality and second-selection references, respectively, as early phases completed. "Duplicate items were removed, resulting in 2300 unique records. "Each of these 2,300 recordings was then subjected to a thorough search procedure, with a focus on the nature of important themes and works that effectively summarized them. In the initial review, 500 irrelevant or peripheral entries were meticulously excluded, thereby refining the dataset to approximately 1,800 selected articles. This rigorous search process ensured that the majority of the 1,779 remaining articles met the thesis criteria, maintaining a consistent focus that was not duplicated in subsequent publications. The comprehensive screening method resulted in 21 revised and enhanced articles, each carefully selected for their intrinsic significance and contribution to the overall aims of the research paper.

This conclusion shows a thorough approach to both qualitative and quantitative analysis, ensuring that the literature review is based on solid, relevant, and high-quality research. The study's credibility is strengthened by its systematic and detailed evaluation process. Additionally, the findings were reviewed by three experts' professors and assistant professors from a renowned university who confirmed the research's reliability and rigor.

Discussion

The findings from this literature review highlight the multifaceted harms associated with the dowry system in Pakistan, underscoring its profound impact on women's psychological, social, and physical well-being. The review reveals that despite varying perspectives on the dowry system's origins and evolution, the core issues remain consistent: the perpetuation of gender inequality, financial burden, and the normalization of violence against women.

The dowry system is an unethical practice that should be prohibited in Pakistan, as it promotes issues, quarrels, and greed in society. Despite the societal opposition to dowry, it remains a familiar practice with severe abuses, affecting both love and arranged marriages among professionals and illiterate individuals



alike. The cost of dowry has a psychological impact on girls and causes parents to lose self-esteem. Dowry is particularly problematic for lower-class communities, reinforcing social inequality and economic disparity.

Implications of Findings

This review affirms that the dowry system significantly contributes to psychological distress among Pakistani women, reinforcing findings from previous studies that link dowry demands to heightened stress and mental health issues (13). Women subjected to dowry demands often experience increased vulnerability to domestic violence, exacerbated by the economic pressures and societal expectations that accompany these practices (12). The social implications of dowry extend beyond individual experiences, influencing societal norms and perpetuating cycles of abuse and inequality(11).

The testimonials of numerous authors shed light on the severe implications that women face in situations of dowry, including violence and suicide (17). Dowry-related pressures create a cycle of misery and, in some unfortunate cases, even suicide (8). This systemic issue is compounded by entrenched cultural practices that validate and perpetuate the dowry system, despite its detrimental effects (2). The persistence of these practices reflects broader issues of patriarchal control and societal attitudes toward women's roles and rights ((19)).

Figure 01: Cultural and economic Factors of domestic Violence

Table-1. CULTURAL AND ECONOMIC FACTORS OF DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

Cultural and Economic Factors		Frequency	Percentage					
Gender-specific socialization		31	08%					
Cultural definitions of appropriate sex roles		29	08%					
Expectations of roles within relationships		25	06%					
Belief in the inherent superiority of males		30	08%					
Values that give men proprietary rights over women and girls		26	07%					
Notion of the family as the private sphere and under male control		32	09%					
Customs of marriage (bride price/dowry		26	07%					
Acceptability of violence as a means to resolve conflict		23	06%					
Women's economic dependence on men		45	12%					
Limited access to cash and credit		27	07%					
Discriminatory laws regarding inheritance, property rights,		26	07%					
Limited access to employment in formal and informal sectors		22	06%					
Limited access to education and training for women		33	09%					
Total		375	100%					
DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS								
Mea n	Media n	Mod e	Varianc e	Standard Deviation	Quarti le	Percentil e	Skewnes s	Range
1.23	1.00	2	3.05	1.47	2.34	1.24	-1.45	12



Comparison with Existing Literature.

The review's findings align with the broader literature on dowry systems in South Asia, which consistently highlights the adverse effects on women's lives. Studies from India and Bangladesh show similar patterns of violence and psychological distress linked to dowry demands (4, 11). However, the unique socio-cultural context of Pakistan, as explored in this review, reveals specific regional and class-based variations in how dowry practices manifest and impact women (18).

The review also highlights the evolving nature of dowry practices, noting a shift from traditional forms of dowry to more materialistic demands, reflecting broader socio-economic changes and increasing materialism within Pakistani society (16). This shift underscores the need for a nuanced understanding of how modern economic pressures influence traditional practices and their impact on women's lives(7).

Gaps and Future Research

While this review provides valuable insights, it also identifies several gaps that warrant further investigation. The complexity of dowry-related violence and its intersection with other forms of abuse, such as early marriage and domestic violence, requires more comprehensive studies to fully understand the broader implications (20). Additionally, the resilience and agency of women who navigate these challenges are underexplored, suggesting a need for research that highlights positive coping strategies and support systems (15).

The review emphasizes the importance of culturally sensitive approaches in addressing dowry-related issues. Given the diversity within LMIC contexts, future research should consider local variations in dowry practices and their specific impacts on different communities. This approach will ensure that interventions are appropriately tailored to address the unique challenges faced by women in various regions (21).

Overall, this literature review underscores the urgent need for comprehensive strategies to address the multifaceted harms of the dowry system in Pakistan. By fostering a collaborative effort among government bodies, NGOs, and community leaders, Pakistan can work towards creating a more equitable and just society for women, free from the burdens of dowry-related violence and abuse.

Figure 03 Table: Abstraction of Literature Review

	Author Name	Aim	Study Design	setting	Results
1	Subhan, R. N. (2007, June).	Examine the custom of dowry in Bangladesh, its characteristics, and its societal impact.	Analytical Review	Bangladesh	Dowry, despite lacking roots in Islamic law, remains a significant factor in Bangladeshi marriages, posing serious social issues and often



					benefiting the husband's family.
2	Gulzar, S., Nauman, M., Yahya, F., Ali, S., & Yaqoob, M. (2012).	Argue on the negative impact of the dowry system on Pakistani civilization	Analytical Review	Pakistan	Dowry involvement is widespread regardless of <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • education level, • imbalance for women • societal conflicts
3	Ahmad, N., et al. (2015)	Role of dowry in successful marital life	Case study	Asia	There is a significant direct link between factors. Dowry is a vital duty for brides and helps them get respect from their husband's family.
4	Gondal, S. (2015).	Explore the role of education, media exposure, and modernization in diminishing support for dowry, with a focus on the increasing materialism and greed in society of South Asia,	Literature review.	South Asia	Education and media can reduce dowry support, but modernization's influence is stronger due to materialism and greed driving dowry in South Asia, requiring strict preventive measures.
5	Shah, M. A. A., Arshad, S., & Qasim, H. (2016)	Investigate social factors affecting dowry in rural and urban areas of Southern Punjab, Pakistan.	Cross-sectional Study	Southern Punjab, Pakistan	Significant associations with area, bride's employment, financial dowry support, and bride's education.
6	Ferdousi, N. (2019)	Analyze the challenges faced by women regarding their right to dower under Shariah and statutory laws, and the impact of dowry practices in Bangladesh	Analytical Review	Bangladesh	Challenges exist in recovering dowers, while dowry victims often don't receive justice from laws and traditions. The article offers suggestions for improving family justice in Bangladesh.
7	Ullah, A., Liqat Ali, H. A., Ali, H., Gul, S., & Tariq, M. (2020)	Investigate the stimulants and negative impacts of high dowry practice on women's prestige in district Swabi, Pakistan.	Observational Study	district Swabi, Pakistan.	Dowry perpetuates violence against women, with rising deaths despite legal prohibitions and activist efforts, demanding urgent cessation.
8	Khanal, K., & Sen, R.	Investigate the nature of dowry in	Analytical Review	South Asia,	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • South Asian grooms continue



	(2020).	South Asia, focusing on its non-reciprocal nature and economic relevance			<p>to demand larger dowries despite economic irrelevance worldwide.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mainstream literature fails to account for the evolution of dowry systems in modern capitalism. • Applying a substantivist methodology, the study explores dowry's prevalence in South Asia within a social and cultural context.
9	Dar, S. A., & Lone, N. A. (2020)	Investigate the impact of the dowry system in India, its perpetuation of violence against women, and the failure of legislative measures to curb the issue	Literature review.	India	Deep-rooted cultural norms fuel violence against women, especially through the dowry system in India, leading to oppression and murder despite legal prohibitions and limited progress in combating the practice.
10	Kumar, R. (2020).	Examine the complexities of the dowry system in India, including its historical origins, societal impact, legal framework, and the need for change	Analytical Review	India	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Undermines gender equality, • Highlighting gaps in legal measures and government efforts • Urging societal change for its eradication..
11	Naveed, S., Tahir, S. M., Imran, N., Rafiq, B., Ayub, M., Haider, I. I., & Khan, M. (2023).	Investigate current trends, demographics, and characteristics of completed suicides in Pakistan based on reports from leading newspapers	Qualitative Study	Pakistan	Analyzing reports from major Pakistani newspapers (2019-2020) revealed 2295 suicides, mostly by men (61.87%), highlighting the urgent need for effective suicide prevention policies.
12	Upadhyay, C. (2023).	Analyze the ideal practices and dowry	Descriptive Research	Nepal	Dowry driven by fanaticism and imitation,



		system in Muslim communities in Nepal.			suggesting Islamic ideals and education to control it.
13	ALI, N., et al. (2023).	Community perception towards dowry practice and its economic consequences in District Malakand	Descriptive study	District Malakand, Pakistan	Dowry is evil, and as a symbol of honor, with significant associations found in various dowry-related aspects. Dowry paid in cash - Dowry payment in material shape like jewelry, land, cattle - Due to demand of huge dowry, poor girls remain unmarried -
14	Bhamani, S. S., Merchant, A., Jetha, Z. A., & Ali, T. S. (2023).	Raise awareness about dowry as a preventable predictor of violence.	Literature review.	Asia	Dowry, while providing women a chance for premortem inheritance, often leads to violence and abuse, demanding comprehensive preventive measures. Collaboration among government, health institutions, and civil society is crucial to prevent violence and abuse related to women's inheritance rights and reduce the burden on brides.
15	Ch, S. N., Chand, S. I., & Dhariwal, C. A. U. H. (2023).	Evaluate the dowry system in Pakistan, its consequences, and legislative attempts to curb the issues.	Qualitative Research	Pakistan	Enforcement of laws, awareness, education, and media campaigns are suggested to address dowry issues, with the article structured into historical background, prevailing customs, anti-dowry laws, and solutions.
16	Asif, A., Ayub, S., Aamer, I., & Cheema, U. A. (2023).	investigate the practice and implications of dowry on female marriage in contemporary society, focusing on	Quantitative Study	Dir Lower, Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa	Recommendations <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • community leaders and elders creating rules against dowry, • media running anti-dowry



		Dir Lower, Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa			campaigns to discourage the practice.
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Results

Dowry Systematic Rationale

The first point of issue was the reasoning for the dowry system. The fundamental reason for Dowry's establishment was custom. Greed is another possible factor. Compulsion and need, on the other hand, are the least effective factors. Furthermore, the findings of Ali, Arnadottir, and Kulane (2013) verified the perceived negative impacts of Dowry and the viewpoints of metropolitan Karachi and Pakistan women. Due to dowry practices, women throughout Karachi were aware of these issues, even if they belonged to various socioeconomic strata. A variety of detrimental effects have developed in Karachi society as a result of these practices (6)).

Rise in Dowry Practice

The second question was about the rise in Dowry. The findings indicate that all young people, especially parents, brides, and government officials, are responsible for preventing Dowry from becoming more popular in Pakistan. Conversely, NGOs receive the most minor support. The following question concerned the social class most impacted by the dowry system. In Pakistan, there are fundamentally three strata that are differentiated by money. According to related research, the middle class, compared to the lower and upper classes, is more likely to use the dowry system (9). Dowry is practiced by both educated and illiterate people, resulting in psychological and physical harm to women while also promoting materialism and disputes. Despite wide opposition, dowry remains due to traditions and lust, particularly among the upper middle class(13).

Societal Impact

Dowry is now common in Pakistan and is mainly motivated by avarice. Most people dislike dowries, but they are still practiced due to tradition. This is customary among people from other caste systems. According to a recent survey, the dowry system is used primarily among the upper middle class. However, according to the present study's findings, the dowry system is used by both educated and illiterate people. In our current urban society, both genders are making financial contributions and are fully conscious of the economic problems one may face.

Strengths

The paper thoroughly reviews the dowry system from various perspectives, integrating a wide range of studies to provide a holistic view of its impact. The extensive search strategy and inclusion of diverse sources contribute to a robust and nuanced analysis. By addressing how dowry practices affect psychological, social, and physical well-being, the paper offers a detailed examination of the



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multifaceted harm caused by dowry. This depth of analysis helps in understanding the complexity of the issue and its broad implications. The paper effectively identifies and discusses the roles of different stakeholders (e.g., government, NGOs, families) in perpetuating or combating the dowry system. This focus on stakeholders provides practical insights into who can influence change and how. The recommendations are based on thorough analysis and evidence from the reviewed literature. They provide actionable steps that can be implemented by various stakeholders to address and mitigate the harmful effects of dowry.

Weaknesses

While the paper reviews a broad range of literature, the reliance on secondary data may limit the depth of understanding. Direct empirical studies or primary data collection could provide more detailed insights into the lived experiences of women affected by dowry. The findings may not fully account for regional and cultural differences within Pakistan. The impact of dowry may vary significantly between urban and rural areas or among different socio-economic groups, which may not be adequately addressed. The paper primarily focuses on academic and secondary sources, which might not fully capture the personal experiences and voices of dowry survivors. Including qualitative data from interviews or focus groups with survivors could enhance the paper's depth and relevance. The selection of sources from certain databases might introduce bias. While efforts were made to ensure a comprehensive review, the reliance on specific databases and language limitations could exclude relevant studies from other sources or languages.

Recommendations

Future studies should consider including primary research methods, such as surveys or interviews with survivors, to provide firsthand accounts and deepen understanding of the personal and social impacts of dowry. Research should investigate the variations in dowry practices and their impacts across different regions of Pakistan. This would help in tailoring interventions to specific contexts and understanding the nuances of dowry's effects in diverse settings. There is a need for research evaluating the effectiveness of existing policies and interventions aimed at reducing dowry-related violence. This can help in assessing what works and where improvements are needed. Future research should also explore the resilience and coping strategies of women affected by dowry. Understanding how survivors navigate and overcome challenges can inform more supportive and empowering interventions. Comparative studies involving other countries with similar practices can provide insights into effective strategies for combating dowry and improving women's rights globally. This could offer broader lessons and solutions applicable beyond Pakistan.



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