

Age and Social Status at Marriage : Karachi, 1961-64

by

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Prior to July 15, 1961, when the Muslim Family Laws Ordinance [5] came into effect, formal registration of marriages was not required, although a record of marriages was usually kept by the person performing the ceremony (Qazis, Mosque Imams, etc.). However, no centralized system of registration of marriages existed, with the result that no reliable statistics concerning marriages in Pakistan were available. For all practical purposes, all Muslim and Hindu marriages in Pakistan are arranged by the two families. But since 1961 the registration of marriages has been required, and, as the law applies only to Muslims, the followers of Islam are expected to adhere to it. At a later date, perhaps, members of other religious communities may also be required to register their marriages.

Karachi, the major commercial and industrial city of the nation, as well as its most populous city, is 96.9 per cent Muslim [7, Vol. 1, Part II, p. 60]. The administration of the Family Laws Ordinance is left in the hands of the Basic Democrats Union Committees, and the registration of marriages, as well as other official business is conducted in the Basic Democrats' Union offices. The city is divided into a number of registration areas, and, although it is possible to register marriages elsewhere, residents normally record their intentions at the local union office in the registration area where the bride resides.

The following pertinent information is recorded in the Union office register: name, address, and age of both the bride and bridegroom; marital condition of the bride (but not of the bridegroom), the amount of *mehr* (dower) the bridegroom has agreed to pay (usually in case of separation and/or divorce), as well as the conditions of payment: prompt (at the time of marriage), deferred, and any other special conditions that may be fixed in the contract. This information, it is assumed, is now available in all Basic Democrats' Union offices in the country, and provides valuable as well as fascinating raw data for the sociologist.

For the purposes of this study, three distinct socio-economic areas of Karachi were selected which would reflect upper and upper-middle, lower-middle, and

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lower-class attributes. Unfortunately, no empirical data are available for per capita income, occupation of family head, etc., in the basic information in the Marriage Register, but, aside from subjective impressions of the general public, the only empirical evidence available to help formulate such distinctions is based on the size of the building plots of the many housing societies planned by the Karachi Development Authority or other competent bodies.

For the purposes of this study, the following three areas in Karachi were selected:

1) *Upper and upper-middle class* (hereafter referred to as sample A): This sample was taken from the Pakistan Employees Cooperative Housing Society, known as PECHS, and the Sindh Muslim Housing Society Union Committee area. These two housing societies are contiguous and are known to the general public as the "society" area. This area has a high concentration of foreign embassies, foreign business representatives, and is generally considered to be one of the highest rent districts in the city. The area has a high concentration of houses that manifest opulence, if not conspicuous consumption. In this sample are found nine different sizes of house plots: 100, 200, 300, 400, 500, 600, 1,000, 1,500, and 2,000 square yards. The majority of all the houses in this sample are the three largest groups. Only pucca dwellings¹ were considered in this sample, as well as in sample B.

2) *Middle class* (Pir Ilahi Bux, or PIB Colony, hereafter referred to as sample B): The residents of this area are sometimes referred to as the "educated middle class". The house plots are of 120 square yards in size and up, with a pucca building of two to four rooms, plus kitchen, bath, latrine, and godown, or storage room. These houses sold for Rs. 4,500 in 1948-49, and now command a price ranging from Rs. 13,000 to Rs. 19,000. They were sold to middle-class workers, many of them government employees, with sufficient resources to purchase quite comfortable houses.

3) *Lower class* (Liaquatabad or Lalukhet area plus Ilyas Village and Usmani Goth all of which fall in the same Basic Democrat Union area). (These will hereafter be referred to as sample C): The Lalukhet area provides house plots of 80 to 120 square yards, but only house plots of the smaller size were included in this sample. The houses originally were only one room, semi-pucca, without door frames or window frames, and without amenities of any kind. These were given outright to homeless refugees from India following Partition. Many of these houses have since been improved by their owners. About 20 per cent of this sample from Ilyas Village and Usmani Goth is made

¹ For description of house construction, see [3, p. 14].

up of *juggies* [3], and are constructed of bamboo and/or canvas, straw, loose stone, or perhaps even mud plaster.

I. AGE STRUCTURE OF WOMEN AT MARRIAGE

The new Muslim Family Laws Ordinance sets the minimum age for marriage at eighteen for men and sixteen for women. Since there is a long tradition of early marriage for women in the subcontinent, especially in the lower income groups, it is widely assumed that some young girls (or perhaps their fathers) stretch the truth a bit in order to meet the minimum age requirements. Two sources seem to support this widely held assumption. In the 1961 Census, it is stated that:

“Most of the females are married before they reach the age of twenty years. In the female age group ten-fourteen, the proportion of married women is as much as 22.02 per cent. This proportion rises to 73.01 per cent in the age group fifteen-nineteen. In the age group twenty-twenty four, as many as 91.63 per cent of the females are married” [7, Part III, pp. 14, 16].

Sadiq states that the median age at marriage for females in East Pakistan in 1951 was 13.1 years and in West Pakistan it was 17.0 and nationally 15.1. For males it was 22.4, 22.9, and 22.5 respectively [8, p. 17]². Among Christians and Parsees in Karachi, the mean age at marriage is 26.7 for males, and 22.8 for females [8, p. 88].

From the data³ presented in this study, it can be seen that the new Muslim Family Laws Ordinance has had the effect of delaying the minimum age at marriage for the female population, but with little effect the male population. For the purpose of reducing family size, the latter is far less important. From the 1961 Census data, we find that the percentage of married females in the ten-fourteen age group dropped from 5.53 per cent in the 1951 Census to 4.39 per cent in the 1961 Census, and for the fifteen-nineteen year age group, the percentage of married females for the country as a whole dropped from 18.19 per cent to 14.00 per cent [7, Part III, p. 20, Statement 3.14]. Not until the twenty-twenty four year age group is reached, do we see the two census years 1951 and 1961 almost in balance, and thereafter each age group in the 1961 Census, with one minor exception (50-54) shows a higher percentage of married females in the older age groups than in the 1951 Census, indicating a shift to a later age at

² Sadiq computed his results from the censuses of 1921 to 1961 with the use of Hajnal's method of synthetic censal cohorts [8, p. 55].

³ The data on which this study is based was collected by M. Aarif Ghayyur, and covers the period from July 15, 1961, when the law first came into effect, until December 31, 1964.

marriage [7, Part III, p. 20, Statement 3.14]. Sadiq⁸[8, p. 90] estimates the mean age at marriage in Karachi as follows:

	<i>Male</i>	<i>Female</i>
1931	21.6	15.5
1951	24.8	16.9
1961	25.5	18.2

In view of the fact that the country's population in 1961 was 86.9 per cent rural [7, Part II, p. 17], the expectation is that any statistics for the largest city in the nation will differ markedly from those of the nation as a whole. But, with the new Family Laws Ordinance coming into effect in the same year as the last census, some significant changes might be expected.

With the minimum legal age at marriage for women limited to sixteen, the data collected for this study show no marriages recorded below that age. From Table I we see that the most significant difference is that only 12.9 per cent of the women in the total sample married in their sixteenth year, or gave their age as sixteen at the time of marriage, while for the three samples, those females who married at age sixteen increased from 4.2 per cent in sample A, to 13.7 per cent in sample B, to 20.9 per cent in sample C. This would tend to validate the generally held hypothesis that the lower the income group, the lower the age at first marriage. Furthermore, it would appear that if any significant number of the females were under age at the time of marriage, but, nevertheless, gave their age as sixteen, then as a result of "heaping" at age sixteen, the percentage of those married at age seventeen would show a marked drop. This, however, is not the case. Instead, we note a slight rise in the percentage of the total sample from 12.9 per cent who married at age sixteen, to 15.3 per cent who married at age seventeen. The most significant increase is noted in sample A, which rose from 4.2 per cent of the females marrying at the minimum age to 10.0 per cent at age seventeen, while in sample B we note a very slight decline from 13.7 per cent to 13.1 per cent, and in sample C an almost insignificant increase from 20.9 per cent to 22.1 per cent at age seventeen. These statistics are at complete variance with what is indicated in the census data of 1961 for the country as a whole. Further, it would appear that the women entering marriage in Karachi are, in general, abiding by the minimum age requirement.

As we move to the older age groups, it can be seen that at age twenty, 69.0 per cent of the total sample has married. This is broken down to 50.8 per cent of sample A, 68.4 per cent of sample B, and 85.0 per cent of sample C. This might bear out the contention that the higher the income group, the later the age at marriage. For example, in central India, it was shown that in 1957 the median

TABLE I

AGE OF FEMALE MARRIAGE REGISTRANTS: KARACHI, 1961-64

Age	Total			Sample A			Sample B			Sample C		
	Number	Per cent	Cumulative Per cent	Number	Per cent	Cumulative Per cent	Number	Per cent	Cumulative Per cent	Number	Per cent	Cumulative Per cent
16	172	12.9	12.9	20	4.2	4.2	50	13.7	13.7	102	20.9	20.9
17	204	15.3	28.2	48	10.0	14.2	48	13.1	26.8	108	22.1	43.0
18	242	19.1	47.3	48	10.0	24.2	68	18.6	45.4	126	25.8	68.8
19	130	9.7	54.0	45	9.4	33.6	45	12.3	57.7	40	8.2	77.0
20	160	12.0	69.0	82	17.2	50.8	39	10.7	68.4	39	8.0	85.0
21	62	4.6	73.6	33	6.9	57.7	24	6.6	75.0	5	1.0	86.0
22	95	7.1	80.7	49	10.3	68.0	29	7.9	82.9	17	3.5	89.5
23	35	2.6	83.3	20	4.2	72.2	11	3.0	85.9	4	0.8	90.3
24	51	3.8	87.1	33	6.9	79.1	13	3.5	89.4	5	1.0	91.3
25	55	4.1	91.2	33	6.9	86.0	9	2.5	91.9	13	2.7	94.0
26	25	1.8	93.0	15	3.1	89.1	6	1.6	93.5	4	0.8	94.8
27	12	0.9	93.9	8	1.7	90.8	2	0.6	94.1	2	0.4	95.2
28	22	1.6	95.5	9	1.9	92.7	5	1.4	95.5	8	1.6	96.8
29	10	0.7	96.2	8	1.7	94.4	1	0.3	95.8	1	0.2	97.0
30	18	1.3	97.5	9	1.9	96.3	6	1.6	97.4	3	0.6	97.6
31	5	0.3	97.8	3	0.6	96.9	1	0.3	97.7	1	0.2	97.8
32	10	0.7	98.5	1	0.2	97.1	3	0.8	98.5	6	1.2	99.0
33	3	0.2	98.7	2	0.4	97.5	1	0.3	98.8	—	—	99.0
34	3	0.2	98.9	2	0.4	97.9	—	—	98.8	—	—	99.0
35-39	9	0.6	99.5	5	1.1	99.0	2	0.6	99.4	2	0.4	99.4
40-44	6	0.4	99.9	2	0.4	99.4	1	0.3	99.7	3	0.6	100.0
45-49	3	0.2	100.0	2	0.4	99.8	1	0.3	100.0	—	—	100.0
50 and over	1	*	100.0	1	0.2	100.0	—	—	100.0	—	—	100.0
	1,333 100.0			478 100.0			366 100.0			489 100.0		
MEAN			20.2			21.7			19.9			18.8
MEDIAN			18.4			19.9			18.4			17.3

*less than 0.1 per cent.

age at marriage of females with no formal schooling was 13.4 years, and increased to 15.8 years for those with primary schooling and rose to 18.4 years for those with education "above primary" [1, p. 71].

In all age groups, it is amply demonstrated that the lower the socio-economic class, the lower the average age at marriage. For example, at age twenty-three 72.2 per cent of the women in sample A, 85.9 per cent of the women in sample B, and 90.3 per cent of the women in sample C have married. At age twenty-five, we find that 86.0, 91.9, and 94.0 per cent, respectively, are married. The mean age at marriage for the total sample is 20.2, which is broken down to 21.7 for sample A, 19.9 for sample B, and 18.8 for sample C. According to Sadiq's findings, the mean age at marriage in Karachi for women in 1931, 1951, and 1961, was 15.5, 16.9, and 18.2, respectively [8, p. 90]. The latter figure is two years lower than the mean age at marriage for our total sample. The median age at time of marriage for our total sample is 18.4 years, which is broken down to 19.9, 19.4, and 17.3 years for samples A, B, and C, respectively.

Marriages are customarily registered in the bride's Basic Democrat's district union office, although it is not required that she do so. Marriages can be registered in other than the bride's local office. The data used in this study included only those cases where at least one party to the marriage lived in the same area selected for this study. Where both principals claimed residence outside the sample areas, these were not included. The raw data showed that thirteen brides, who had been previously divorced, had registered their marriages in district union offices where neither the bride nor the bridegroom resided. The reason, apparently, is that sufficient stigma is attached to marrying a divorced female so that some marriage partners will seek other neighbourhoods than their own for the purposes of registration and the holding of the wedding ceremony. It also has been suggested that a relative who lives in another part of the city will sponsor the wedding, and for this reason the couple will register in other than their home communities. In any case, thirteen such cases were excluded from the refined data. Had they been included, the percentage of previously divorced women would have been increased from 4.6 per cent to 5.2 per cent in the total. This, added to the 4.3 per cent widowed, would have yielded a total of 9.5 per cent of the total sample of women previously married. The refined data shows a total of 8.9 per cent of the women previously married.

When the differences among the previously unmarried, the widowed and the divorced females are examined (Table II), we find that the mean age at marriage is 21.3, 27.0 and 26.4, respectively, in sample A; 19.4, 29.6, and 27.4 in sample B; and 18.0, 26.3, and 23.8 in sample C. For the total sample, the ages are 19.6⁴,

⁴ This compares with 20.2 years for unmarried women in the United States. Cf. [2, Table 5, p. 37].

TABLE II

MEAN AGE AND MARITAL CONDITION OF FEMALE MARRIAGE REGISTRANTS

Marital condition of female	Total			Sample A			Sample B			Sample C		
	Number	Per cent	Mean	Number	Per cent	Mean	Number	Per cent	Mean	Number	Per cent	Mean
Unmarried.	1,215	91.1	19.6	436	91.2	21.3	347	94.8	19.4	432	88.3	18.0
Widowed.	57	4.3	27.0	16	3.4	27.0	9	2.5	29.6	32	6.5	26.3
Divorced.	61	4.6	25.4	26	5.4	26.4	10	2.7	27.4	25	5.1	23.8
Total	1,333	100.0	20.1	478	100.0	21.7	366	100.0	19.9	489	100.0	18.8

27.0, and 25.4, respectively. Since widowhood is an involuntary state, while those who are divorced can be assumed to have had some part in reaching a decision to end the previous marriage, it is probably sufficient reason to explain the differences in the results. Once again, it should be noted that the mean age at marriage of previously unmarried females drops steadily from sample A, through sample B, to sample C. These data amply reinforce the generalization stated above.

II. AGE STRUCTURE OF MEN AT MARRIAGE

With the minimum legal age for marriage set at eighteen, there seems to be little question that this limitation is quite rigidly observed. From Table III we see that for the total sample, only 1.0 per cent of the males entered marriage at the minimum age, compared to almost 13 per cent of the females. Only 7.5 per cent of the males have married before age twenty-one. It can be also seen that at age twenty-one, the percentage of males married increased markedly from 5.6 per cent of sample A, to 9.5 per cent of sample B, to 17.1 per cent of sample C. For the total sample, the mean age at marriage was 26.8, while for the three samples the age dropped steadily from 27.9 for sample A, to 27.2 for sample B, to 25.3 for sample C. This compares with Sadiq's findings of the mean age at marriage for males in Karachi to be 25.5 in 1961, and 21.6 and 24.8 in 1931 and 1951, respectively [8, p. 90]. The median age at time of marriage for our total sample is 25.4 years, which is broken down to 26.8, 25.4, and 23.9 for samples A, B, and C, respectively. With the exception of the minimum age of eighteen, where the number is too small to be significant, at every age thereafter, the percentage of males married increased markedly from sample A, to sample B, to sample C. Once again, the generalization holds that the lower the socio-economic class, the lower the age at marriage.

TABLE III
AGE OF MALE MARRIAGE REGISTRANTS: KARACHI, 1961-64

Age	Total			Sample A			Sample B			Sample C		
	Num-ber	Per-cent	Cumu-lative Per-cent	Num-ber	Per-cent	Cumu-lative Per-cent	Num-ber	Per-cent	Cumu-lative Per-cent	Num-ber	Per-cent	Cumu-lative Per-cent
18	13	1.0	1.0	2	0.4	0.4	8	2.2	2.2	3	0.6	0.6
19	22	1.6	2.6	3	0.6	1.0	7	1.9	4.1	12	2.4	3.0
20	66	4.9	7.5	10	2.1	3.1	10	2.7	6.8	46	9.4	12.4
21	45	3.4	10.9	12	2.5	5.6	10	2.7	9.5	23	4.7	17.1
22	146	10.9	21.8	30	6.3	11.9	43	11.8	21.3	74	15.1	32.2
23	70	5.2	27.0	13	2.7	14.6	20	5.5	26.8	37	7.6	39.8
24	118	8.8	35.8	34	7.1	21.7	30	8.2	35.0	54	11.0	50.8
25	186	13.9	49.7	68	14.2	35.9	39	10.7	45.7	79	16.2	67.0
26	103	7.7	57.4	37	7.8	43.7	36	9.8	55.5	30	6.1	73.1
27	78	5.8	63.2	41	8.6	52.3	22	6.0	61.5	15	3.1	76.2
28	110	8.2	71.4	48	10.0	62.3	32	8.7	70.2	30	6.1	82.3
29	46	3.4	74.8	32	6.7	69.0	7	1.9	72.1	7	1.4	83.7
30	102	7.6	82.4	43	9.0	78.0	33	9.0	81.1	26	5.3	89.0
31	21	1.6	84.0	15	3.1	81.1	6	1.6	82.7	—	—	89.0
32	54	4.0	88.0	22	4.6	85.7	13	3.6	86.3	19	3.9	92.9
33	19	1.4	89.4	9	1.9	87.6	8	2.2	88.5	2	0.4	93.3
34	19	1.4	90.8	11	2.3	89.9	6	1.6	90.1	2	0.4	93.7
35	41	3.7	94.5	17	3.6	93.5	10	2.7	92.8	14	2.9	96.6
36	7	0.5	95.0	4	0.8	94.3	3	0.8	93.6	—	—	96.6
37	4	0.4	95.4	2	0.4	94.7	—	—	93.6	2	0.4	97.0
38	10	0.7	96.1	4	0.8	95.5	4	1.1	94.7	2	0.4	97.4
39	2	0.1	96.2	1	0.2	95.7	—	—	94.7	1	0.2	97.6
40-44	31	1.6	97.8	9	1.9	97.6	5	1.4	86.1	7	1.4	99.0
45-49	22	1.6	99.4	8	1.7	99.3	10	2.7	98.8	4	0.8	99.8
50 and over	8	0.6	100.0	3	0.6	99.9	4	1.1	99.9	1	0.2	100.0
	1,333	100.0		478	100.0		366	100.0		489	100.0	
MEAN			26.8			27.9			27.2			25.3
MEDIAN			25.4			26.8			25.4			23.9

When the mean age at marriage of males in relation to marital condition of females is considered (Table IV), we see that the above generalization holds

TABLE IV
PREVIOUS MARITAL STATUS AT TIME OF MARRIAGE, BY SEX:
MEAN AGE OF MALES

Marital condition of female	Total			Sample A			Sample B			Sample C		
	Number	Per cent	Mean	Number	Per cent	Mean	Number	Per cent	Mean	Number	Per cent	Mean
Unmarried.	1,215	91.1	26.4	436	91.2	27.8	347	94.8	26.9	432	88.3	24.3
Widowed.	57	4.3	33.6	16	3.4	34.1	9	2.5	40.1	32	6.5	31.3
Divorced.	61	4.6	31.3	26	5.4	31.8	10	2.7	34.3	25	5.1	29.6
Total	1,333	100.0	26.8	478	100.0	27.9	366	100.0	27.2	489	100.0	25.3

only for males who married previously unmarried females. Here we see that for samples A, B, and C, the mean age at marriage for the males was 27.8, 26.9, and 24.7, respectively, with the mean age for all males in this group 26.4 years. The mean age at marriage for those males marrying widowed or divorced females provides a relatively irregular pattern, and no conclusions can be drawn from the results.

III. AGE DIFFERENTIAL AT MARRIAGE

In Table V no significant pattern is apparent, except that the males in sample B show the greatest differential in age in all three situations: those marrying

TABLE V
AGE DIFFERENTIAL BY SEX OF MARRIAGE REGISTRANTS AND
PREVIOUS MARITAL CONDITION OF FEMALES

Males marrying	Total			Sample A			Sample B			Sample C		
	Age of male	Age of female	Differential	Age of male	Age of female	Differential	Age of male	Age of female	Differential	Age of male	Age of female	Differential
Unmarried females	26.4	19.6	6.8	27.8	21.3	6.5	26.9	19.4	7.5	24.7	18.0	6.7
Widowed females	33.6	27.0	6.6	34.1	27.0	7.1	40.1	29.6	10.5	31.3	26.3	5.0
Divorced	31.3	25.4	5.9	31.8	26.4	5.4	34.3	27.4	6.9	29.6	23.8	5.8

previously unmarried females, as well as those marrying widowed and divorced females. The age differential does drop regularly from 6.8 years⁵ for those marrying widowed females, to 5.9 years for those marrying divorcees. When the total age differential in age at marriage between the sexes is broken down on the basis of social class, we find the age differential in sample A to be 6.5 years for the men marrying previously unmarried females, 7.5 years in sample B and 6.7 years in sample C. For those men marrying widowed females, sample B shows the highest differential with 10.5 years, sample A, 7.1 years, and sample C, the smallest differential of 5.0 years. For the men marrying divorced females, sample B once again shows the highest differential with 6.9 years, sample C is next with 5.8 years, and sample A shows the smallest differential with 5.4 years. In all three situations described above, sample B shows the highest age differential in age at marriage, while no discernible pattern is revealed in the other two samples. Although the total number of men marrying previously married women is small (118 or 8.9 per cent of the total sample), it does offer evidence that these women are not lost in the marriage mart.

It has been suggested that one of the reasons for the sizable differential in age at marriage between males and females is the apparent shortage of females in the ten-fourteen, fifteen-nineteen, and twenty-twenty four age cohorts. This resulted in a mean sex ratio of 118 for the three age groups in West Pakistan in 1961 [6]. Sadiq suggests that this may be due to underenumeration, lower resistance to disease and/or neglect in the younger years, high maternal deaths, *etc.* [7, Part II, pp. 18, 22]. However, in Karachi, the 1961 Census reported 132 males for each 100 females in all age groups. Competition for eligible girls might make it advisable for the male to wait until he has had time to complete his education and/or training, or to have the opportunity to improve his economic status, and therefore become a more attractive prospect to the girl's family. On the other hand, many married males move to Karachi from rural areas and leave their wives and children in the villages. This might also serve as a contributing factor in the high sex ratio in Karachi.

When compared with the age differential at marriage between the sexes in the United States, which is 2.1 years [2], the greater differential in ages between the sexes in Karachi can probably be ascribed to a lower level of prosperity. In other words, the lower mean age at marriage for males in the United States might be explained by a higher level of income at an earlier age, better employment opportunities at an earlier age, *etc.* If greater family resources were the sole reason for marriage at an earlier age, then the mean age at marriage in sample A should

⁵ This compares with a differential of 7.3 years in Sadiq's findings [8, p. 81].

be lower than the comparable ages in samples B and C. However, this assumption is not borne out by the results in Table III, where it is demonstrated that the higher the income level, the higher the mean age at marriage. Perhaps, the best reason that can be assigned for the later age in this sample is the desire for more education and training, plus the desire on the part of the young man to establish himself vocationally so that he can more nearly match the level of living of his (and his wife's) father. On the other hand, it is well known that lack of sufficient income is not necessarily a bar to marriage in Pakistan, because the extended family arrangement offers the expectation that the bridegroom will bring his bride home, with no significant increase in cost to the father's family.

In Table VI we note that almost all males (97.0 per cent) married females younger than themselves. Only 1.5 per cent of the males married females of the same age, and the same percentage married females older than themselves. This compares with 98.2 per cent, 1.24 per cent and 0.54 per cent found by Hashmi

TABLE VI
RELATIVE AGE OF MALE AND FEMALE MARRIAGE REGISTRANTS

	Total		Sample A		Sample B		Sample C	
	Number	Per cent	Number	Per cent	Number	Per cent	Number	Per cent
Male older	1,293	97.0	447	93.5	363	99.1	483	98.8
Same age	20	1.5	14	2.9	2	.6	4	.4
Female older	20	1.5	17	3.6	1	.3	2	.4
Total	1,333	100.0	478	100.0	366	100.0	489	100.0

[4, p. 74]. Curiously, both of these groups are concentrated in sample A, where 2.9 per cent of the males married females of the same age, while 3.6 per cent of the males married females older than themselves. In the latter situation, the mean age differential found the female to be older by 2.7 years. In samples B and C, the numbers and percentages of males marrying females of the same age or older were too small to be of any significance. In a total sample as small as this one, it is difficult to make any generalizations, except that, on the whole, the traditional age differential between the sexes at the time of marriage is being maintained (*see*, Table V). The results shown in Table VI would seem to indicate that the small number of males who marry females of the same age, or older, has little net effect on the age differential at marriage between the sexes.

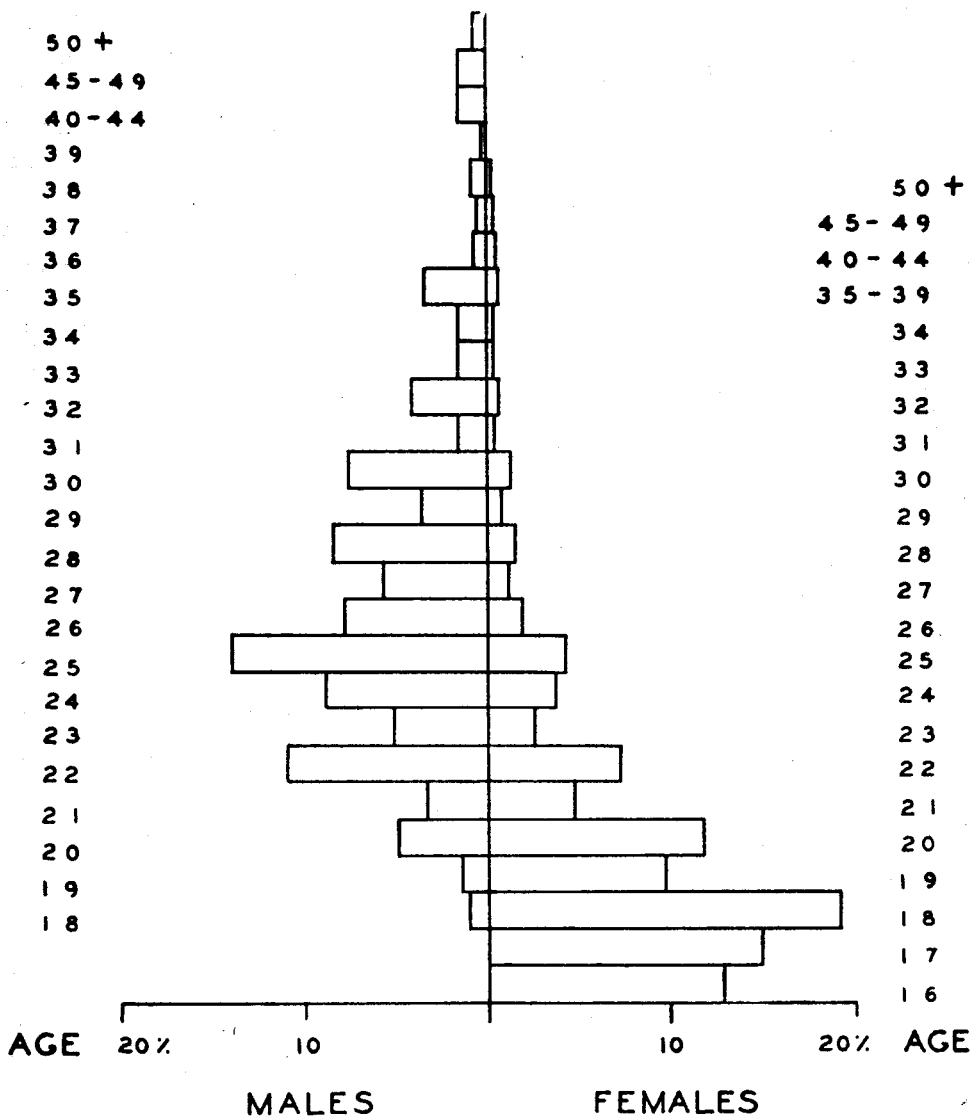
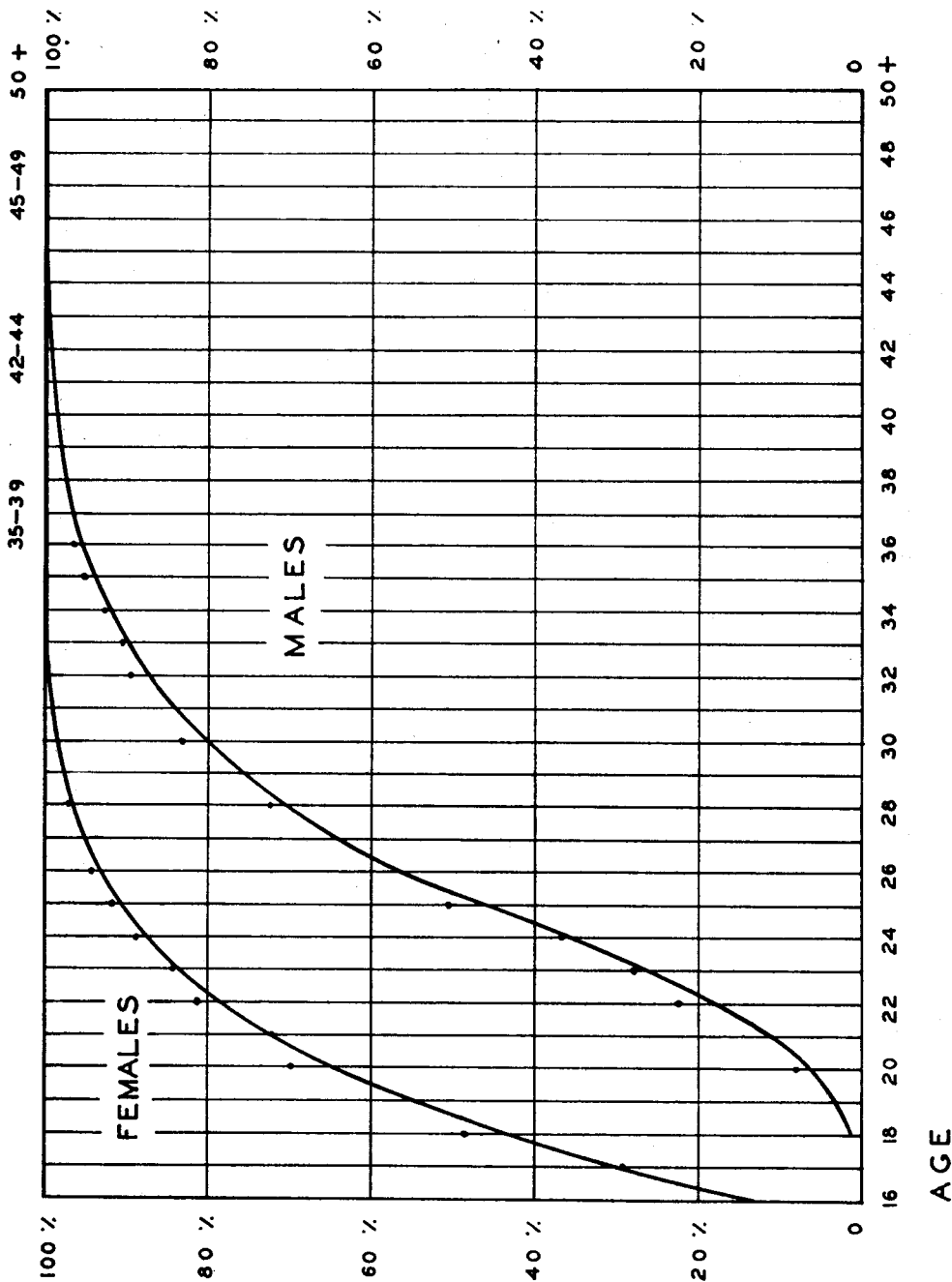


Figure 1. Age at Marriage, Karachi, 1961-64

Source: Tables I and III.



Source: Tables I and III.

Figure 2. Age at Marriage, Karachi, 1961-64

In conclusion, it should be pointed out that the results of this study do not reflect a universal count of the city, as does the decennial census data. No effect was made to take a random sample of the city. Rather, the major purpose was to determine what differentials, if any, exist in the marriage age registrants among three major socio-economic groups. Samples A, B, and C constitute 35.9, 27.4, and 36.7 per cent of the total sample. Obviously, these do not reflect the socio-economic status of the total population of Karachi. For this reason, it is quite possible that Sadiq's results are closer to the actual facts—once the data for the city as a whole are collected and analyzed.

To the writer's knowledge, no data of the kind presented here have been collected in Karachi, or elsewhere in Pakistan. When Sadiq did his study in 1961, the kind of raw data collected in this study was not available in Karachi, or elsewhere in Pakistan, and he had to rely on an indirect method of achieving his results. Now that such data are available in all Basic Democrats' Union offices throughout the country, it would be highly desirable if similar samples could be taken not only in the major cities in Pakistan, but in the smaller cities, towns, and villages as well. The pattern of age at marriage could definitely be established for the nation as a whole, while rural-urban and other differential could be accurately determined. With sufficient manpower and resources, a follow-up study could be done on a selected sample over a period of a full generation (and longer) highlighting the complete family cycle: age at marriage, birth of first child, intervening births, birth of last child, age at marriage of first child, *etc.* This kind of study would be of enormous value not only to demographers, but to the economic planners of the country at all levels.

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