

<http://dx.doi.org/10.5339/qfarf.2012.AHO1>

Consanguineous marriage in Qatar: Marriage selection in a society in transition

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This study examines the practice of arranged marriage with close relatives in Qatar. A survey was conducted on 521 young males and females to identify whether youth attitudes towards marriage selection have changed and to what extent their attitudes are influenced by the traditional standards of the arranged marriage which is associated with kinship system. The study also reviewed many previous studies about marriage in the region, dating back to the last century, and compared them with the results of more recent studies and the current study.

The study findings showed that the practice of this form of consanguineous marriage is common in the region, and remains common, in spite of the rapid modernization and urbanization of the region. The perseverance of these practices challenges some of the fundamental assumptions about the correlation between modernization and social change.

From a practical standpoint, the perseverance of these consanguineous marriage practices also represents a significant risk to the societies in question, as endogamous marriage practices within a tribe result in high levels of congenital disorders. This study suggests the cultural foundation of these practices, and recommends that programs seeking to remedy these problems take aim at their social and cultural roots.



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