

CHILD MARRIAGE AND THEIR IMPACT ON INDIAN SOCIETY

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Abstract

In civilized society, child marriage has been accepted as a negative indicator and a big challenge for human development. Due to this, children are deprived of getting full education. They do not get opportunities for skill development. The responsibilities arising out of marriage deprive them of the right to flourish and dream about their lives. The same survey shows that 31 percent of women face emotional, physical and sexual violence. The society which argues that marriage at a young age strengthens the moral standards of society is well aware that in some contexts, marriage also gives men the social right to commit violence against women. According to 2016 data, 29 out of 100 women are victims of physical or sexual violence by their husbands.

It is a matter of genuine concern that a large number of child marriages still take place in India. A recent report has revealed that in several states of North India, one crore men and three and a half crore women still suffer from child marriages. While every third person of Rajasthan is a victim of child marriage, Uttar Pradesh, the state with the largest population of the country, is the top in child marriage. 13.5 lakhs in Uttar Pradesh, 7.5 lakhs in Rajasthan, five lakh people have been married in Madhya Pradesh. The rate of child marriage is relatively high in Uttar Pradesh's leading districts Ghaziabad, Allahabad, Agra, Jaipur in Rajasthan, Bhopal in Madhya Pradesh and Indore, Faridabad in Haryana. Recently, the Central Government has also admitted in an affidavit filed in the Delhi High Court that the practice of child marriage is going on in many parts of the country. A major loss from child marriage is falling on their education. The children or girls whose child is married, if they are going to school also, their studies are first abandoned. This paper will attempt to discuss different aspects of child marriage in India.

Keywords: Child Marriage, Human development, Skill development, sexual violence

Introduction

If we ask anyone standing on the road, then he will count the name of caste system, dowry, child marriage etc. in one breath in the name of social evils. The truth is that illiteracy, poverty and lack of awareness are at its core. Everyone knows that child marriage is a misdemeanour, yet its non-stop raises many questions. Child marriage is probably the first

crime that is illegal before it happens, but it becomes legal as soon as it happens! This means that under the Prevention of Child Marriage Act, 1929, child marriage is a punishable offense, but the marriage done in it is not illegal or illegal.

The Child Marriage Prohibition Act 2006 considered child marriage as a punishable offense. According to a report, forty Percent of the world's child marriages occur in India. Forty-nine Percent of these girls get married at the age of eighteen. Gender discrimination and illiteracy have been considered as the biggest reason for this. According to UNICEF, eighty two Percent of girls in Rajasthan get married before 18 years. The Child Marriage Prevention Act was passed by the Parliament in 1978. In this the age of marriage was determined.

In fact, poverty is one of the main reason for the unbroken empire of child marriage. Poverty supports child marriage in two ways. On the one hand, the girl goes to another house in her childhood, due to which the parents' expenses on her food, clothes, medicine, and health are saved. On the other hand, because of the age of the groom, he does not do any job, so he would not have been enrolled in the groom's rate list. Due to this, the parents of the girl also escape the demand for more dowries. Marriage of a child or a young girl is more expensive for both the parents. In our society, the birth of a daughter is like a crime. Many times a lot happens before birth, such as female feticide. If you search for how many songs are there when a daughter is born, then hardly any song will be found, but there are many songs on the birth of sons. What does all this mean? Doesn't this just mean that daughters are like a burden? A daughter's marriage after birth is a major cause for concern for the father. For this reason many parents think that it should get married quickly. There is also a belief behind marrying at a young age that the younger the marriage, the less dowry will have to be given. Anyway, a daughter is an alien. If not today, tomorrow he has to go to someone else's house. Such jumlas are often heard.

One major disadvantage of marriage at a young age is that all the talents remain undeveloped. How many talented girls are closed for their advancement? There has always been a double view of girls in society and it is clearly visible at different levels. A number of schemes and campaigns are being run by the government to end child marriage and its awareness, which is communicated to the general public through hoardings, channels, etc. But how effective is it? Child marriage turned out to be the most vicious and most powerful of its contemporaries.

Literature review

The problem of child marriage in India is a complex one because it is related with traditional and religious practices. The studies on child marriage have focused on related issues of early marriage of child in India. Child marriage is associated with lower education and economic status of girls.

Bielby and Bielby (1989) stated that women were more concerned with family and marital roles than with their work or occupational roles, whereas men placed greater importance on work roles than on family and marriage roles. Arond and Pauker (1987) found in their study that a majority of the couples reported enjoying a sexually healthy relationship prior to marriage. MacDonald (1993) indicated the longer couples have lived together before marriage, the earlier disillusionment develops in the marital relationship. Pauker (1987) stated those newlyweds who fought less frequently and more productively rated themselves as happier in their marriages than those couples who fought more often. As suggested by UNFPA and the University of Aberdeen(2004). Girls between 10 and 14 are five times more likely than women ages 20 to 24 to die in pregnancy and childbirth. Another UNICEF report on children said that 47 per cent of women were legally married under the age of 18. 56 percent of these women were from rural areas. Research shows that girls who marry before 18 are more likely to be married too much older men (Mensch 1986). As a result of child marriage, the girl child's reproductive and sexual health is affected the most. Child marriage is deeply embedded in ideals about the role of women and the status of girls in Indian culture (Gupta, 2005,). This literature review provides a brief overview of the norms surrounding child marriage in India and effective interventions to delay marriage for girls. Indian society is marked by gender stratification and differentiation.

Child marriage is a formal or informal alliance in which one or both parties are less than 18 years of age. According to recent UNICEF statistics, every year about 1.2 crore girls get married before reaching the age of 18 years. This means that 23 girls every minute, or one girl every 2 seconds - are married ahead of time and at a very early age, putting their personal development, health and overall well-being at risk. This practice mostly affects girls more than boys. Today, sixty five Crore women were married before their 18th birthday, while in the case of men, this figure is 15.6 Crore. Child marriage is widely regarded as a violation of human rights and a form of violence against girls.

The findings of the National Family Health Survey in India show that 39.1 percent of marriages in Bihar occur before the legal age. 32.6 percent in Andhra Pradesh, 24.9 percent

in Gujarat, 30 percent in Madhya Pradesh, 35.4 percent in Rajasthan, 40.7 percent in West Bengal and 26.8 percent of marriages in the whole of India. After 59 years of independence in India, the law preventing child marriage became possible, that is, it was the subject of the lowest order in development.

Objectives of the Study

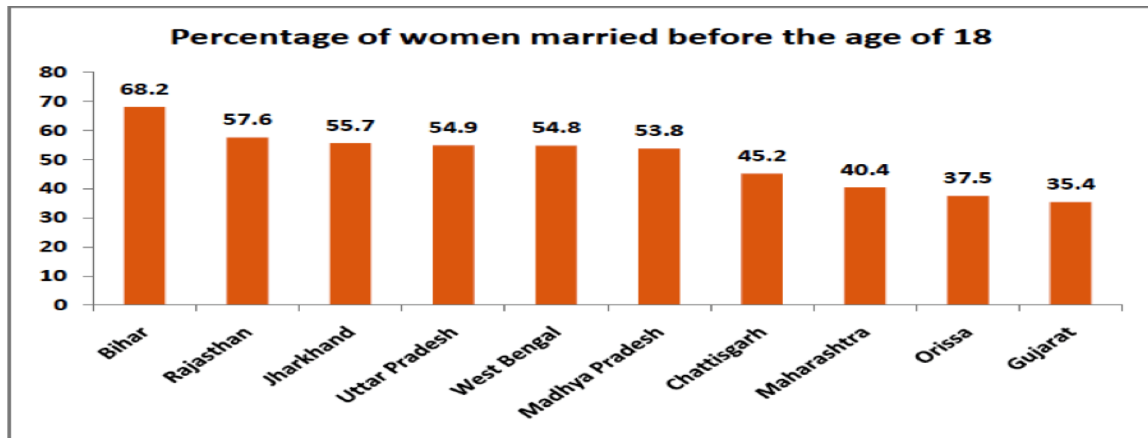
- To study the socio-economic impact of child marriage in India
- To analyse the effect of various health related issues related child marriage
- To discuss the constitutional and legal aspect to prevent child marriages in India.
- To suggest new ways means for eradicating child marriage in India.

Major statistics related to child marriage in India

- Out of 34 crore total married Indian women (including divorced / widowed / separated women), 30.2 per cent married under 18 years of age.
- 2.3% of women (including divorced / widowed / separated women) got married at less than 10 years of age.
- 38% of marriages (out of total illiterate girls) occur in less than 18
- 22% of child brides become mothers under the age of 18 years.
- In the case of child marriage, Rajasthan (68%), Bihar (67%) and Jharkhand (51.8%) respectively. (*Source: Census-2011*)

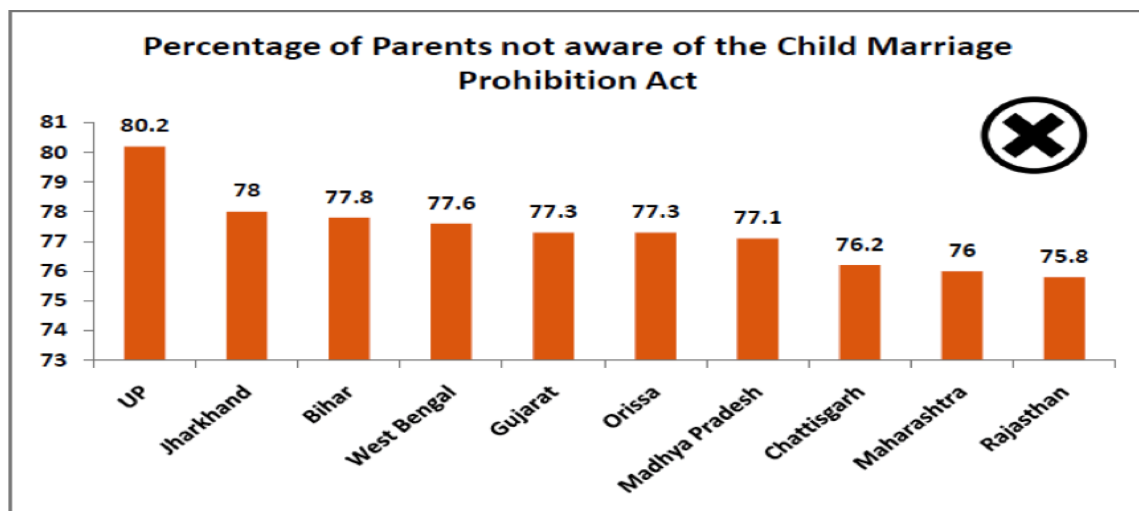
Situation of child marriage in the 10 selected states

This was situation of the ten states of India. As per the data available from 2017-18, the percentage of women who were married before the age of 18 was significantly high in Bihar (68.2 per cent) followed by Rajasthan (57.6 per cent), Jharkhand (55.7 per cent), Uttar Pradesh (54.9 per cent) and West Bengal (54.8 per cent). These percentages were comparatively lower in Gujarat (35.4 per cent) and Orissa (37.5 per cent).



Parents not aware about Child Marriage Prohibition Act

This form of legal aspect of child marriage related to awareness. The parents were asked whether they are aware about the Child Marriage Prohibition Act. About 3/4th respondents reported that they are not aware about the Child Marriage Prohibition Act. This was found more pronounced in Uttar Pradesh (80.2 per cent). Only 23 Percent respondents were aware of the Child Marriage Prohibition Act.



Side-effects of child marriage

Being married at a young age violates not only the child's right to safety but also the right to get good health, nutrition and education. Apart from this, the problems they face are prominent. Due to child marriage, girls get involved in unprotected sex cycle at an early age because it is said that till marriage only, they will marry early or will get married later. But shortly after marriage, emphasis is placed on the girl's family that the girl's farewell should be hurried. Therefore, in the same way, water does not stay in raw mat nor can it remain intact. In the same way, sexual relations at an early age mean the conception of a girl child in an immature body. As a result, the fetus is not fully developed nor does the mother's body develop. Some more consequences include miscarriage, low birth weight

baby, malnutrition in children, malnutrition in mother, anaemia, maternal death, reproductive tract infection in mother, increased likelihood of sexually transmitted HIV infection, etc. It has been proved by studies that the probability of maternal death by becoming a mother at the age of 15 is five times more than that of a mother at the age of 20.

Child marriage is a violation of human rights and many of the possibilities and hopes that make life and society better die. Between 2008 and 2015, 26.30 lakh new-borns died in India because they were born before completing 37 weeks of pregnancy, i.e. premature delivery.

According to UNICEF, 82 percent of marriages in Rajasthan occur before 18 years. The Child Marriage Prevention Act was passed by the Parliament in 1978. The age of marriage was fixed in this, but the cradle of this law could not be fully fulfilled. According to the UNICEF Report on Children of the World, 47 percent of the country's women aged 20-24 were legally married at the age of 18. 56 percent of these women were from rural areas.

Influence of child marriage

Once married, the daughter was forced to leave her home and live with others in a place where she had to discharge all the roles for which she was not mentally prepared. It is a big responsibility for a minor girl to bear the responsibility of mother and daughter-in-law. This eventually leads to isolation and depression. For men too, it becomes difficult to discharge responsibilities as he has to fulfil all the financial needs of his wife and also share his finances with her.

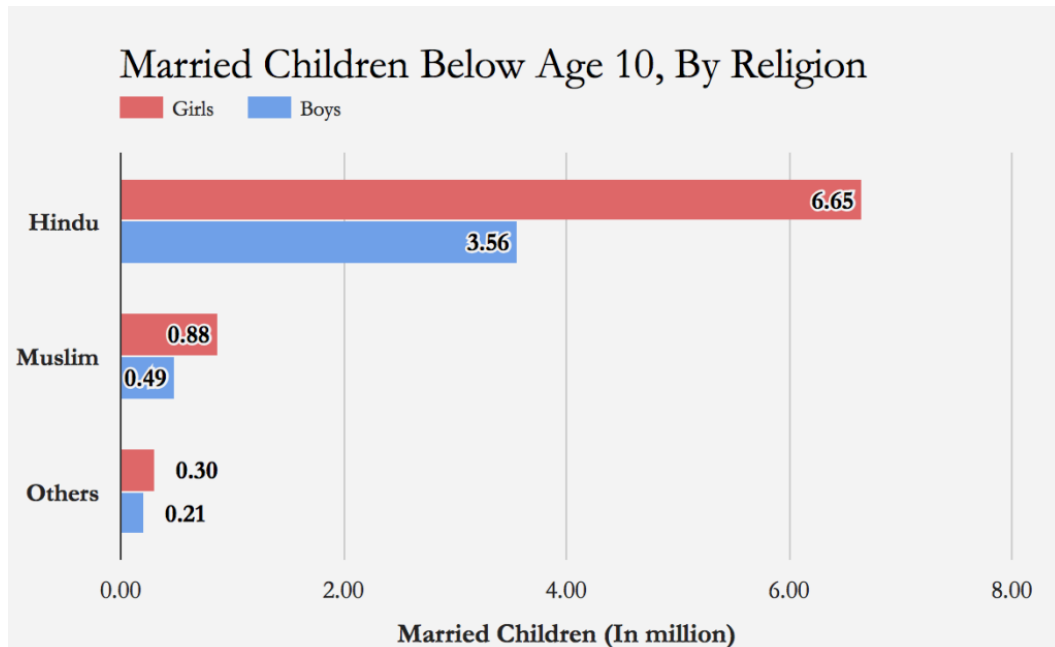
Childhood is lost in this process as well as the freedom to play and learn is taken away. Early marriage also brings with it extreme risk factors. There is a very high risk of suffering from sexual diseases like HIV. Apart from this, girls who are married early have very little information about the conception and the subjects related to it. Children born to such a mother suffer from diseases such as malnutrition and low birth weight.

In India, child marriage is still in vogue in the state of Kerala, the state with the highest literacy. According to the report of UNICEF (United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund), more child marriages occur in urban areas in rural areas of India. According to statistics, Bihar has the highest incidence of child marriages at 68% while Himachal Pradesh has the lowest child marriages at 9%.

Married Children under Age Ten

Nearly 12 million Indian children were married before the age of 10 years, 84% of them Hindu and 11% Muslim, reveals India Spend analysis of recently released census data. As

many as 7.84 million (65%) married children were female, reinforcing the fact that girls are significantly more disadvantaged; eight in ten illiterate children who were married were also girls. The data further reveal that 72% of all Hindu girls married before ten were in rural areas, as compared to 58.5% Muslim girls, with higher levels of education correlating with later marriage.



Constitution provisions to prevent child marriage in India

The Indian Constitution has provisions to prevent child marriage through various laws and enactments. The first law was the Prevention of Child Marriage Act 1929 which applies to the whole of India except Jammu and Kashmir. The Act defines the age of adult boys and girls. If a boy in the age group of 18-21 is married to a girl under the age of 18, then a fine of 1000 rupees is imposed along with imprisonment for more than 15 days. The act was again amended in 1940 to rise the age of boys and girls to adulthood.

Another law that exists is the Child Marriage Prohibition Act 2006. This Act addresses the flaws inherent in the Prevention of Child Marriage Act. Thus, the Act strictly prohibits child marriage instead of partially restricting it. Under this law, children can declare their child marriage illegal within two years of becoming an adult by their will. But this law does not apply to Muslims which is the biggest drawback of this law because this law binds all the citizens of India in one thread. Apart from this, sex with a minor is also an offense under Indian Penal Section 376. This issue creates confusion over marital rape which is a major obstacle in controlling this evil as marital rape is not illegal in India.

Prevention Strategies

Since there are so many reasons for child marriage, it is no wonder that there are many ways for us to work towards ending this practice.

- Preventing child marriage means that we have to take steps at all levels - from the world level to the community level. And we need an inclusive and cohesive system from so many different groups working together in different fields - from governments to social institutions, parents and community leaders to you, that is, the most directly affected groups. .
- Girls Not Brides' theory of change shows that everyone has a role to play in preventing child marriage and helping married girls.
- Governments will have to formulate national strategies that are action plans to prevent or avoid child marriage. Separate investment in these national strategies is necessary to target the poorest and most marginalized girls, as they are the most vulnerable to child marriage.
- Provide good quality services such as education, health care and protection, and work to ensure that girls, irrespective of their background or income, can access these services. This will also encourage parents to send their girls to school and to keep them sent to school for the maximum time possible
- Implement projects empowering girls and their communities to say no to child marriage. This can be done by building skills, enlightening, and facilitating collaboration networks that help girls access their decision-making abilities and opportunities.

Suggestions to stop child marriage

Although there is a law in our country to stop child marriage, but it cannot be stopped with the help of law. Kindergarten is a social problem. Therefore, its diagnosis is possible only through social awareness. To end this social crime, the youth section of the society will have to come forward. No social evil can be eradicated only by the efforts of the government or by enacting a law. The responsibility of their elimination / prevention rests with the whole society.

Participation of youth groups as well as voluntary organizations is necessary to remove evils like child marriage. A wave of awareness in the society should start from the youth.

Debates and speech competitions should be organized in schools and colleges to remove social evils. They should be resolved to get education, not to take dowry, not to give dowry, to stop child marriage around them. Village Panchayats, Social Welfare Institutions, Anganwadis and Voluntary Institutions should also take similar and positive steps, so it is possible to bring awareness in the society.

For the elimination of social evils, first of all it is very important that every person gets education. It is very important to register all the school-eligible children in schools to ensure their regular education, especially to encourage female education. Only educated people are able to create a healthy society. In this direction, the general public can play its important role.

Conclusion

In order to establish an advanced and successful society, it is very important that child marriage should not have any place in this world in the present and future. All children around the world are entitled to live their happy childhood of their own free will. We all should have the resolve that all children should take education to improve their future and live a healthy childhood and become mature, away from the violence and negative consequences associated with child marriage. Also, in future, they have every right to decide for themselves when they are adults and when and with whom they want to spend their lives. Education is of paramount importance in the society, we have to educate people for child marriage, and this can be understood because of education. People also change their mind of exploitation and their mind-set is that by getting married at a young age, parents are safe, where there is education, girls can fall to class 10 and 12, which leads to the age of 18, but education Due to no reason, people marry them and through education we can explain to the society. Education system will have to be reformed. Marriage at a young age causes more harm to girls than boys. Unsafe sex has the opposite effect on their health. As a result, it is common to suffer from many severe diseases. Child marriages have to face repeated pregnancies and untimely abortions. Even a new-born baby is expected to be a victim of premature death. Malnutrition and anemia cause adverse effects on the health of mother and child.

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