Beliefs About Love Marriage: Development and Validation of a Psychological Questionnaire

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In the Pakistani cultural context, love marriage often perceived as a challenge to traditional norms, family expectations, and societal cohesion. Despite the increasing visibility of love marriages related beliefs and attitude discrepancy among young educated populations there has been a lack of culturally sensitive psychological tools to systematically assess beliefs regarding love marriage. Recognizing this gap, the present study aimed to develop and validate the Positive and Negative Beliefs about Love Marriage Questionnaire (PNBLM-Q) an indigenous, psychometrically sound measure that captures the nuanced perspectives individuals hold toward love marriage in Pakistan. The scale was developed through a rigorous multi-phase process including qualitative interviews, thematic analysis, expert review, and empirical validation. A total of 312 participants (aged 18–35) took part in the study. Exploratory factor analysis supported a two-factor model reflecting positive and negative belief dimensions, accounting for 58.8% of the total variance. Both subscales demonstrated high internal consistency ($\alpha = .92$ for positive beliefs, $\alpha = .89$ for negative beliefs). The two subscales were significantly negatively correlated ($r = –.23$, $p < .01$), suggesting that individuals who hold stronger positive beliefs tend to endorse fewer negative beliefs. Gender analysis revealed that females reported significantly higher positive beliefs than males, while no significant difference was observed in negative beliefs. The PNBLM-Q offers a culturally grounded and empirically validated tool for researchers, clinicians, and counselors seeking to understand how evolving social norms, emotional expectations, and traditional values shape attitudes toward love marriage in contemporary Pakistani society.

Introduction

In addition to being a social or legal agreement, marriage is a deep psychological and emotional bond that is influenced by family values, cultural beliefs, and individual expectations (Myers et al., 2018). Love marriages, in which people select their partners based on their shared affection and romantic compatibility, are becoming more and more accepted, particularly among younger, urban populations, despite the fact that arranged marriages have been prevalent in collectivist societies like Pakistan (Kamble & Boyd, 2022). According to Netting (2010), love marriage priorities personal compatibility, interpersonal connections, and individual autonomy over social or familial factors. Beliefs on love marriage are changing in today's expanded society because to exposure to modern education, shifting gender roles, media portrayals, and interactions across cultures. However, societal, religious, and generational influences continue to protect these fundamentally societal views.

In Pakistan, love marriages are frequently seen through a variety of lenses. They are praised for their romantic belief and freedom of choice, but they are also occasionally criticized for upsetting social unity, family peace, and traditional gender standards (Zaidi & Shuraydi, 2019; Qureshi, 2021). The conflict between individual goals and societal norms gives rise to a variety of belief systems, which can have an effect on identity development, emotional health, and familial relationships. There is still a lack of established instruments to systematically evaluate the belief systems supporting love marriages, despite their growing popularity. Since these beliefs influence attitudes towards relationship responsibilities, conflict resolution, and expectations of closeness and independence, it is essential to consider them in addition to marital preferences.

There are many different psychological and cultural frameworks that influence beliefs of love marriage. In individualist societies that priorities happiness and freedom, love marriages are more common, according to the Individualism-Collectivism Theory (Hofstede, 2001). As an alternative, collectivist cultures place a higher priority on maintaining peace within the group and frequently support arranged marriages that uphold social standards and familial connections. But even in collectivist environments, the growing acceptance of love marriages points to a move towards blended belief systems that strike a balance between individual preference and family acceptance (Younis et al., 2021).

According to empirical research, people who have positive beliefs about love marriage frequently connect it to self-expression, gender equality, emotional intimacy, and respect for one another (Goodwin, 1999; Myers et al., 2018). These people are more likely to believe that romantic relationships are necessary for both personal contentment and the success of marriage. In a cross-cultural study, Dion and Dion (2005) discovered that, in contrast to those who placed more emphasis on duty or tradition, participants from urban, educated backgrounds in South Asia linked love marriage to higher levels of marital pleasure and emotional involvement.

There are still negative beliefs regarding love marriage, especially in cultures where social standing and family structure are highly valued. According to research expressing autonomy in their marital decision, women in particular may experience stigma, societal discrimination, or familial hatred (Iqbal & Golombok, 2018; Khan & Qureshi, 2020).

Love marriage beliefs can also be better understood through the lens of Social Exchange Theory (Homans, 1958). This theory holds that people evaluate relationships by analyzing the perceived costs and benefits. Mutual consent, emotional investment, and personal fulfilment are considered to be the main "rewards" of love marriages. However, because of the possible lack of social security

or familial support, these relationships might also be viewed as dangerous in collectivist countries (Rehman, 2021). As a result, opinions of love marriages include both practical worries about stability, social approval, and long-term success as well as emotional ideals.

Moreover, studies suggests that belief systems are not static. According to a recent study on Indian populations by Kamble, Shackelford, and Buss (2014), attitudes towards marriage are changing in favour of "emerging individualism," especially among young people who are exposed to international media and urban schooling. Younis et al. (2021) found similar results in Pakistan, indicating the growth of "modern-traditional" marital frameworks, with many young adults supporting love marriage but still wanting family approval.

Despite growing interest in the psychology of marriage, there is currently no psychometric tool that directly measures beliefs about love marriage within the Pakistani cultural setting. Although some validated tools exist for related psychological areas, they do not capture the unique emotional and cognitive beliefs specifically tied to love marriage.

To fill the existing gap in literature, the current study introduces and validates the Positive and Negative Beliefs About Love Marriage Questionnaire (PNBLM-Q) a culturally grounded tool designed to better understand how people's belief systems shape their romantic choices within the Pakistani context. This work also builds on the authors' earlier development of the Negative and Positive Beliefs About Arranged Marriage Questionnaire (NPBAM-Q), (Shehbaz et al.,2025) which was created and validated alongside the PNBLM-Q as part of the same larger research effort. Both scales were constructed using similar psychometric processes, ensuring consistency in methodology and cultural alignment when exploring these two distinct yet interconnected marital belief systems.

In many Western societies, love marriage is widely regarded as a foundational element of adult autonomy and emotional fulfillment. Individuals are encouraged to choose their partners based on romantic attraction, shared values, and mutual compatibility factors believed to foster long-term relationship satisfaction and psychological well-being (Ulitzsch et al., 2024). A recent cross-cultural study conducted across 45 countries found that love experiences particularly emotional intimacy and commitment were stronger in modernized societies that emphasize gender equality and self-expression, including several European and North American contexts (Ulitzsch et al., 2024). Moreover, in countries like the United States, Canada, and parts of Western Europe, the notion of marriage is increasingly tied to personal happiness rather than familial duty, and partner selection is typically seen as a private matter free from parental intervention (Sen & Kapoor, 2025).

In stark contrast, Pakistani society rooted in collectivist cultural values continues to view marriage as a family-centered institution, where decisions are strongly influenced by social, religious, and generational expectations (Kausar et al., 2024; Younis et al., 2021). Although arranged marriage remains the dominant norm, particularly in rural and traditional settings, the growing influence of urbanization, higher education, social media, and globalization has introduced competing ideals of love marriage, especially among young adults. Despite this shift, the emotional and social risks associated with defying family norms often discourage open pursuit of romantic relationships, particularly for women, due to concerns related to family honor and societal judgment (Zhang, 2024). This contrast highlights a significant cultural divergence: while Western cultures valorize personal choice and emotional freedom in romantic unions, Pakistani culture tends to prioritize collective harmony, intergenerational loyalty, and familial involvement.

Understanding this cultural tension is essential for developing context-specific psychological assessments. In particular, the need for an indigenous scale like the Positive and Negative Beliefs

About Love Marriage Questionnaire (PNBLM-Q) is underscored by these contrasting belief systems. A scale that fails to account for the dual influences of collectivist norms and emerging individualism would be insufficient in capturing the nuanced attitudes toward love marriage within Pakistani society. Thus, integrating insights from global research enriches the theoretical foundation for this study while emphasizing the need for culturally grounded psychometric tools.

While the NPBAM-Q focused on how individuals view arranged marriages, the PNBLM-Q addresses a related but previously overlooked area beliefs specifically about love marriages. As love marriages become more visible and meaningful in contemporary Pakistani society, this tool offers valuable insight into a topic that has often been underrepresented in psychological research. For example, Akbar et al. (2025) developed the Future-Positive Core Beliefs Scale (FPBS), which assesses general optimism about the future, including beliefs related to success, relationships, and self-worth. While it is useful for understanding personal direction and hope, it does not explore beliefs about marriage or partner selection.

Additionally, the Urdu version of the Negative Core Beliefs Inventory (NCBI) recently translated and validated by Mujitaba and Ahmad (2024) shows strong psychometric reliability in measuring negative core beliefs about the self and others (based on Beck's framework). However, it is generally captured negative core core-beliefs related to psychiatric condition and does not address personal beliefs about romantic or marital choices.

This clear gap in both research and assessment tools highlights the need for a culturally appropriate and psychometrically sound scale that focuses specifically on beliefs about love marriage. As society increasingly moves toward blended models of marriage where both personal choice and family involvement matter (Younis et al., 2021; Kamble et al., 2014) it becomes even more important to explore how people view love marriage. These beliefs may include positive aspects like emotional closeness, mutual respect, and personal freedom, as well as concerns such as social disapproval, instability, or loss of family support.

To respond to this need, the current study introduces and validates the Positive and Negative Beliefs About Love Marriage Questionnaire (PNBLM-Q). This tool is developed to help researchers, educators, and mental health professionals better understand how people in Pakistan think and feel about love marriage, through a culturally sensitive and well-structured psychological measure.

Objectives

1. To develop a culturally grounded tool that records people's opinions and society's perspectives on love marriage in Pakistani culture.
2. To evaluate the designed tool's psychometric effectiveness by looking at its validity and consistency measures.
3. To evaluate the directional differences of the relationship between positive and negative attitudes about love marriage.
4. To explore into differences in the support of both the positive and negative aspects of love marriage based on gender.

Hypotheses

- It was expected that people who have more positive ideas about love marriage would be less likely to have negative beliefs, confirming a negative association between the two beliefs.

- It was expected that those who scored higher on positive belief aspects would have a stronger desire or willingness to pursue love marriage in their personal lives.

Method

The development and validation of the Positive and Negative Beliefs About Love Marriage Questionnaire (PNBLM-Q) were carried out in two major phases. This structured approach was modeled on best practices for psychological scale construction, which emphasize the importance of theoretical grounding, cultural relevance, expert input, and psychometric rigor (Boateng et al., 2018). Each phase was designed to ensure the content validity, construct clarity, and reliability of the scale, particularly within the sociocultural context of Pakistan.

Phase 1: Item Development

Phase I, which had two steps, was suggested as a way to develop the PNBLM-Q. Using open-ended questionnaires, the first step aimed to create an item pool for scale with the assistance of experts, elderly individuals, and young university students. In this way the item pool has been established. To determine the final instrument's factorial structure, factor analysis was performed on the finalized items.

Step 1: Construct Identification and Item Generation

To construct a culturally sensitive and meaningful measure of beliefs about love marriage, the initial step involved qualitative exploration of underlying constructs. Semi-structured interviews were conducted with 15 individuals selected purposively to represent diverse demographic backgrounds: five practicing psychologists, five university students, and five older adults. This approach was adopted to capture a broad spectrum of generational, academic, and professional perspectives relevant to love marriage beliefs, which are known to vary across age and education levels.

Participants were asked open-ended questions about their positive and negative perceptions of love marriages. All interviews were audio-recorded (with consent), transcribed verbatim, and analyzed using thematic analysis following Braun and Clarke's (2021) updated approach. The emergent themes included emotional compatibility, mutual respect, family disapproval, risk of instability, individual autonomy, and perceived immorality each of which formed the conceptual basis for item generation.

Informed by these themes and supported by contemporary literature on romantic relationships and cultural belief systems (Kausar et al., 2024; Ulitzsch et al., 2024), a pool of 40 preliminary items was generated 19 assessing positive beliefs and 21 assessing negative beliefs. Items were framed in clear, culturally appropriate language in both English and Urdu to enhance clarity and accessibility for a wide range of participants.

A panel of 10 experts in psychology and marital research reviewed the initial items for conceptual clarity, linguistic appropriateness, and cultural sensitivity. This expert feedback ensured that the items accurately represented the constructs they were intended to measure and aligned with cultural values related to marriage in Pakistan. Based on the expert recommendations, redundant or unclear items were removed or refined, resulting in a more concise version of 18 items: 10 positive and 8 negative belief statements.

Step 2: Try-Out (Pilot Testing)

The revised version of the PNBLM-Q was then piloted with a small yet diverse group of 20 individuals 10 men and 10 women including university students and members of the general community. Participants were asked not only to complete the scale but also to share their thoughts on the clarity, relevance, and ease of understanding of each item, along with the overall format. Their insights helped fine tune the wording of a few items to ensure they felt more relatable and easier to interpret. The final version of the questionnaire adopted a 5-point Likert scale, ranging from 1 = Strongly Disagree to 5 = Strongly Agree, allowing respondents to express the extent to which they agreed with each belief about love marriage.

Phase 2: Determining Psychometric Properties of the Questionnaire

To determine the factor structure and validate the PNBLM-Q, exploratory factor analysis (EFA) was performed. This step is essential in scale development to identify the latent constructs that best represent the dataset and reduce the item pool to only those items with meaningful contributions (Worthington & Whittaker, 2021). Factor analysis helped confirm the underlying two-factor model positive and negative beliefs consistent with the theoretical framework and qualitative findings. Items with low factor loadings and poor corrected item-total correlations were removed, resulting in a final scale with 18 items: 10 positive and 8 negatives.

Cronbach's alpha was calculated to assess internal consistency for each subscale. Both the positive and negative dimensions showed acceptable reliability coefficients above .80, indicating strong internal consistency (Tavakol & Dennick, 2020). Quartiles ranks were used to identify interpretive cut-offs for high and low belief levels. The finalized version of the PNBLM-Q demonstrated robust psychometric properties and was deemed suitable for further use in academic and clinical research settings in Pakistan.

Sample

Purposive sampling was used in the selection of 312 participants for the psychometric assessment. The sample included both males and females, with the average age of 22.37 years (SD = 3.91) and a range of 18 to 35 years. Participants were from Pakistan's rural (21.5%) and urban (78.5%) regions. Undergraduate and graduate students made up the educational spectrum, guaranteeing an educated population that would understand the questionnaire's content.

Procedure

Participants were told about the purpose of the study and were assured that their personal information would remain private. They were also told that taking part was completely their choice. Before starting, everyone gave written permission to be included in the study. The questionnaire was given either one-on-one or in small groups. Trained helpers were present to guide participants and answer any questions. Most people took about 10 to 15 minutes to complete the form. Throughout the study, all ethical rules were followed carefully to make sure participants felt safe and respected.

Results

To examine whether the scale accurately measured the intended constructs, Principal Component Analysis (PCA) with Varimax rotation was used. Before running the analysis, standard statistical

checks were performed to ensure the data met the necessary conditions for factor analysis. One of the most commonly used tools for evaluating whether a sample is suitable for factor analysis is the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) measure (See Table 1). Based on recent guidelines, a KMO value above .90 is considered excellent, while anything below .50 is typically seen as inadequate (Hair et al., 2021). In this study, the KMO value was .91, which indicates that the sample was more than adequate and well-suited for factor analysis.

In addition, Bartlett's Test of Sphericity was conducted to check whether the relationships among the items were strong enough to proceed. The test result was highly significant, χ^2 (153) = 3176.63, $p < .001$, confirming that the correlation matrix was not an identity matrix and factor analysis was appropriate (Field, 2021). Taken together, these findings supported the use of PCA and suggested that the dataset was strong enough to reveal meaningful underlying patterns among the items.
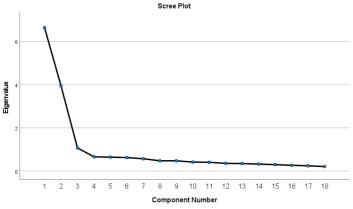
Table 1
Kaiser-Meyer- Olkin Test for Sampling Adequacy and Bartlett's Test of Sphericity (N = 312)

Kaiser- Mayer's-Olkin Test for Sampling Adequacy	.91
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity, Approx. χ^2	3176.63***
Df	153

Note. df=degree of freedom, ***p < .001

Figure 1 presents the scree plot derived from the factor analysis of the 18-item PNBLM-Q. The curve shows a steep decline after the second component, forming a distinct "elbow" shape. This pattern indicates that the first two components account for the majority of variance in the data and are likely to represent meaningful underlying factors. Beyond the second component, the line levels off, suggesting that the remaining components contribute minimal explanatory value and may simply reflect statistical noise rather than conceptually distinct dimensions.

Figure 1
Scree plot illustrating the eigenvalues for the two-factor solution of the PNBLM-Q (N=312)

This two-factor solution is consistent not only with statistical criteria but also with the thematic structure developed during the qualitative phase of scale construction. As described earlier, semi-structured interviews with a diverse group of participants revealed two dominant themes: positive beliefs about love marriage (e.g., emotional closeness, mutual respect, autonomy) and negative beliefs (e.g., family conflict, instability, cultural disapproval). These themes were used to guide item development and provided strong theoretical support for a two-factor model. The convergence of both quantitative (scree plot) and qualitative (interview themes) evidence reinforces the conceptual

clarity and structure of the scale, confirming that it reliably measures two distinct belief domains positive and negative perceptions of love marriage in the Pakistani context.

Table 2
Factor Structure and Item Analysis for Beliefs About Love Marriage Questionnaire (N = 312)

Sr. #	Item Code	Statements	Factor 1	Factor 2	r^{it}
1	PBLMQ1	محبت کی شادی میں میاں بیوی ایک دوسرے کا ساتھ دیتے ہیں۔	.71	-.07	.71**
2	PBLMQ2	محبت کی شادی میں میاں بیوی اپنی مرضی سے زندگی گزارتے ہیں ۔	.75	.05	.73**
3	PBLMQ3	محبت کی شادی میں میاں بیوی زیادہ مطمئن ہوتے ہیں۔	.73	-.03	.73**
4	PBLMQ4	محبت کی شادی میں ذہنی صحت اچھی رہتی ہے ۔	.80	-.09	.80**
5	PBLMQ5	محبت کی شادی زیادہ کامیاب ہوتی ہے۔	.67	-.18	.70**
6	PBLMQ6	محبت کی شادی میں جذباتی تعلق مظبوط ہوتے ہیں۔	.75	-.04	.75**
7	PBLMQ7	محبت کی شادی میں میاں بیوی مشکل حالات میں ایک دوسرے کو سنبھال لیتے ہیں ۔	.80	-.11	.81**
8	PBLMQ8	محبت کی شادی میں بچوں کی پرورش اچھی ہوتی ہے ۔	.76	-.18	.78**
9	PBLMQ9	محبت کی شادی میں میاں بیوی بامقصد زندگی گزارتے ہیں	.77	-.13	.78**
10	PBLMQ10	محبت کی شادی میں میاں بیوی ایک دوسرے کا زیادہ احساس کرتے ہیں ۔	.79	-.09	.79**
11	NBLMQ3	محبت کی شادی کامیاب نہیں ہو سکتی ہے۔	-.05	.66	.67**
12	NBLMQ7	محبت کی شادی جذباتی فیصلہ ہوتا ہے۔	-.15	.82	.83**
13	NBLMQ8	دو لوگوں کا فیصلہ درست نہیں ہوتاہے۔	-.03	.77	.77**
14	NBLMQ10	محبت کی شادی میں شادی کے بعد پیار ختم ہو جاتا ہے۔	-.06	.82	.82**
15	NBLMQ11	محبت کی شادی میں طلاق زیادہ ہوتی ہے۔	-.09	.66	.68**
16	NBLMQ12	محبت کی شادی میں شادی کے بعد اعتماد ختم ہو جاتا ہے۔	-.07	.77	.77**
17	NBLMQ13	محبت کی شادی کرنا غلط ہے۔	-.16	.77	.77**
18	NBLMQ14	محبت کی شادی میں لڑائی جھگڑے زیادہ ہوتے ہیں۔		**.77**	.78**
	Eigen Value		6.64	3.94	
	% Of Variance		36.90	21.91	
	Cumulative %		36.90	58.8	

Note. All items had loadings > .60 on their primary factor and item-total correlations (r^{it}) > .40. Factor 1 = Positive Beliefs About Love Marriage Questionnaire (PBLMQ); Factor 2 = Negative Beliefs About Love Marriage Questionnaire (NBLMQ)

Factor Description

Principal Component Analysis (PCA) with Varimax rotation confirmed a two-factor structure for the 18-item scale, explaining a cumulative variance of 58.8%. The first factor accounted for 36.90% of the variance, and the second factor added 21.91%. This structure aligned well with both the theoretical framework and the qualitative themes derived during the item development phase.

Factor 1: Positive Beliefs About Love Marriage (PBLM)

Positive Beliefs About Love Marriage (PBLM) includes 10 items (PBLMQ1–PBLMQ10) that reflect favorable and supportive attitudes toward love marriages. These items emphasize emotional closeness, personal choice, mutual understanding, and long-term satisfaction. Factor loadings ranged from .67 to .80, with corrected item-total correlations (r^{it}) between .70 and .81, indicating strong internal consistency. For instance, Item 7 ("In love marriages, spouses support each other in difficult times") had a high factor loading of .80 and r^{it} of .81. Similarly, Item 6 ("Emotional bonds are

stronger in love marriages") loaded at .75 with a r^{it} of .75. These examples suggest that participants perceive love marriages as emotionally secure and based on mutual respect and care.

Factor 2: Negative Beliefs About Love Marriage (NBLM)

Negative Beliefs About Love Marriage (NBLM) comprises 8 items (NBLMQ3, NBLMQ7, NBLMQ8, NBLMQ10–NBLMQ14), capturing critical or skeptical perspectives about love marriage. This factor includes beliefs related to impulsiveness, emotional instability, social disapproval, and the perceived decline of affection over time. The factor loadings for these items ranged from .66 to .82, with r^{it} values between .67 and .83. For example, Item 12 ("Love marriages are based on emotional decisions") demonstrated a strong loading of .82 and r^{it} of .83, while Item 14 ("In love marriages, love fades after marriage") also showed a loading of .82 and r^{it} of .82. These responses reflect common cultural concerns about the long-term stability and rationality of love-based unions.

Overall, both factors demonstrated robust psychometric properties, with items clustering meaningfully around the two distinct belief domains positive and negative beliefs about love marriage reaffirming the theoretical basis and cultural relevance of the PNBLM-Q in the Pakistani context.

Item Analysis and Reliability

Table 3
Inter-Item Correlation of Positive Beliefs about Love Marriage(N=312)

Items	*M*	*SD*	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
PBLM1	3.75	.90	-	.59**	.48**	.53**	.37**	.46**	.51**	.45**	.54**	.57**
PBLM2	3.57	1.02	-	-	.56**	.53**	.42**	.49**	.50**	.52**	.49**	.57**
PBLM3	3.58	1.04	-	-	-	.58**	.45**	.47**	.52**	.50**	.47**	.54**
PBLM4	3.48	1.02	-	-	-	-	.59**	.61**	.65**	.58**	.58**	.51**
PBLM5	2.96	1.07	-	-	-	-	-	.48**	.52**	.55**	.49**	.49**
PBLM6	3.69	1.01	-	-	-	-	-	-	.66**	.52**	.53**	.54**
PBLM7	3.64	1.06	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	.62**	.60**	.61**
PBLM8	3.46	1.04	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	.66**	.58**
PBLM9	3.43	1.06	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	.64**
PBLM10	3.65	1.04	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-

Note. M=mean, SD=standard deviation, **p<.01

Table 3 presents the inter-item correlations for the 10 items of the Positive Beliefs About Love Marriage (PBLM) subscale, based on data from 312 participants. All correlations were positive and statistically significant at p < .01, indicating strong internal consistency among the items. Correlation values ranged from .37 to .66, showing moderate to strong relationships across the items. The highest correlation (r = .66) was between emotional bonding (PBLM6) and positive child-rearing outcomes (PBLM8), suggesting that emotional closeness is closely tied to perceived family strength in love marriages. The lowest correlation (r = .37) was between mutual support (PBLM1) and overall marital success (PBLM5), reflecting slightly less alignment in how respondents conceptualize these aspects. Overall, the results support the coherence and reliability of the PBLM subscale as a measure of positive beliefs regarding love marriage.

Table 4
Inter-Item Correlation of Negative Beliefs about Love Marriage (N=312)

Items	M	SD	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
NBLM3	3.01	1.20	-	.52**	.49**	.50**	.29**	.44**	.43**	.42**
NBLM7	2.76	1.18	-	-	.63**	.70**	.46**	.56**	.60**	.58**
NBLM8	3.15	1.16	-	-	-	.57**	.36**	.62**	.49**	.51**
NBLM10	2.59	1.13	-	-	-	-	.56**	.54**	.55**	.62**
NBLM11	2.00	1.07	-	-	-	-	-	.45**	.51**	.56**
NBLM12	2.90	1.15	-	-	-	-	-	-	.55**	.52**
NBLM13	2.75	1.15	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	.59**
NBLM14	2.54	1.15	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-

Note. M=mean, SD=standard deviation, **p<.01

This table shows how the 8 items about negative beliefs in love marriage are related to each other, based on answers from 312 people. The average scores (means) for the items range from 2.00 to 3.15, which means people had different levels of agreement with these negative beliefs. The standard deviations show some variation in their answers. All items are positively and significantly related to each other (p < .01), with correlation values between .29 and .70. This means that when someone agrees with one negative belief, they are likely to agree with the others too. The strongest link is between item NBLM7 and NBLM10 (.70), showing a very close relationship between those two statements.

Table 5
Correlation of Positive and Negative Beliefs about Love Marriage (N=312)

Items	M	SD	1	2
PBLM	35.26	7.85	-	-.23 **
NBLM	21.70	7.06	-	-

Note. M=mean, SD=standard deviation, **p<.01

Table 5 shows the correlation between positive and negative beliefs about love marriage, based on responses from 312 participants. The average score for positive beliefs (PBLM) is 35.26 with a standard deviation of 7.85, while the average score for negative beliefs (NBLM) is 21.70 with a standard deviation of 7.06. There is a negative correlation of -.23 between the two scales, which is statistically significant (p < .01). This means that people who have stronger positive beliefs about love marriage tend to have weaker negative beliefs, and vice versa.

Table 6
Descriptive Statistics and Reliability Analysis of Positive and Negative Beliefs about Love Marriage(N=312)

Scale	k	M	SD	Range	α	Skewness	Kurtosis
PBLM	10	35.26	7.85	10-40	.92	-.39	.33
NBLM	8	21.70	7.06	8-32	.89	1.96	-.06

Note. N= Number of participants, PBAM=Positive Beliefs about Arrange Marriage, NBAM=Negative Beliefs about Arrange Marriage, M= Mean, SD= Standard Deviation, α =Cronbach's Alpha

Table 6 shows the descriptive statistics and reliability of the two scales: Positive Beliefs about Love Marriage (PBLM) and Negative Beliefs about Love Marriage (NBLM), based on data from 312

participants. The PBLM scale has 10 items, with an average score (mean) of 35.26 and a standard deviation of 7.85. The scores range from 10 to 40. The reliability of this scale is very high, with a Cronbach's alpha of .92, which means the items are very consistent. The skewness value of -0.39 suggests that most people scored a bit higher on positive beliefs, and the kurtosis value of 0.33 shows a fairly normal distribution. The NBLM scale has 8 items, with an average score of 21.70 and a standard deviation of 7.06. The scores range from 8 to 32. This scale also shows high reliability, with a Cronbach's alpha of .89. The skewness value of 1.96 means that more people gave lower scores on negative beliefs, and the kurtosis of -0.06 shows the distribution is fairly normal.

Gender Norms of PNBLM-Q

Table 7

Independent Sample t-test of Positive and Negative Beliefs about Love Marriage (N=312)

	Male(n=156)		Female(n=156)				95% CI		
Analysis	M	SD	M	SD	t (309)	p	LL	UL	Cohen's d
PBLM	34.05	8.45	36.45	7.04	-2.71	.00	-4.13	-.66	-.31
NBLM	21.75	7.64	21.64	6.44	1.36	.89	-1.46	2.06	.01

Note. PBLM=Positive Beliefs about Love Marriage, NBLM=Negative Beliefs about Love Marriage, *CI*= Confidence Interval, *UL*= Upper Limit, *LL*= Lower Limit, *p<.05

Table 7 shows the results of an independent sample t-test comparing males and females on their positive and negative beliefs about love marriage, using data from 312 participants. The results indicated a significant difference in positive beliefs about love marriage (PBLM) between males (M = 34.05, SD = 8.45) and females (M = 36.45, SD = 7.04), t (309) = -2.71, p = .00, with females reporting more positive beliefs. The 95% confidence interval for the mean difference ranged from -4.13 to -0.66, and the effect size was small to moderate (Cohen's d = -.31). In contrast, no significant gender differences were found in negative beliefs about love marriage (NBLM), with males (M = 21.75, SD = 7.64) and females (M = 21.64, SD = 6.44) showing similar scores, t (309) = 1.36, p = .89, and a negligible effect size (Cohen's d = .01).

Scoring Procedure

The final questionnaire included two subscales: Positive Beliefs about Love Marriage (PBLM) and Negative Beliefs about Love Marriage (NBLM). Each item was rated on a 5-point Likert scale. Scores are summed per subscale. Higher scores on PBLM indicate stronger positive beliefs, while higher NBLM scores reflect stronger negative beliefs.

Table 8

Cut-off Scores and Levels of Positive Beliefs About Love Marriage (PBLM)

Raw Scores	Percentile Level	Interpretation	f (%)
≤ 30	< 25	Minimal PB	84(20)
31 – 36	50	Mild PB	83(20)
37 – 40	75	Moderate PB	84(41)
≥ 41	>75	Strong PB	61(19)

Note. PB= Positive Beliefs

Table 8 shows how people's beliefs about love marriage vary depending on their scores. Around 20 percent of the participants scored 30 or below, which means they hold very limited or minimal positive beliefs about love marriage. These individuals might be more cautious or doubtful about the idea of marrying for love. Another 20 percent scored between 31 and 36, suggesting they have mild positive beliefs they may be somewhat open to love marriage but not fully convinced. The largest group, making up 41 percent of the sample, scored between 37 and 40. This group seems to have a fairly balanced and moderate belief in love marriage, seeing it in a mostly positive light. Lastly, 19 percent of participants scored 41 or above, indicating strong positive beliefs. These individuals are more likely to view love marriage as meaningful and important, and they may fully support the idea of choosing a partner based on love.

Table 9
Cut-off Scores and Levels of Negative Beliefs About Love Marriage (NBLM)

Raw Scores	Quartile Level	Interpretation	f (%)
≤ 16	< 25	Minimal NB	79(26)
17 – 22	50	Mild NB	88(28)
23 – 26	75	Moderate NB	82(26)
>27	>75	Strong NB	63(20)

Note. NB= Negative Beliefs

Table 9 shows how strongly people hold negative beliefs about love marriage based on their scores. About 26 percent of participants scored 16 or below, meaning they have minimal negative beliefs. These individuals likely don't see many downsides to love marriage and may even support it to some extent. Around 28 percent scored between 17 and 22, which falls into the mild negative belief range. They might have some doubts or concerns but aren't strongly opposed. Another 26 percent scored between 23 and 26, showing moderate negative beliefs this group likely has more noticeable reservations or criticisms of love marriage. Lastly, 20 percent of the participants scored above 27, placing them in the strong negative belief category. These individuals are more likely to distrust or reject the idea of love marriage, possibly favoring more traditional or arranged approaches to relationships.

Discussion

The Positive and Negative Beliefs About Love Marriage Questionnaire (PNBLM-Q) was developed to explore individuals' attitudes toward love marriage within the Pakistani cultural context. Exploratory factor analysis revealed a two-factor structure positive and negative beliefs which accounted for 58.8% of the total variance. Both subscales demonstrated strong internal consistency (α = .92 for positive beliefs and α = .89 for negative beliefs), and a significant negative correlation (r = −.23, p < .01) between the two constructs confirmed that individuals who strongly endorsed positive beliefs were less likely to hold negative ones. This validates the independence of the two belief systems, while also highlighting their inverse relationship.

The findings indicated that respondents simultaneously held both supportive and critical views about love marriage. Positive beliefs were centered on emotional intimacy, mutual understanding, and personal freedom reflecting a desire or self-directed marital choices. In contrast, negative beliefs expressed concerns about impulsiveness, instability, parental disapproval, and societal backlash (Ahmad & Reid, 2016; Goodwin, 1999).

Gender-based analysis revealed a significant difference in positive beliefs female participants scored higher than males, suggesting greater support for love marriage among women. This may indicate that women place stronger emphasis on emotional connection and value autonomy in marital decisions, possibly due to the limited agency traditionally afforded to them in arranged setups (Khan & Qureshi, 2020). Interestingly, no significant gender difference was observed in negative beliefs, implying that both men and women equally perceive societal risks, such as family resistance and judgment, associated with love marriages (Iqbal & Golombok, 2018).

These patterns resonate with broader cultural shifts. While arranged marriage remains predominant in Pakistan, the increasing influence of education, media, and globalization is gradually reshaping marital values. Especially among urban youth, love marriage is becoming more acceptable, reflecting an emerging blend of individualism and collectivism (Kamble et al., 2014; Hofstede, 2001). Positive beliefs appear aligned with modern ideals that prioritize emotional satisfaction, respect, and mutual consent, whereas negative beliefs continue to reflect collective concerns such as family honor, social image, and long-term marital security (Kausar et al., 2024).

Social Identity Theory (Tajfel & Turner, 1979) helps explain the internal conflict observed in many participants, especially women. In patriarchal societies like Pakistan, women are socialized into roles emphasizing modesty, obedience, and dependence. These expectations limit their freedom in making independent marital choices. In our study, this dynamic was clearly reflected: women were more likely to endorse positive beliefs, possibly because love marriage represents an avenue for personal agency and emotional fulfillment things they may feel deprived of in traditional marriages. At the same time, these women did not significantly differ from men in their negative beliefs, suggesting that even when women support the idea of love marriage, they remain highly conscious of the potential social costs.

This internal struggle between personal values and collective norms was one of the most prominent findings in the current study. It demonstrates how belief systems are not fixed but instead exist in a state of negotiation. Many women in the sample appeared to idealize the emotional closeness and shared decision-making promised by love marriage, yet they also carried the weight of cultural realities that make such choices risky or socially unacceptable. The tension between hope and hesitation highlights the transitional nature of Pakistani society where the influence of modern individualism grows, but traditional values continue to shape behavior and belief.

Limitations and Suggestions

In this study, purposive sampling was used, which means that participants were chosen on purpose because they fit the topic well. While this helped in focusing on the right group, it also means the results may not apply to everyone. Most of the people in the study were young and well-educated, which could have influenced how they think about love marriage. Since only a few participants were married, the study doesn't fully show how real marriage experience might affect beliefs. In the future, researchers should include people from different age groups, education levels, and especially more married individuals. It would also be helpful to do a long-term study that follows people over time to see how their views change. Using the same trusted questionnaire to compare beliefs about arranged and love marriages could also give a better idea of how personal values and culture shape opinions.

Implications and Recommendations

The PNBLM-Q used in this study can be a helpful tool for both researchers and therapists. For researchers, it can help compare how people from different cultures view love and marriage. For example, people in individualistic cultures might see love marriage differently than those in collectivist cultures, and this tool can highlight those differences. Therapists and counselors can also use this questionnaire to better understand what their clients think and feel about marriage. This is especially useful when working with young adults who may be confused or under pressure while making relationship decisions. By exploring both positive and negative beliefs, counselors can help clients think more clearly about their own values. This can lead to more open conversations and support people in making decisions about love and commitment that feel right for them.

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Appendix

Positive and Negative Beliefs about Love Marriage Questionnaire (PNBLM-Q)
ہدایات

یہ پیمانہ محبت کی شادی سے متعلق آپ کے خیالات اور عقائد کا جائزہ لینے کے لیے تیار کیا گیا ہے۔ براہِ کرم ہر بیان کو بغور پڑھیں اور اپنی ذاتی رائے پیش کریں۔ اس میں کوئی درست یا غلط جواب نہیں ہے، لہٰذا ایمانداری کے ساتھ اپنے حقیقی خیالات اور محسوسات کی عکاسی کریں۔ براہِ کرم ہر بیان کا لازمی طور پر جواب دیں۔ ہر بیان کے جواب کے لیے درج ذیل درجہ بندی استعمال کریں۔

بالکل متفق
متفق
غیر جانبدار / نہ متفق نہ غیر متفق
غیر متفق
بالکل غیر متفق

آپ سے گزارش ہے کہ ہر بیان کو غور سے پڑھ کر اس کے مطابق ایک درجہ کا انتخاب کریں جو آپ کی رائے کی بہترین ترجمانی کرے۔

محبت کی شادی کے بارے میں مثبت عقائد

بالکل متفق	متفق	غیر جانبدار	غیرمتفق	بالکل غیر متفق	Item Statement	Sr. #
5	4	3	2	1	محبت کی شادی میں میاں بیوی ایک دوسرے کا ساتھ دیتے ہیں ۔	1
5	4	3	2	1	محبت کی شادی میں میاں بیوی اپنی مرضی سے زندگی گزارتے ہیں ۔	2
5	4	3	2	1	محبت کی شادی میں میاں بیوی زیادہ مطمئن ہوتے ہیں۔	3
5	4	3	2	1	محبت کی شادی میں ذہنی صحت اچھی رہتی ہے ۔	4
5	4	3	2	1	محبت کی شادی زیادہ کامیاب ہوتی ہے۔	5
5	4	3	2	1	محبت کی شادی میں جذباتی تعلق مظبوط ہوتا ہیں۔	6
5	4	3	2	1	محبت کی شادی میں میاں بیوی مشکل حالات میں ایک دوسرے کو سنبھال لیتے ہیں ۔	7
5	4	3	2	1	محبت کی شادی میں بچوں کی پرورش اچھی ہوتی ہے ۔	8
5	4	3	2	1	محبت کی شادی میں میاں بیوی بامقصد زندگی گزارتے ہیں	9
5	4	3	2	1	محبت کی شادی میں میاں بیوی ایک دوسرے کا زیادہ احساس کرتے ہیں ۔	10

محبت کی شادی کے بارے میں منفی عقائد

بالکل متفق	متفق	غیر جانبدار	غیر متفق	بالکل غیر متفق	Item Statements	Sr.#
5	4	3	2	1	محبت کی شادی کامیاب نہیں ہو سکتی ہے۔	1
5	4	3	2	1	محبت کی شادی جذباتی فیصلہ ہوتا ہے۔	2
5	4	3	2	1	دو لوگوں کا فیصلہ درست نہیں ہوتاہے۔	3
5	4	3	2	1	محبت کی شادی میں شادی کے بعد پیار ختم ہو جاتا ہے۔	4
5	4	3	2	1	محبت کی شادی میں طلاق ذیادہ ہوتی ہے۔	5
5	4	3	2	1	محبت کی شادی میں شادی کے بعد اعتماد ختم ہو جاتا ہے۔	6
5	4	3	2	1	محبت کی شادی کرنا غلط ہے۔	7
5	4	3	2	1	محبت کی شادی میں لڑائی جھگڑے ذیادہ ہوتے ہیں ۔	8