



EFFECTS OF COUSIN MARRIAGES ON ADVERSE PREGNANCY OUTCOMES AMONG WOMEN IN PAKISTAN: A SECONDARY ANALYSIS OF DATA FROM THE PAKISTAN DEMOGRAPHIC AND HEALTH SURVEY 2012-13

Sonia Omer,
Sitwat Farooq
Dept. of Social Work, University of the Punjab
&
Sadia Jabeen
Dept. of Sociology, Virtual University of Pakistan

Abstract

Preference for consanguineous marriages is significantly high in South Asian populations and Pakistan is no exception. Pakistan is one of the countries most prone to favour consanguineous marriages and has one of the highest rates of consanguineous marriages in the region. Current study conducted on this significant issue highlights the adverse effects of cousin marriages on maternal and child health. This study explores the effects of cousin marriages on adverse pregnancy outcomes, namely still births, abortions, miscarriages and termination. The study findings reveal that cousin marriages have severe impacts on maternal and child health. Rates of abortion, termination and still births are found to be higher among females having consanguineous marriages. The data also showed limited access or permission to have consultation in consanguineous marriages as most of the respondents do not even fulfill the standard criteria of antenatal visits during pregnancy. Such study concludes that in Pakistan, consanguinity not only contributes to the negative effects on maternal and child health but also reinforces adoption of past and outdated behavior patterns among the masses.

Keywords

Consanguineous marriages, cousin marriage & pregnancy outcomes, miscarriages, sociological indicators, consanguinity in South Asia