



Consanguineous marriages and their detrimental outcomes in Pakistan: an urgent need for appropriate measures

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ABSTRACT

Consanguineous marriage is a union between first or second cousins. This practice is very common in developing Asian countries especially Pakistan. Around 70% of marriages in Pakistan are consanguineous. The major factors that promote consanguinity are arranged marriages, illiteracy and inter-caste marriages. The complications that follow include, small birth size, congenital malformations, neonatal mortality, rare genetic disorders, congenital deafness, congenital heart disorders and mental retardation. Serious steps must be taken to overcome this ongoing crises. Counselling, genetic screening, pre-natal diagnostic tests are some of the measures that are essential. Government involvement is also necessary to promote awareness and discourage consanguinity.

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