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Gender Differences in Perceptions Regarding Victimizing Potential of Social Practices of Dowry and Watta Satta on Pakistani Women

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Abstract

Several social and cultural practices are considered as having victimized and criminal potential against Pakistani women. The two such practices, namely dowry and watta satta, are the focus of this research paper. There is a lack of research available to explore the perceptions regarding these social practices in existing literature. Further, the research on differences in perceptions held by men and women regarding these social practices is also rare. Therefore, this paper specifically focuses on exploring the differences of perceptions regarding the above-named two social practices among educated men and women of Sindh, Pakistan. The data was collected from 347 educated men and women in Sindh through a survey administered by using a questionnaire. The statistical analysis of the collected data was done by applying the Mann Whitney U test to explore the gender differences in perceptions about each of these individual practices. The results show that there is a statistically significant difference in men and women's perceptions regarding the victimizing potential of two social practices of dowry and *Watta satta*.

Keyword: Gender, Perceptions, Dowry, Watta Satta, Victimization, Women, Pakistan.

Introduction

Pakistani society has various social practices prevalent in the name of culture and customs that have some direct and indirect harmful effect on the status of Pakistani women. Some of these social practices are namely Dowry, *Watta satta*, *Walwar*, *Wanni*, *Swara*, Marriage with Quran, Honour killing, and child marriage. This research paper focuses on two of these social practices, namely Dowry and Wata Satta. There is sufficient public interest, knowledge, and theoretical literature regarding these social practices. However, studying the exact nature and effect of these social practices is difficult because of the scarcity of empirical studies and data sets. There are many studies theoretically revealing the harmful effects of these social practices on the status of women in society. The laws have also been promulgated to legally restrict or limit these practices. However, despite their harmful effect, their acknowledgement and the legal restrictions, these social practices are being practiced on a large scale in South Asian societies, like Pakistan.

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What are the reasons behind the long persistence of these harmful social practices in these societies? This is still an unanswered question through empirical evidence. Patriarchy or male domination in these societies of tribal and feudal nature can be theoretically explained as a cause of the long persistence of such anti-women social practices in any society. Still, this hypothesis needs much empirical evidence to satisfactorily prove the link between these two. The gender segregated data on perceptions and acceptability regarding these anti-women social practices may help to understand the different views, if men (as the dominant controlling group) and women (as the subordinate and underprivileged group) in patriarchal societies possess on them. This research is particularly an effort to explore the difference of perception among men and women in the patriarchal society of Pakistan regarding two social practices of dowry and watta satta.

Dowry is called as *Jaheez* (جہیز) in Urdu language. It can be understood as a kind of transfer or payment made at the time of marriage. In history, this custom has been practiced in almost all parts of the world in one form or another. However, in recent times, we have found that this custom still prevails in developing countries. South Asian countries are not exceptions, as the dowry system is still prevailing in these countries to a greater extent. It is apt to say that the same is almost universally practiced in all marriages in Pakistan and India irrespective of educational, social, economic backgrounds of family or the couple.

The custom of dowry is a tradition of giving gifts to the bride at the time of marriage from her paternal family as a support for starting a new family and household. However, with time, the traditional gifts in the name of dowry have changed their nature and value to acquire the transformed nature of large-scale valuable goods, property, and monetary transactions. This has become an economic and social burden on the family of the girls to be married. Thus, it has affected the life of the women in Pakistan with the attached stigma of this financial burden attached to a girl since her birth.

The custom of dowry is also known for its potential of resulting in post-marital maltreatment and domestic violence on women in their husband's house by their husband or in-laws. The demand of dowry from in-laws before marriage, and their dissatisfaction with the provided dowry after marriage is often said to be linked with determining the status of women in her husband's home. It is also linked with the occurrence, frequency, and extent of violence done on the bride after marriage. The reported cases of domestic violence on married women often reveal their perpetrators as their husbands and in-laws. Many forms of domestic violence on married women, such as scolding, beating, hanging, stove burning, are often theoretically linked with in-laws' demands for more dowry or dissatisfaction with the provided dowry.

Watta Satta is commonly known as an exchange marriage. It is a tradition of exchanging brides between two families. One woman from a family gets married to a man in another family in exchange for a woman from the groom's family being married to a man of the bride's family. Sometimes, this tradition also involves an old/middle-aged woman being married to a younger man in exchange. Some scholars see this arrangement as a security measure for the girls' families and the grooms' families. It is perceived that keeping in mind the security of their daughters in other families, the in-laws will not maltreat their daughter-in-law in their family. On the contrary, in reality, this tradition results in causing much agony for both the couples if any slight maladjustment occurs between any one of these couples. The age difference between the bride and groom usually adds to this maladjustment among any one of the couples involved.

The existence of the above named social practices is a result of the patriarchal nature of society. The patriarchal nature of society has a link with the continuous persistence of these social practices despite their harmful effect. In a patriarchal system, men enjoy the hegemonic power over all avenues and sources of power. Men in patriarchal societies have a great influence in maintaining the ideological aspect of society through the control of various social institutions, such as religion, media, and family control. They promote ideologies and concepts, and through these ideologies, certain practices in society have the potential to consolidate the power of men by suppressing the other weak and underprivileged groups into subordination and vulnerable conditions. As men control the venues of power and authority in society, the protest and the voice raised by the weaker groups against such harmful ideologies and practices are easily suppressed. Even the weaker group sufficiently perceives the harmful effect. However, the way men perceive these ideologies and practices leads to continuously enforcing and promoting these ideologies and practices despite their visibly evident negative impact on the weaker group.

There is not much research done in this direction, to explore the differences in perceptions of men and women regarding several prevailing social practices like dowry and watta satta. This research paper is a step ahead in this direction. The future research may further need to explore the link between the social practices perceived as less harmful by men (e.g. dowry and watta satta) as compared to that of women and their continuous universal prevalence in society.

Literature Review

Pakistani society has a rich culture that includes uncountable social and customary practices that are beneficial for the organization, order, and integration of society. Women are given an important role to play in these beneficial cultural practices. However, at the same time, some of the social practices existing in

Pakistan are still considered as discriminatory and harmful, especially for women. Dowry, exchange marriage, paying the bride price, exchange of women for settlement of disputes, honour killing, child marriage, and the marriage with the holy book of the Quran are some of these discriminatory practices. Some of these very critical practices have already been condemned and declared as crime by the newly formulated or amended laws in the last two decades (Weiss, 2012).

Several research studies have shed light on the popular consideration of these social practices as victimizing and harmful for the status of Pakistani women (Jilani & Ahmed 2004, Tabassum, Tabassum & Afzal 2015). Some of these social practices are growingly perceived as crime against women in Pakistani society (Syed, Afzal, & Tabassum, 2015). Agha and Ahmed (2018:101) acknowledged that social practices like watta satta (exchange marriage), dowry, and bride price contribute a great deal to women's disempowerment. The two of these social practices are the main focus of this research paper. The next paragraphs will discuss the available literature on these two social practices of dowry and watta satta.

Anderson (2007: 151-152) points out that most developed and developing societies at some point in history have practiced the tradition of payments at the time of marriage. However, the same thing now mostly exists in developing countries. This custom is commonly observed in South Asian countries (Makino, 2019). Several research studies have explored the almost universally prevailing social practice of dowry and its dynamics in Pakistani society (Afzal & Subhani, 2009; Ahmed, Hussain, Tariq, & Raza 2015; Ali et al. 2013: 87; Ali, Krantz, & Morgen 2012: 579; Anjum, Malik & Khan 1995; Commission of Inquiry for Women in Pakistan 1997: 39; Gulzar et al. 2012: 784; Jilani & Ahmed, 2004; Naved & Persson, 2010; Shah, Arshad & Qasim 2016; Subhani & Afzal, 2009; Tabassum, Tabassum, & Afzal 2015; Tabassum, Tabassum, & Afzal 2017: 120). Initially, it was supposed to be a set of gifts given at the time of marriage to the newlywed couple to start their life and a new home easily (Anjum et al., 1995; Thompson, 1997, p. 408; Gulzar et al., 2012, p. 784). However, in recent times this helping positive social practice has turned into capital including highly valuable and expensive items, good and money, paid with or without demand form groom's side, determining a woman's prospects for finding good mate before marriage and her worth, respect, safety after marriage in grooms' home and from in laws (Ali et al., 2013, p. 87; Commission of inquiry for women in Pakistan 1997, 39; Anjum et al., 1995; Ali, Krantz, & Morgen 2012: 579). Makino (2019) also affirms that in recent times the dowry amounts are increasing and are affecting the women's status in the husband's house with evidence from rural Punjab in Pakistan.

Anderson (2007: 151) highlights the literature documenting the amount of payments or transfers done at the time of marriage show that this transfer per marriage is amounting to six times the annual income of an average household in

South Asia and four times in Sub-Saharan Africa. The practice of demanding and paying dowry has a potential for initiating several forms of violence against women, such as burning, killing, and hanging (Ali et al., 2013, pp. 84-85; Commission of inquiry for women in Pakistan 1997, 39; Ali, Krantz, & Morgen 2012: 579). If the dowry expectations of the husband and in-laws are not met, they may start to threaten the bride to kill or for physical torture to force the bride's family to fulfil the demands (Nasrullah & Muazzam, 2009, p. 247). Abdul Hadi (2017; 301) also indicates that the husband or in-laws perpetrate the extreme forms of domestic violence like stove burning due to their dissatisfaction with the dowry the woman has brought to them. Naved and Persson (2010) highlight that demands of dowry made by in-laws usually determine the magnitude, frequency, and the harshness of abusive physical treatment of women in the husband's house, and if the dowry is not paid, this may result in more chances of violence and abuse. Bloch and Rao (2002) claimed that this terror of abusive behaviour and violence is a bargaining tool for the dowry transfers at the time of marriage. Makino (2019) showing the results of his survey research done in rural Punjab in Pakistan studying the link between dowry and the status of women infer that the higher amounts of payments in the form of goods as dowry (e.g. furniture, home appliances, and items for the kitchen) results in a better status of women in husband's home. This economic burden of dowry actually affects women's lives from birth to death. It affects the determination of the son preference among parents at the time of childbirth. Parents feel it is difficult to bring up a daughter who will need such a huge dowry while she will not be supporting her paternal family like sons (Winkvist & Akhtar, 2000).

Watta satta is mean an exchange marriage involving two couples of brother and sister between two families, literally connoting the exchange of brides between two families have also been studied by several scholars (Jilani & Ahmed, 2004; Riaz, Mannan & Malik 2016; Jacoby & Mansuri 2010, p. 1804; Baghal et al. 2016: 104; Bhutta et al. 2015, p. 166). The prevalence of this social practice is such that Jacoby and Mansuri (2010, 1804) have identified this sort of marriage as comprising one third of all marriages in rural areas of Pakistan. This social practice has the potential for violence and abuse to each of the women involved in this exchange, in case anything went wrong with any of them (Jilani & Ahmed, 2004, p. 194). This practice has been identified as the power controlling strategy between two families and the married couples (Naveed & Butt, 2015, p. 167).

Some of the research studies have explained the reason for the prevalence of watta satta marriage in Pakistan as a perceived social security for the women concerned. These marriages are practiced with the perceived aim of providing social security to the brides by establishing reciprocal controlling mechanisms of the groom and the in-laws' behaviours to prevent brides' maltreatment. This social security to the women concerned is provided through conditioning the grooms' behaviour with their respective wives with a potential surety of the good or threat

of the abusive treatment of their respective blood relative girl given as bride in exchange (Zaman, 2013; Zaman, Zakar, & Sharif 2014).

This type of marriage has also been criticized for limiting a woman's marriage by free choice (Tabassum et al., 2017, p. 117). Several scholars have identified its effects as including domestic violence, estrangement, depression and violation of rights (Soomro, Lalani & Qureshi 2013) and the potential for exchange of minor girls in marriage or sometimes before their birth (Bagahl et al., 2016, pp. 104 -107; Naveed & Butt, 2015: 167).

These practices are victimizing Pakistani women. Jilani and Ahmed (2004) have also identified a number of these practices as harmful but still are either acceptable or less resisted in Pakistani society. Research studies have found that larger scale popular perceptions prevailing among educated people are condemning (among 80 to 82% of the research participants in these studies) towards these anti women social practices as a source of fostering crime against women in Pakistan (Syed et al., 2015, p. 34; Tabassum, Tabassum & Afal 2015: 120). Similarly, the research also showed that there is an overall condemning perception regarding individual social practices. For example, Tabassum, Tabassum & Afzal (2017: 120) found 76% of respondents of field survey in Sindh accepting dowry as bearing potential of entailing crime against Pakistani women. Further, it highlights that 92% of the research participants accept watta satta, 83% of the participants accept Walwar, 93% of the participants accept wanni, 90% of the participants accept swara and 90% participants accepting marriage with Quran as having same anti women and discriminatory potential (Tabassum, Tabassum & Afzal 2017: 120). Anderson (2007:151) highlights the crucial problem of solid data on dowry and bride price being extremely rare. Makino (2019) while studying the relationship between dowry and women's status also highlights the problem that, compared with the theoretical studies done on dowry, there is a dearth of empirical studies because there is not much data available and what is available is not sufficient.

The existing literature is evident that all the above-discussed social practices victimize women by curtailing some of their rights and reducing their status for the benefit of men. Tabassum and her fellows (2017: 112) highlight that the dominant groups in society have the power to promote practices and traditions that are in their best interest. In general, masculine dominance is universal in all societies around the world. Pakistan is not an exception. Pakistani society is structured as a typically patriarchal one (Shaheed, 1991, pp. 135-158). The basic feature of a patriarchal society is defined as the dominance of men over women (Johnson, 1997, p. 5; Millett 1970, p. 25). Satisfying this classic feature of patriarchal society, Pakistani women experience control and subordination by a hierarchy of male patriarchs from home to the state level. Men possess all the powers from family to the state level to condition women's behavior, promote practices, customs, laws and standards that

affect the life of other social groups including women (Tabassum, Tabassum & Afzal 2017: 113).

This controlling patriarchal authority that men enjoy in Pakistani society indicates that if men have a different perception about certain anti-women socio-cultural practices as compared to that of the way women perceive, this may lead to their use of power and control to foster and practice such practices on and on in the future. Certain evidence can be found regarding men's acceptance of certain social practices despite their continuous harmful effect on women. Ahmed, Hussain, Tariq and Raza (2015) in a study of dowry found that dowry helps to get respect for women from husbands, husbands give honour to their wives, and support her in family disputes, and results in a successful marital life for women. Although several studies cited above have discussed the economic burden of dowry on women and their parents, they continue to keep up this burden of dowry to condition the behavior of husbands in married couples. It means that men are comfortable receiving dowry and find it acceptable to pay dowry to ensure peace for themselves and their subordinate women.

Subhani and Afzal (2009) highlights that villagers (men) consider dowry as not a threat and do not try to resist this practice through any complaint or FIR, while women had hardly any access to such mechanisms of lodging complaints and are aware that they will not be welcome in home back after lodging such complaints. Subhani and Afzal (2009) also cited from Shanaz (2006) that dowry is essential to make a man accept one's daughter in marriage, therefore, this practice cannot be stopped till men (especially the father of the groom) refuse to accept dowry. This finding shows the determining worth of men's perception towards dowry from both ends of supply and demand.

Although a large body of literature is available on the dynamics of these social practices, very few studies have discussed the gender differentials in perceptions regarding these social practices. Gender segregated data on the perceptions regarding these social practices is essential for facilitating the future research to show the causes of continuous persistence of these social practices in Pakistani society despite their direly discriminatory effect on women. Therefore, to extend the existing knowledge in this regard, the aim is to further explore gendered patterns of perceptions regarding condemnation of these practices by men and women in this present research study.

Study Objectives

1. To identify the difference between educated men and women's perceptions regarding the rank of victimizing potential of the social practice of dowry against women in Pakistan.

2. To identify the difference between educated men and women's perceptions regarding the rank of victimizing potential of the social practice of Watta Satta against women in Pakistan.

Study Hypotheses

H_1: Educated women perceive a higher rank of victimizing potential of the social practice of dowry against women in Pakistan as compared to that of perceived by educated men.

H_2: Educated women perceive a higher rank of victimizing potential of the social practice of watta satta against women in Pakistan as compared to that of perceived by educated men.

Research Methodology

This research paper aims to explore popular perceptions regarding prevailing social practices against Pakistani women. This paper specifically focuses on the differences in perceptions of educated men and women regarding two social practices of dowry and watta satta. The population of this research study comprises educated people of Sindh. The random sampling technique selected the sample of respondents or research participants. The sample included 124 men and 223 women respondents in a 347 total cases retained for data analysis. The data was gathered from a selected sample of educated men and women of Sindh through the survey method. The survey was done with the help of a questionnaire developed by the researcher. The questionnaire included questions/items developed to explore people's perceptions regarding these anti-women social practices. Table 1 shows gender-wise descriptive statistics, including values of mean, median, standard deviation, skewness, and kurtosis, with respect to each item of the questionnaire for which the data were utilized in this research paper.

Table 1: Descriptive Statistics

GENDER			Dowry's victimizing potential against women.	Watta Satta marriage's victimizing potential against women.
MALE	N	Valid	124	124
		Missing	0	0
	Mean		3.6371	4.1613
	Median		4.0000	4.0000
	Std. Deviation		1.04636	1.09238
	Skewness		-.263	-1.392
	Std. Error of Skewness		.217	.217
	Kurtosis		-1.098	1.126
	Std. Error of Kurtosis		.431	.431
	Minimum		2.00	1.00
	Maximum		5.00	5.00
FEMALE	N	Valid	223	223
		Missing	0	0
	Mean		4.0942	4.4484
	Median		4.0000	5.0000
	Std. Deviation		.90300	.78027
	Skewness		-.928	-1.779
	Std. Error of Skewness		.163	.163
	Kurtosis		.230	3.919
	Std. Error of Kurtosis		.324	.324
	Minimum		2.00	1.00
	Maximum		5.00	5.00

Source: Author's analysis of the survey data.

The cross tabulation is run and presented to show the gender wise statistics (that is, frequencies and percentages) of responses for each item. The data on each item is ordinal (as already stated above) and skewed, as shown in Table 1. Therefore, the Mann Whitney U Test was found suitable and applied to identify the gender differentials in perceptions regarding each of the two social practices, as dealt with in two individual items of the questionnaire. The results of the test are presented below, showing the difference of Mean Rank, *U* value, *Z* value, and the *p* value showing the statistical significance or non-significance of the difference in perceptions held by the two genders on the two social practices, to test the hypotheses stated above.

Data Analysis and Discussion

Gender differences in perception regarding social practice of Dowry:

The results of data analysis show that there is a difference in the way men and women perceive the potential of the social practice of dowry for victimizing women in Pakistani society.

Table 2: Gender wise frequencies and percentages of the responses in respect of Dowry

			Gender		Total
			Male	Female	
Dowry's victimizing potential against women.	Disagree	Count	24	20	44
		%	19.4%	9.0%	12.7%
	Do not know	Count	26	21	47
		%	21.0%	9.4%	13.5%
	Agree	Count	45	100	145
		%	36.3%	44.8%	41.8%
	Strongly Agree	Count	29	82	111
		%	23.4%	36.8%	32.0%
Total		Count	124	223	347
		%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

The statistics presented in Table 2 show that only 9% of the women, as compared to that of 19.4% of the men, disagree with the statement that the popular social practice of dowry has a victimizing potential against women. At the same time, 81.6% of women, as compared to that of 59.7% of the men, agree that dowry has such victimizing potential against women. It means women more strongly perceive, as compared to men, that dowry can give rise to victimization and crime against women in Pakistan.

Table 3: Mann-Whitney Ranks Test

	Gender	N	Mean Rank	Sum of Ranks
Dowry's victimizing potential against women.	Male	124	146.42	18156.00
	Female	223	189.34	42222.00
	Total	347		

The same difference in men's and women's perception regarding dowry is also visible in the mean values presented in Table 1 above. The mean value for women's perceptions regarding dowry is higher (i.e. 4.0942) than the mean value for men (i.e. 3.6371). The Mann Whitney test results also show a similar gender

wise difference in the Mean Rank, as presented in Table-3. The statistics show the Mean Rank for females is higher (i.e. 189.34) than the Mean Rank for men (i.e. 146.42).

Table 4: Test Statistics(a)

	Dowry's victimizing potential against women
Mann-Whitney U	10406.000
Wilcoxon W	18156.000
Z	-4.049
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)	0.000
Exact Sig. (2-tailed)	0.000
Exact Sig. (1-tailed)	0.000
Point Probability	0.000
a. Grouping Variable: Gender	

The Mann Whitney U test results indicated that the level of perception regarding vicitimizing potential of the social practice of dowry against women in Pakistan was significantly greater for educated women of Sindh (Median= 4.0000 and Mean=4.0942) than for educated men of Sindh (Median=4.0000 and Mean =3.6371), The data analysis results presented in Table-4 shows as following U=10406.000, Z=-4.049, *p*=.000. Therefore, on the basis of above statistics, rejecting the null hypothesis, the hypothesis 1 stating "Educated women perceive a higher rank of victimizing potential of the social practice of dowry against women in Pakistan as compared to that of perceived by educated men" is accepted.

Gender differences in perceptions regarding watta satta marriage

The results of data analysis show that there is a difference in the way educated men and women perceive the victimizing potential of the social practice of Watta Satta (i.e. exchange marriage) against women in Pakistani society.

Table 5: Gender wise frequency and percentages of the responses in respect of Watta Satta

			Gender		Total
			Male	Female	
Watta Satta's victimizing potential against women.	Strongly Disagree	Count	4	2	6
		%	3.2%	0.9%	1.7%
	Disagree	Count	12	6	18
		%	9.7%	2.7%	5.2%
	Do not know	Count	5	10	15
		%	4.0%	4.5%	4.3%
	Agree	Count	42	77	119
		%	33.9%	34.5%	34.3%
	Strongly Agree	Count	61	128	189
		%	49.2%	57.4%	54.5%
Total		Count	124	223	347
		%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

The statistics presented in Table 5 show that only 3.6% of the women, as compared to that of 13% of men, disagree with the statement that the popular social practice of Watta Satta (exchange marriage) has a victimizing potential against women in Pakistani society. At the same time, 91.9% of women, as compared to that of 83.1% of the men, agree that the exchange marriage in the name of watta satta has a potential to result in victimization against women. It means women are more strongly perceiving, as compared to men, that what a satta gives rise to victimization against women in Pakistan.

Table 6: Mann-Whitney Test Ranks

	Gender	N	Mean Rank	Sum of Ranks
Watta Satta's victimizing potential against women.	Male	124	160.90	19951.00
	Female	223	181.29	40427.00
	Total	347		

The same difference in men's and women's perceptions regarding marriage is also visible in the mean values presented in Table 1 above. The mean value for women's perceptions regarding watta satta marriage is higher (i.e. 4.4484) than the mean value for men (i.e. 4.1613). The Mann Whitney test results also show a similar gender wise difference in the Mean Rank, as presented in Table-6. The statistics show the Mean Rank for Female as higher (i.e. 181.29) than the Mean Rank for men (i.e. 160.90).

Table 7: Test Statistics(a)

	Watta Satta's victimizing potential against women
Mann-Whitney U	12201.000
Wilcoxon W	19951.000
Z	-2.032
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)	0.042
Exact Sig. (2-tailed)	0.042
Exact Sig. (1-tailed)	0.021
Point Probability	0.000
a. Grouping Variable: Gender	

The Mann Whitney U test results indicated that the level of perception regarding victimizing potential of the social practice of Watta Satta marriage against women in Pakistan is significantly greater for educated women of Sindh (Median= 5.0000 and Mean=4.4484) than for educated men of Sindh (Median=4.0000 and Mean =4.1613). The data analysis results presented in Table 7 are as follows: *U*=12201.000, Z=-2.032, *P*=.042. Therefore, on the basis of the above statistics, rejecting the null hypothesis, the hypothesis 2 stating "Educated women perceive a higher rank of victimizing potential of the social practice of watta satta against women in Pakistan as compared to that of perceived by educated men" is accepted.

Conclusion and Recommendations

This research paper aimed to find out the difference between Sindh's educated men and women's perceptions regarding two individual anti-women social and cultural practices, namely Dowry (*jaheez*) and *Watta satta* (exchange marriage). The examination of the previously available literature shows a dearth of available research, particularly exploring the gender differences in perceptions regarding anti-women social practices. This research was designed as quantitative research done with a survey method for data collection and a closed-ended questionnaire. The data collected was statistically analyzed. The results of data analysis show that there is a statistically significant difference in perceptions of educated men and women of Sindh about the victimizing potential of two social practices of dowry and watta satta. It is visible from the data that women held a perception confirming a greater criminal and victimizing potential of these two social practices as compared to that of men. It is also important to note that despite women's awareness about the greater victimizing potential of the social practices of dowry and watta satta, these two anti-women social practices are still prevailing in Pakistani society to a greater extent. As discussed above, scholars have identified an almost universal prevalence of the social practice of dowry. It is also observed

that the watta satta (i.e. exchange marriage) also comprises a large number of marriages in Pakistani society. It may suggest a potential link that if men in a patriarchal society consider acceptable or condone any social practice, there are more chances that this particular social practice will continue to persist and survive for long despite its visible harmful effect on women. This is a potential area for future research to explore and find new knowledge to fill this gap. It is recommended to conduct further social research to gather empirical data and find the theoretical link between prevailing perceptions and persisting practice of anti-women social practice in Pakistani society.

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