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## Across region marriages: A case study of Khidwali village, Rohtak (Haryana)

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### Abstract

In the last decade and a half, the male marriage squeeze in economically prosperous North Indian provinces such as Punjab, Haryana and Uttar Pradesh has led to men from these states to pay money to marry women, usually from underdeveloped or economically marginalized regions in Eastern India. A case study of across region marriages conducted in Khidwali village, Rohtak in January 2015. Eighteen across region brides participating in this study. The study examines the socio-cultural and economic dimensions of such marriages and also examines that how do such women adjust to a culturally different environment which is rigid and patriarchal than their own? The study finds out that the shortage of women is not common across all caste groups in the conjugal regions, but is endemic in dominant caste groups of Jats and Brahmins. This practice, however, is spreading to some lower caste groups also. The study suggests that these unusual marriages are a consequence of the combination of factors like low sex-ratio, unemployment, poverty, little land, less education, addiction and handicappedness.

**Keywords:** Cross region marriages, sex-ratio, marriage squeeze, unemployment, poverty.

### 1. Introduction

Every individual has to play a number of roles in his life. Of the various roles one plays, one is the economic role and the other is the marital or the family role. The marital role involves about forty to fifty years of one's life. But of these two roles, the marital role is more important than the economic role because the latter involves secondary relations, the former, involves personal or primary relations.

The institution of marriage from time immemorial has been a subject of critical investigation owing to its close and intimate relation to human happiness. In that large segment of an individual's life, which constitutes his social life and involves a relationship with another individual, this institution assures extreme significance. Parties involved undergo a very complex experience in marriage, particularly in contemporary marriage. During its course, individuals engage in ordained and purposeful activity in order to obtain biological, psychological and social satisfaction through constant meaningful interaction (Ahlawat, 2009) [1].

Though the majority of marriage in rural India are between different clans or different villages, they are nonetheless between the same castes. In rural India the status and reputation of the family is of paramount importance in matters of matchmaking, but of late there is some change in thinking and attitudes in this regard. In some villages, marriage may be contracted between villages five to ten miles apart, whereas in some other villages this distance must not be less than forty miles. There are certain families in the village which do not accept a match for marriage of anyone who lives within one hundred miles distance from the village; it should be more than hundred miles for these people (Jayapalan, 2002) [14].

About the patterns of kinship and marriage as identified are (Karve, 1965) [16] different for the north and the south. In the south, marriages often take place among close relatives due to which brides were known to the family. Thus 'cross-cousin' and 'uncle-niece' marriages were quite common. On the other hand, in the north, however people preferred to marry

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'Stranger'- those sufficiently removed in terms of both social and physical distance. The relationship between the bride givers and takers is more equal in the south and entirely hierarchical in the north with the bride takes having a permanent superiority here.

### 1.1 Decline Child Sex Ratio and Marriage Squeeze

While the overall sex ratio presents somewhat encouraging trends across the country, the same is not true in the case of the girl child in the age group of 0-6 years. There is a sharp decline in child sex ratio from 976 in the 1961 census to 914 in the 2011 census. It shows that intolerance towards the girl child continues despite the implementation of the Pre-conception and Prenatal Diagnostic Technique (PCPNDT). An effect of the imbalance in sex ratios is the mismatch in the marriage market, which is referred to as the "marriage squeeze". An excess of eligible women is called a female marriage squeeze; an excess of eligible men is called a male marriage squeeze.

Haryana is one of the economically prosperous state, but when it comes to the social development, it is still quite backward as is clearly reflected in poor sex ratio of the state, i.e. 877/1000

males against the national average of 940/1000 males. It is even poorer in the age group of 0-6 and that is 830/1000 males against the national average of 914/1000 males. Eminent demographer Asish Bose (2001) coined an interesting term Daughter Elimination and Male Craze for Ultrasound (DEMARU) and has categorically remarked about Haryana as DEMARU or *Daughter Maru* (killing) state. The killing of girl child has a long history in north-west India and remains quite common in particular areas and communities (Premi & Raju 1996, Premi 2001) [25].

Female foeticide is an extreme manifestation of the poor status of women who are socially constructed, inferior and the less valuable sex and often projected as a burden on the family. The risk faced by the girl child appears to be more acute in areas which have strongly benefited from the ongoing process of rapid economic change, and consequently considerable changes in the social fabric of society. It has been estimated that approximately 0.5 million girls have been denied being born during the past two decades. Clearly, there is a stronger bias against girl-children, particularly among the rich and the educated Indians (Ahlawat, 2013) [3].

**Table 1:** (District wise Child Sex Ratio and literacy Rate in Haryana 2001 to 2011)

State/District	Sex Ratio		Percent 0-6 pop		Sex Ratio 0-6 pop		Literacy Rate (Persons)		Literacy Rate (Males)		Literacy Rate (Females)	
	2001	2011	2001	2011	2001	2011	2001	2011	2001	2011	2001	2011
<b>HARYANA</b>	<b>861</b>	<b>877</b>	<b>15.8</b>	<b>13.0</b>	<b>819</b>	<b>830</b>	<b>67.9</b>	<b>76.64</b>	<b>78.5</b>	<b>85.4</b>	<b>55.7</b>	<b>66.8</b>
<b>Panchkula</b>	823	<b>870</b>	14.1	<b>11.7</b>	829	<b>850</b>	74.0	<b>83.4</b>	80.9	<b>88.6</b>	65.7	<b>77.5</b>
<b>Ambala</b>	868	<b>882</b>	13.2	<b>10.9</b>	782	<b>807</b>	75.3	<b>82.9</b>	82.3	<b>88.5</b>	67.4	<b>76.6</b>
<b>Yamuna Nagar</b>	862	<b>877</b>	14.4	<b>11.8</b>	806	<b>825</b>	71.6	<b>78.9</b>	78.8	<b>85.1</b>	63.4	<b>72.0</b>
<b>Kurukshetra</b>	866	<b>889</b>	14.2	<b>12.0</b>	771	<b>817</b>	69.9	<b>76.7</b>	78.1	<b>83.5</b>	60.6	<b>69.2</b>
<b>Kaithal</b>	853	<b>880</b>	15.4	<b>12.6</b>	791	<b>821</b>	59.0	<b>70.6</b>	69.2	<b>79.3</b>	47.3	<b>60.7</b>
<b>Karnal</b>	865	<b>886</b>	15.1	<b>12.9</b>	809	<b>820</b>	67.7	<b>76.4</b>	76.3	<b>83.7</b>	58.0	<b>68.3</b>
<b>Panipat</b>	829	<b>861</b>	16.4	<b>13.7</b>	809	<b>833</b>	69.2	<b>77.5</b>	78.5	<b>85.4</b>	58.0	<b>68.2</b>
<b>Sonipat</b>	839	<b>853</b>	15.4	<b>12.7</b>	788	<b>790</b>	72.8	<b>80.8</b>	83.1	<b>89.4</b>	60.7	<b>70.9</b>
<b>Jind</b>	852	<b>870</b>	15.8	<b>12.4</b>	818	<b>835</b>	62.1	<b>72.7</b>	73.8	<b>82.5</b>	48.5	<b>61.6</b>
<b>Fatimabad</b>	884	<b>903</b>	16.1	<b>12.6</b>	828	<b>845</b>	58.0	<b>69.1</b>	68.2	<b>78.1</b>	46.5	<b>59.3</b>
<b>Sirsa</b>	882	<b>896</b>	15.0	<b>11.9</b>	817	<b>852</b>	60.6	<b>70.4</b>	70.1	<b>78.6</b>	49.9	<b>61.2</b>
<b>Hisar</b>	851	<b>871</b>	15.5	<b>12.1</b>	832	<b>849</b>	64.8	<b>73.2</b>	76.6	<b>82.8</b>	51.1	<b>62.3</b>
<b>Bhiwani</b>	879	<b>884</b>	15.7	<b>12.6</b>	841	<b>831</b>	67.4	<b>76.7</b>	80.3	<b>87.4</b>	53.0	<b>64.8</b>
<b>Rohtak</b>	<b>847</b>	<b>868</b>	<b>14.5</b>	<b>11.9</b>	<b>799</b>	<b>807</b>	<b>73.7</b>	<b>80.4</b>	<b>83.2</b>	<b>88.4</b>	<b>62.6</b>	<b>71.2</b>
<b>Jhajjar</b>	847	<b>861</b>	15.0	<b>12.1</b>	801	<b>774</b>	72.4	<b>80.8</b>	83.3	<b>89.4</b>	59.6	<b>71.0</b>
<b>Mahendragarh</b>	918	<b>894</b>	15.8	<b>11.9</b>	818	<b>778</b>	69.9	<b>78.9</b>	84.7	<b>91.3</b>	54.1	<b>65.3</b>
<b>Rewari</b>	899	<b>898</b>	15.2	<b>12.5</b>	811	<b>784</b>	75.2	<b>82.2</b>	88.4	<b>92.9</b>	60.8	<b>70.5</b>
<b>Gurgaon</b>	850	<b>853</b>	15.5	<b>13.1</b>	807	<b>826</b>	78.5	<b>84.4</b>	88.0	<b>90.3</b>	67.5	<b>77.6</b>
<b>Mewat</b>	899	<b>906</b>	25.1	<b>22.3</b>	893	<b>903</b>	43.5	<b>56.1</b>	61.2	<b>73.0</b>	23.9	<b>37.6</b>
<b>Faridabad</b>	826	<b>871</b>	15.8	<b>13.2</b>	847	<b>842</b>	76.3	<b>83.0</b>	85.1	<b>89.9</b>	65.5	<b>75.2</b>
<b>Palwal</b>	862	<b>879</b>	20.0	<b>16.5</b>	854	<b>862</b>	59.2	<b>70.3</b>	75.1	<b>82.6</b>	40.8	<b>56.4</b>

The data presented in the above table shows the most dismal aspect of decline in child sex ratio between 2001-2011 census. District-wise data indicates an overall decline in CSR in all the districts shown in the table from the 2001-2011 census. Jhajjar has the lowest CSR, whereas Mewat has the highest CSR. The literacy levels of women highlight some interesting observations. It is important to note that female literacy rates

have improved considerably from the 2001-2011 census at the state/district level. The highest literacy was found in the district of Gurgaon. The lowest literacy was reported in Mewat. A pertinent observation about CSR and FLR shows that as the literacy levels have risen, the sex ratio has declined. The district with high CSR are reported to have low FLR, for

instance Jhajjar has the lowest CSR but at the same time it also has the better female literacy rate.

**2. Objectives Of The Study**

- i) To study the pattern of across region marriage across caste and class lines.
- ii) How do women adjust in a completely different environment which is more patriarchal and rigid than their own?

**3. Methodology**

The methodology is an important part of any research. Methodology is the planning or scheme, which is needed in all research pursuits. The present study is an attempt to analyse the Across Region Marriages in Haryana. In this study, Khidwali village of Rohtak district was selected as universe of study by lottery method. The data was collected through Interview schedule and case study method. In the interview schedule both open and closed-ended 27 questions were included in order to avoid subjectivity the observation method also employed to ascertain the reliability and the validity of the information.

**4. Findings**

**Table 2:** (Present age wise distribution of the men respondents)

S. No.	Age of the Respondents in Years	No. of the Respondents	Percentage
1	25-29 years	2	11.11%
2	30-34 years	4	22.22%
3	35-39 years	8	44.45%
4	40-44 years	2	11.11%
5	45 and above years	2	11.11%
<b>Total</b>		<b>18</b>	<b>100%</b>

The table 2 shows the present age wise distribution of the respondents. We found that out of 18 respondents, 12 respondents (66.67%) were in category of 30-39 years of age and 4 respondents (22.22%) were in the category of above 40 years age and only 2 respondents (11.11%) were in the category of 25-29 years of age.

**Table 3:** (Present age wise distribution of the women respondents)

S. No.	Age of the Respondents in Years	No. of the Respondents	Percentage
1	16-20 years	2	11.11%
2	21-25 years	9	50.00%
3	26-30 years	4	22.22%
4	31 and above years	3	16.67%
<b>Total</b>		<b>18</b>	<b>100%</b>

The table 3 shows the present age wise distribution of the women respondents. We found that out of 18 respondents, the majority of the respondents i.e. 9(50%) were in the category of 21-25 years and 4 respondents (22.22%) were in the category of 26-30 years and only 3 respondents (16.67%) were in the category of above 31 years and only 2 respondents (11.11%)

were in the category of 16-20 years and this indicates that the majority of women have more age gap with their husbands.

**Table 4:** (Distribution of the men respondents on the basis of the age at marriage)

S. No.	Age at Marriage of the Respondents in Years	No. of the Respondents	Percentage
1	24 to 27 years	4	22.22%
2	28 to 31 years	6	33.33%
3	32 to 35 years	3	16.67%
4	36 to 39 years	3	16.67%
5	40 and above years	2	11.11%
<b>Total</b>		<b>18</b>	<b>100%</b>

The table 4 shows the distribution of the men respondents on the basis of the age at marriage. We found that out of 18 respondents, the majority of the respondents i.e. 12(66.67%) were in the category of 28-39 years age group and 4 respondents (22.22%) were in the category of 24-27 years age group and only 2 respondents (11.11%) were in the category of above 40 years age group.

**Table 5:** (Distribution of the women respondents on the basis of the age at marriage)

S. No.	Age at Marriage of the Respondents in Years	No. of the Respondents	Percentage
1	16 to 18 years	2	11.11%
2	19 to 21 years	10	55.56%
3	22 to 24 years	5	27.78%
4	25 and above	1	5.55%
<b>Total</b>		<b>18</b>	<b>100%</b>

The table 5 shows the distribution of the women respondents on the basis of the age at marriage. We found that out of 18 respondents, more than a half sample of data means 55.56% were in the category of 19-21 years age group and only 6 respondents (33.36%) were in the category of above 22 years age group and only 2 respondents (11.11%) were in the category of 16-18 years age group.

**Table 6:** (Distribution of the respondents on the basis of the duration of the marriage)

S. No	Duration of the Marriage	No. of the Respondents	Percentage
1	2 to 6 month	2	11.11%
2	6 month to 1 year	2	11.11%
3	1 year to 3 year	5	27.78%
4	3 year to 6 year	4	22.22%
5	6 year to 10 year	2	11.11%
6	10 year and above	3	16.67%
<b>Total</b>		<b>18</b>	<b>100%</b>

The table 6 shows the distribution of the respondents on the basis of the duration of the marriage. We found that out of 18 respondents, 9 respondents (50%) had been married for the past 1-6 years. 4 respondents (22.22%) had been married either very recently (2 to 6 months) or just one year had passed. Only 2 respondents (11.11%) had been married for the last 6 to 10 years and 3 respondents (16.67%) had been married above 10 years.

**Table 7:** (Caste wise distribution of the men and women respondents)

S. No	Caste of the Female Respondents	No. of the Respondents	%	Caste of the Male Respondents	No. of the Respondents	%
1	Chamar	1	5.56%	Jat	10	55.56%
2	Teli	1	5.56%	Brahmin	1	5.56%
3	Saini	1	5.56%	Khati	1	5.56%
4	Kushwaha	1	5.56%	Nai	1	5.56%
5	Kanjar	1	5.56%	Chamar	1	5.56%
6	Bagri	1	5.56%	Dhanak	1	5.56%
7	Thakur	2	11.11%	Kumhar	1	5.56%
8	Chauhan	1	5.56%	Luhar	1	5.56%
9	Mukhi	1	5.56%	Jhimar	1	5.56%
10	Yadav	2	11.11%			
11	Jat	2	11.11%			
12	Agori	1	5.56%			
13	Namasudra	1	5.56%			
14	Dosad	1	5.56%			
15	Nai	1	5.56%			
	<b>Total</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>100%</b>

The table 7 shows the distribution of the women and men respondents on the basis of caste. We found that 2 women respondents (11.11%) belonged to Thakur caste, and 2 respondents (11.11%) belonged to Yadav caste, and 2 respondents (11.11%) belonged to Jat caste and in other castes only one woman respondent (5.56%) was belonged from each caste given in table 7. We found that majority of the male respondents were from Jat i.e. 10 respondents (55.56%) and in other castes only one respondent (5.56%) was belonged from each caste given in table 7.

**Table 8:** (Distribution of the men respondents on the basis of occupation)

S. No.	Occupation of the Respondents	No. of the Respondents	Percentage
1	Agricultural worker/ Labour	11	61.11%
2	Tailor	1	5.56%
3	Carpenter	1	5.56%
6	Halwai	1	5.55%
7	Shop attendant	2	11.11%
8	General store	1	5.55%
9	Barber	1	5.56%
	<b>Total</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>100%</b>

The table 8 shows the distribution of the men respondents on the basis of the occupations. The data shows that the majority of the respondents i.e. 11 respondents (61.11%) worked as agricultural workers/ labour and 2 respondents (11.11%) worked on other's shop as workers and one respondent (5.56%) was tailor, one was (5.56%) carpenter, one was (5.56%) halwai and one respondent (5.56%) run his own general store.

**Table 9:** (Distribution of the respondents on the basis of the land holding in acres)

S. No.	Land (in Acres)	No. of the Respondents	Percentage
1	0-1	4	22.22%
2	1-2	4	22.22%
3	2-3	1	5.56%
4	7-8	1	5.56%
5	Landless	8	44.44%
	<b>Total</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>100%</b>

The Table 9 reflects the distribution of the respondents on the basis of land holding. Majority of the respondents i.e. 8 respondents (44.44%) were landless. 4 respondents (22.22%) had between 0-1 acre agriculture land, 4 respondents (22.22%) had between 1-2 acre agriculture land, 1 respondent (5.56%) had between 2-3 acres of agriculture land and only 1 respondent (5.56%) had between 7-8 acres of agriculture land.

**Table 10:** (Distribution of the men respondents on the basis of the annually income).

S. No.	Income of the Respondents (in rupees)	No. of the Respondents	Percentage
1	Up to 75000	4	22.22%
2	75001 to 100000	6	33.33%
3	100001 to 125000	2	11.11%
4	125001 to 150000	1	5.56%
5	150001 and above	5	27.78%
	<b>Total</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>100%</b>

The table 10 shows the distribution of the men respondents on the basis of their income. We found that out of 18 respondents, 4 respondents (22.22%) were in the income up to Rs.75000, 6 respondents (33.33%) were earning between Rs.75001 to 100000 annually and 2 respondents (11.11%) were earning between Rs.100001 to 125000 annually and only one respondent (5.56%) was earning between Rs.125001 to 150000 per year and 5 respondents (27.78%) were earning above Rs.150000 annually.

**Table 11:** (Distribution of the respondents on the basis of the education)

S. No.	Educational Level	Men	%	Women	%
1	Illiterate	7	38.89%	14	77.78%
2	Primary	5	27.78%	2	11.11%
3	Middle	3	16.67%	0	00%
4	Matric	2	11.11%	1	5.56%
5	Senior Secondary	1	5.55%	1	5.55%
	<b>Total</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>100%</b>

The table 11 shows the distribution of the respondents on the basis of the education. We found that out of 18 respondents, 7 men respondents (38.89%) were illiterate, and 5 men (27.78%)

were educated up to primary level, whereas 3 men (16.67%) were educated up to middle standard and 2 men (11.11%) were educated up to matric level and only 1 respondent (5.55%) was educated up to senior secondary. Regarding women, out of 18 women respondents, a large majority i.e., 14 women respondents (77.78%) were illiterate, only 2 women (11.11%) were educated up to primary level and 1 women respondent (5.56%) was educated up to matric and 1 (5.55%) was educated up to senior secondary level. It is evident from the table that in both categories most of the respondents were illiterate or educated up to only primary level.

## 5. Conclusion

Various patterns of across region marriages were reflected during the field survey in Khidwali village like poor economic condition, unemployment, alcohol and drug addiction, second marriage and physical handicap also the responsible for such marriages taking place in Haryana. During the field survey, it was observed through case studies that extreme poverty is a responsible factor for across region marriages. The girls are from poorer states, poorer villages and poorer families. The parents of the girls, being extremely poor are unable to tolerate the expenditures of the marriage of their daughters. Under conditions of extreme poverty parents convince themselves into believing that they are sending their daughters away for a better future that they cannot provide them. In these marriages, some poor parents also take money from groom at the time of marriages.

In Indian society, the burden of adjustment always lies on the women. But, when women are brought as brides across different regions depicting cultural as well as spatial distance then the burden of adjustment on such women is tremendous. During the field survey, it was revealed that the women faced the problem of adjustment related with the communication, food and rigid tradition as purdah system. Since the large majority of them could not speak Hindi so in the beginning they were very confused and upset. With the passing of time, they learnt Hindi and Haryanvi dialect also. These women also faced the problem of food. Although, in Haryana, there is no lack of food, milk and ghee, but these women are habitual of rice and non-veg. another observation regarding problems of adjustment was the practice of veil by the women in front of elders. In southern regions, women do not cover their heads from their elders and in laws. But in Haryana, the purdah is necessary, so these women feel uncomfortable in Ghunghat. These women are also economically dependent on their husband and in law's because they belong to the poor families, so they cannot bring clothes and money from their natal home like local women. These women visit their natal homes in two or three years and some women never visit to their natal homes. During the field survey, it is revealed that, it is not necessary that all these women are in miserable conditions from these marriages. Many women are very happy from their marriages and living a good married life.

The field observation revealed that the marriages were arranged either through already married women of other states or through middle men. The field observation revealed that some marriages have been arranged by mediators. These mediators take cash money by groom side.

From our collected data, we can say that declining sex ratio is also a responsibility factor for across region marriages in

Haryana. In Haryana, there is an unbalanced proportion among young girls and boys. Only 830 girls (0-6 years) are behind to 1000 boys. As a result of decline sex ratio men are forced bachelors and remains lonely for their life. One man remain unmarried out of 5 men in Haryana. In order to get rid of this unhappy situation, some of them have been able to find a wife from other regions.

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