

## ORIGINAL ARTICLE

# Parental Perspective Regarding Consanguineous Marriages as the Cause for Speech and Language Disorders in Pakistan

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## ABSTRACT

**Background:** Consanguineous connections are portrayed as connections between close relatives. These relationships are generally preferred in the majority of Asian and African nations particularly in the Muslim nations. Nonetheless, it is clear that these sorts of marriages have higher risk of congenital anomalies and disorders in children.

**Objective:** To determine the parental perspective regarding consanguineous marriages as the cause for speech and language disorders in children.

**Methodology:** The cross-sectional study was conducted through different hospital and centers in Lahore, Pakistan (Mayo Hospital, Services hospital, Autism Resource center and The University of Lahore Teaching hospital). Questionnaire will be used and comprised of questions. Data was collected through standardized questionnaire after taking the consent and was distributed among the consanguineous parents who have children with speech and language disorders. Parents were asked to complete the questionnaire. The data was collected using the online questionnaire as well. Results score was recorded for every respondent.

**Results:** The study showed that majority of the people thought that consanguinity cannot lead to speech and language disorders in children.

**Conclusion:** According to my research, although there is higher frequency of speech and language disorders recorded among consanguineous marriages than non-consanguineous marriages but majority of the people had a trend and preference for cousin marriages.

**Keywords:** Consanguinity, Cousin Marriage, parental attitude, speech problems, language disorders, perception, Pakistan

## INTRODUCTION

Consanguineous marriage, which was more popular in the past, is a coupling of first or second cousins. Cousin marriage, as the concept is popularly known, has been widespread over a long period of time, making it all the more noticeable in horticultural Asian countries, particularly Pakistan.<sup>(1)</sup> According to surveys, 60 percent of Pakistani relationships had connection, with 80 percent being first cousins. Further research found a rising trend of linking among married couples as well. Pakistan should be the primary country to practice relationship with around 70% of connections being consanguineous. A few spaces of Pakistan have shown an upsetting level of consanguineous relationship, for instance, the Sargodha space of Punjab and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.<sup>(2)</sup> 'Consanguinity' is a term gotten from the Latin word 'consanguineous', signifying 'of a similar blood'. In clinical hereditary qualities, consanguineous association is for the most part alluded as a joining between couples related as second cousins or closer.<sup>(3)</sup> Consanguineous affiliations are generally ordinary worldwide and especially in the Islamic countries. High speed of association has been believed to be connected with low monetary status, absence of schooling, and rural home. The case of unequivocal sorts of consanguinity and their connected elements, in any case, contrast in different peoples across the globe. Further, the epidemiological examinations have shown that there was a critical

abundance of inborn irregularities in the children of the consanguineous couples.<sup>(4)</sup>

Pakistani researchers concluded that cousin marriage is to blame for the prevalence of mental illness in the Pakistani population; they also discovered 30 new characteristics in these children that were responsible for this abnormality. Punjab is Pakistan's most populous province, and deafness is widespread there. The Rajput's have the highest rate of deafness due to genetics.<sup>(5)</sup> As a result of cousin marriage, around 700 children are born into the world with acquired shortcomings, with the situation being particularly terrible among the British Pakistani socioeconomic class.<sup>(6)</sup>

Consanguineous connections can grow the financial, physical, and mental load of innate flaws and genetic issues. Consanguineous spouses' offspring had a considerably higher rate of congenital malformations than non-consanguineous spouses' descendants, according to a study.<sup>(7)</sup> Similarly, parental association in a general sense extended the risk of developmental delay, autism, and the regularity of essential distortions, for instance, cardiovascular, external muscle, and urological systems.<sup>(8)</sup>

Speech and language problems are common, and they can affect people of all ages, regardless of their sexual orientation or color. Hearing, speech, language, fluency, cognition, and the neuromotor mechanics of speaking can all produce communication problems.<sup>(9)</sup> Any difference in

the capacity to grasp verbal and non-verbal communication accomplishes disorder with its genuineness going from sensitive to basic. Hearing problems, inborn, cerebrum eccentricities, metabolic concerns, reactivity to destructive chemicals, supporting inadequacies, wounds including brain wounds, and epilepsy are all examples of intrinsic or acquired communication disorders.<sup>(10)</sup>

In 2017, a study conducted in The Netherlands entitled "All in the family: Attitudes towards cousin marriages among young Dutch people from various ethnic groups" Netherlands which uncovered the perspectives towards cousin relationships among youngsters from different ethnic gatherings living in The Netherlands.<sup>(11)</sup> The group consisted of 245 people, with an average age of 21, with 107 Dutch, 69 Moroccans, and 69 Turks among them. The last two gatherings' guardians were from countries that respect cousin ties.<sup>(12)</sup> A study conducted by Joseph G. Grzywacz et al in 2022 entitled "Latino Parents' Perspectives on the Life Trajectories of Mixed-Status Children" in which it was explained that different expert Latino households typically have one child born in the United States and at least one new non-native child. Setting focused hypotheses of human advancement would fight that these families' lives would be completely transformed by the goals of their citizenship status or lack thereof.<sup>(13)</sup>

A cross-sectional audit was done well now (OP) focus in the Teaching Hospital of Maternity and Childhood, Al-Ramadi city, Anbar locale, Iraq. The outcomes showed that the mean age ( $\pm$ SD) was 39.0 ( $\pm$ 12.8) a long time. Around two third (64.6) of relationships were consanguineous and 36.6% of which were between first cousins and 14.7% had a kid with hereditary illness or handicap. Uplifting perspective towards inbreeding was 64.7%, but just 34.3% realized that it prompts hereditary sicknesses. Around 77.0% liked to get data about the dangers of inbreeding and 94.7% to have clinical assessment prior to getting hitched. It was inferred that connection is ordinarily rehearsed and acknowledged in Iraq, the familiarity with moms towards the connected wellbeing results to their posterity stays low.<sup>(14)</sup>

A study in Oman was conducted to dissect the different levels and examples of consanguineous marriages, as well as investigate the neighborhood's inborn inconsistencies in terms of affiliation and attitude toward alliance in Oman. According to the findings, Oman has an astonishingly high proportion of consanguineous marriage (49 percent). There is a diminishing plan in this association, which could be due to fewer first cousin marriages. Adults in Omani have a tolerably great deal of knowledge (69%) about the advantages of consanguineous marriage. Consanguineous marriage has a high energizing perspective (75 percent), which is a basic sign of the contemporary display of consanguineous marriage in Oman.<sup>(15)</sup>

## MATERIALS AND METHODS

This descriptive cross-sectional study conducted at different hospitals and centers (Services Hospital, University of Lahore Teaching Hospital, Autism resource center, Mayo hospital) over a period of six months (August 2021-February 2022). Convenient sampling technique was

selected to collect the data. Data was collected through self-made questionnaire. The questionnaire was comprised of 11 questions and were distributed among 190 participants. The inclusion criteria were parents having children with speech and language disorders. Total 190 respondents filled the questionnaire. Data was also collected using online questionnaire. The questionnaire's reliability and validity were tested using SPSS and Content Validity Performa, and the Cronbach's alpha was found to be 0.68. Every respondent's score was kept track of. The IBM Statistical Package for the Social Sciences SPSS version 22, was used to carry out the statistical analyses. We found the parental perspective regarding cousin marriages.

## RESULTS

Table 1

Demographics	Features	N (%)
Age	18-24	14 (7.4%)
	25-30	64 (33.7%)
	31 or above	112 (58.9%)
Gender	Male	44 (23.2%)
	Female	146 (76.8%)
No. of children	1-3	146 (76.8%)
	4-6	37 (19.5%)
	Above 6	7 (3.7%)
Socio-economic status	Low income	12 (6.3%)
	Middle income	150 (78.9%)
	High income	28 (14.7%)
Cousin marriage?	Yes	103 (54.2%)
	No	87 (45.8%)
Nuclear or joint family?	Nuclear	112 (58.9%)
	Joint	78 (41.1%)
Relation with spouse?	Maternal cousin?	52 (27.4%)
	Paternal cousin?	49 (25.8%)

Table 2

Sr.	Questions	Yes	No
1.	Should cousin marriages be encouraged or not?	78 (41.1%)	112 (58.9%)
2.	Preference of cousin marriages in your family?	128 (67.4%)	62 (32.6%)
3.	Trend of cousin marriage in your family?	111 (58.4%)	79 (41.6%)
4.	Any speech and language disorder in family?	101 (53.2%)	89 (46.8%)
5.	Can cousin marriage lead to speech and language disorders in children?	86 (45.3%)	104 (54.7%)
6.	Children can develop speech and language disorders because of mother?	32 (16.8%)	158 (83.2%)
7.	Children can develop speech and language disorders because of father?	34 (17.9%)	156 (82.1%)
8.	Ever faced a miscarriage or death of a child?	43 (22.6%)	147 (77.4%)
9.	Speech and language disorders are only caused when there is a prolonged history of cousin marriages?	106 (55.8%)	84 (44.2%)
10.	Were you educated regarding risk factors of cousin marriages?	108 (56.8%)	82 (43.2%)

These questions were posed to the parents in order to learn their thoughts on cousin marriages and whether they can cause speech and language impairments in children. The majority of the respondents 111 (58.4%) in the survey believed that consanguinity could not cause speech and language difficulties in children because their family had a trend of cousin marriages. Despite the fact that the majority of the people (51%) have a family history of speech and language difficulties, they have a favorable view regarding cousin marriages.

## DISCUSSION

Consanguinity is widely practiced in this region. 58.4% of the families had a trend of cousin connections in their families. In a study of parental attitudes toward consanguineous marriages and their effects on children's speech and language, it was discovered that 63.9 percent of respondents believed cousin marriages can cause speech and language disorders, but that parental attitudes toward the relationship remained positive. This contrasts with the findings of Badaea et al., who discovered that consanguineous marriage is fairly widespread (64.6 percent) among married women in Al-Ramadi, Anbar Province, Iraq. Two-thirds of these unions were between first cousins. Women's education has a negative relationship with consanguinity. Consanguineous couples reported more genetic illnesses and disabilities than nonconsanguineous marriages. Despite the fact that consanguinity is extensively practiced and accepted, women's awareness of the health implications for their offspring remains low. The majority of those polled preferred to learn about the dangers of consanguineous marriage before getting married. Approximately 60% of mothers are unconcerned if their sons or daughters marry cousins in the future. <sup>(16)</sup>

Another study conducted in Saudi Arabia which has similar results to our study. Cousin marriages were viewed favorably by the respondents, with nearly half of those polled viewing cousin relationships favorably. <sup>(17)</sup> Another study published in 2017 by Abraham P. Buunk found that individuals have a negative opinion regarding consanguinity, with the major reason being that it is wrong for important reasons, but that the risk of genetic abnormalities in children born from such unions is regarded to be low. Cousin marriage was never intended to increase the quality or cohesiveness of a marriage or family. <sup>(18)</sup> According to a study conducted in Pakistan (2018), This study found that the Pashtun community of KP province, Pakistan, has a high rate of consanguineous marriage (58.3%), with a mean inbreeding value of 0.0259. The target population's general relationship rate was regarded as highly high, with little knowledge of its genetic concerns. Aside from a small group of people, the Pashtun population knows relatively little about the inherited dangers of connection. <sup>(19)</sup>

Another study of young people from three ethnic groups in the Mexican state of Oaxaca found that, like the adults in the study, participants had a more negative than positive attitude toward marrying a cousin, and there was no difference between the three ethnic groups in this regard (Buunk and Hoben 2013). The possibility of genetic abnormalities in children born from such marriages, as is

often recognized (e.g., Ember 1975; Ottenheimer 1996), was a major argument against marrying a cousin. <sup>(20)</sup>

## CONCLUSION

According to my research, although there is a higher frequency of speech and language disorders recorded among consanguineous marriages than non-consanguineous marriages but majority of the people had a trend and preference for cousin marriages.

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