



IMPACT OF EARLY MARRIAGES ON THE EDUCATIONAL STATUS OF WOMEN.

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ABSTRACT

Girls' education is more crucial than males' education because it gives girls more power. It helps them to survive the discriminatory cultural practices. They have begun to receive equal treatment with boys due to education. Therefore, girls who have access to education gain more strength and self-assurance. If a female receives an education, the entire society benefits because she will make sure that her offspring receive an education, followed by the education of the entire family, and ultimately the entire community. In other words, when I say that females need education, I mean that educated girls serve as role models for the community in preventing child marriage. Girls must pursue higher education and serve as role models for the neighborhood. In order to make the brain sharper and be useful in a variety of situations, such as managing a family, raising one's own children, managing domestic duties, and even making money, it is crucial to educate girls in the same manner that boys are educated.

Key words: Women Education, Educational status Early Marriage.

EARLY MARRIAGES

Early marriage, often known as child marriage, is the union of two persons when one or both parties are under the age of 18. The right to "free and full" consent to marriage is recognized by the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, although it is acknowledged that such consent cannot be "free and full" if one of the parties is too mature to choose a life partner. Nevertheless, girls are frequently forced into arranged marriages without their knowledge or consent in many low- and middle-income nations, particularly in rural areas with higher levels of poverty. Even as early as infancy, such a situation might arise. Marriage, in the eyes of parents, is a cultural tradition that safeguards their daughter from sexual assault and provides for the care of a male guardian.

Many parents want to marry off their young daughters before they become a financial obligation because they believe that a young girl is an economic burden. Girls who marry as teenagers typically have poorer educational levels, lower social standing in their husbands' families, report using less birth control, and experience greater rates of maternal death and domestic abuse. These individual results also point to a number of more significant social effects of early marriage, such as increased population growth, faster disease transmission, and a higher rate of orphans. In contrast to their urban counterparts, girl children in rural settings are more affected.

41,000 females get married before turning 18 every day. That is 15 million girls annually. Child marriage



contributes to population increase and persistent poverty. Globally, it is anticipated that child marriage would cost citizens in poorer nations trillions of dollars between now and 2030. Girls who marry as children tend to have more children overall and earlier in life. As a result, households become less able to achieve their fundamental requirements, which furthers the problem of poverty.

THE REASONS FOR EARLY MARRIAGES

There are a wide range of causes for young marriage. The most prevalent ones are gender inequality, social standards, perceptions of females as having low status, poverty, a lack of education, safety concerns for young girls, and control over one's sexuality.

Poverty: A major factor in child marriage is the family's financial situation. One of the main causes of this practice is poverty. It is both a cause and a result of this bad custom. Where poverty is severe, individuals resort to even unlawful ways to survive. Thus, daughters are married off at a relatively young age only to transfer the girls' financial responsibility to another family. As a tactic for the family's financial survival, young girls are occasionally married off for brides to considerably older men. (1996, R.D. Naik)

Gender Discrimination: Early marriage is a product of cultures that devalue women and girls and discriminate against them. The discrimination often manifests itself in the form of domestic violence, marital rape, and deprivation of food, lack of access to information, education, health care etc.

Control over sexuality: Since a bride's value is often associated with her virginity in many cultures, protecting girls from shameful situations like unwed pregnancies is a common justification for child and early weddings.

Customs and Traditions: In areas where child marriage is common, families are under intense social pressure to fit in or risk scorn, condemnation, and family humiliation. Local conceptions of the optimum marriage age are influenced by financial considerations such dowries, bride price, etc.

Humanitarian crises and armed conflict. Schools are frequently the target of direct assaults, and girls are especially vulnerable to sexual assault, human trafficking, and violence intended to obstruct their education. Due to families' fears of sexual violence and general instability, girls are less likely than boys to return to school after conflict.

CONSEQUENCES OF EARLY MARRIAGES

Early marriage has negative effects, such as less independence and educational chances. Adolescent mothers give birth prematurely or to low birth weight kids as a result of their early and frequently closely spaced pregnancies before their bodies are ready to bear the load of pregnancy. These moms and children face health risks, and frequently they do not make it. Girls who marry as children are also more likely to experience domestic violence, sexual assault, and the inability to finish their elementary education. Additionally, it has



been discovered that states with high rates of child marriage have infant mortality rates that are greater than the national norm. (Myles and Margate, 2009).

CONSEQUENCES OF EARLY MARRIAGES OF GIRLS

Due to their immaturity and small pelvises, girls between the ages of ten and fifteen are at serious risk for both physical and mental health problems after giving birth. Obstetric fistula, a physically immature girl-specific birthing problem that affects millions of women globally, is crippling. Other negative effects include infant mortality, poor decision-making ability, illiteracy, abuse and violence, abandonment and isolation, depression and suicide etc.

IMPACTS OF EARLY-STAGE MARRIAGE ON GIRLS' EDUCATION

The most significant institution outside of the family involved in preparing children for all facets of adult tasks and responsibilities is the school. Numerous beneficial effects, such as later marriage ages, decreased fertility, healthier and more intelligent offspring, and economic development, have been linked to more years of education. However, young marriage necessarily denies school-age children the right to the education they require for their personal growth, their preparation for adulthood, and their ability to make a meaningful contribution to their family and society's future well-being.

Returning to school can be almost impossible for a married girl.

Married girls confront a variety of real obstacles to obtaining an education, such as domestic duties, stigma, being expelled from school, and gender stereotypes that keep them at home.

Adolescent pregnancy is frequently the result of child marriage. Due to shame, lack of assistance for re-enrollment, and national legislation, a pregnant adolescent girl may leave school or be excluded.

The influence is larger the younger the marriage age. A female is quite unlikely to stay in school or go back after getting married. Married girls who want to continue their education may, in fact, be both practically and legally prohibited from doing so. The fundamental purpose of the rights to health and education is to ensure and promote the effective exercise of all other human rights. Many impoverished families believe that the benefits of educating their daughters are too distant to be worth the investment, thus they do not view it as such. Families believe that a girl should only attend school for the benefit of her husband's family, not for her own. In addition, some parents think that girls don't need a formal education because they'll be brides and moms, that education undermines cultural practices, and it teaches the girl to reject tradition.

There is a significant correlation between girls' educational achievement and child marriage. It is very challenging for ladies to continue their education after getting married in the majority of poor nations.

It's common for girls to be expected to stop attending school after getting married, therefore finish their formal education.

A girl is more likely to leave school before or soon after getting married than at any other period. She is frequently expected to care for the house, the kids, and the extended family in her role as a wife or mother.



According to science, postponing marriage has no negative effects. However, because the society believes that no one wants to marry her, they cause her psychological suffering. In her neighborhood and at school, people frequently make fun of her. Brilliant pupils left school as a result of their fear of social disgrace. In modern society, they [girls] don't receive enough attention or fair treatment. Many females possess the skills and abilities... They believe that women cannot achieve higher... Girls are still viewed as inferior by them.

There is a proverb that states that educating women educates a nation. Even at the most basic level, education gives social "connectedness" or aptitude that makes it possible to acquire crucial resources to fight poverty. This is more important than simply teaching technical skills and livelihoods. People develop their social skills and personal capabilities through interaction with others, which enables them to access opportunities and resources and create social networks for future support and help. Additionally, people can increase their self-worth and confidence so they can speak up for themselves, take charge of their own lives, and take care of their bodies. According to Naana Otoo-Oyortey and Sonita Pobi (2003), increased reproductive health, child survival, and welfare are further advantages of schooling.

Women with higher levels of education are more likely to have a say in decisions about the size of their families and the spacing between their children. They are also more likely to be aware of the use of contraception and the medical requirements of their children. Teenage girls who get married outside of their communities frequently lose the intimate bonds they had made in their parent's houses and turn quiet and reserved. As a result, even in cases where girls have created social networks, they are unable to use them outside of their married community. The Millennium Development Goals, agreed by the 191 United Nations members states in 2000, were the most current statement of the universal right to education by the world's governments after more than 50 years. Nevertheless, this right is still denied to some 115 million youngsters, 62 million of them are girls. Only 76% of boys and 70% of girls attend primary education outside of the industrialized world, according to figures from UNICEF (2004). Marriage need not imply that a girl's or boy's education ends, but in many societies, it does because of the views of parents, schools, and spouses. Young wives frequently have older husbands who want them to uphold tradition, stay at home, and take care of the home and children. A girl might not be able to defy her husband, and the husband's family might not want to spend their limited funds on the wife's ongoing education. Many schools have a rule against letting girls who are married, pregnant, or have young children go back. They might think it will be a terrible example for other students or that other parents will be upset to see the school reject the established ideas. It may be very challenging for a female to attend school and fulfill her responsibilities as a wife and mother at the same time, even if they do allow girls to return. This is because of the school atmosphere, which includes the regulations, timetables, and physical surroundings. Girls' sense of security and self-confidence can be further undermined by bullying and harassment from teachers, students, and other parents, leading them to drop out of school.

The fundamental issue with evaluating how child marriage affects educational attainment is that a girl's (or her parents') decision to get married young is likely to be based on her own capacity for education. Girls who are academically worse, for instance, face smaller predicted losses in future earnings and, as a result, have fewer incentives to continue their school than girls who are academically brighter. It's possible that these girls are



more eager to wed young or that their parents are more likely to consent. In a similar vein, girls who are less interested in continuing their education regardless of their academic prowess may also choose to be married young, and they might have dropped out even in the absence of marriage. In other words, choices about school and marriage are made together. Finding instrumental variables that explain marriage decisions but not schooling outcomes that depend on marriage decisions is therefore required, albeit it is not always simple to do.

IMPORTANCE OF EDUCATION

- A girl who lacks education might not be able to discern what will be beneficial or harmful to her. The socioeconomic advantages of schooling are unknown to her. If a girl is uneducated, she may believe she is inferior to boys.
- The future for girls who are educated is brighter because they have more knowledge. The girls who are not educated only know what they see on television or what others tell them.
- Since males do not stay at home and teach the children, who are the future of the family, society, and village, an educated girl may provide her child with a suitable upbringing and education. It is solely the female's obligation to educate the youngsters.
- The value of literacy was also tied to marital prospects, The literate girls are more appreciated by people and they get good marriage proposals. They are more intelligent and street-smart. The illiterate girls are very gullible.
- Education for girls should be equal to that for boys. The likelihood of problems with the husband and in-laws will significantly decrease if a girl has an education since she will be able to manage her home and family well. A female who has received an education is better able to educate her child and can even make a good living through employment. She also recognizes the value of having a modest family with one or two children.
- Education Improves the Economic Capability of Girls Financial management in the home and opportunities for and aspirations in the workplace.
- A girl's education will directly affect society; it is stated that educating just one female is like educating the entire family. This does not imply that the entire family receives direct instruction, though. But after learning, a female is capable of running the household. She also understands how to manage her finances.
- Women are the main actors in the community. They move the economy. So, if they get an education, it enables them to further strengthen their role in the community.

To prevent child marriage and ensure that girls may reach their full potential, education is a vital method. The longer a female attends school, the less likely it is that she will get married before turning 18 and have children while still a teen. The advantages are felt broadly when girls have access to a safe, high-quality school for 12 years. Girls who have an education gain the abilities, knowledge, and confidence to make wise decisions, such as when, if, and with whom to get married. The concept that girls are still children and too young to marry is



further supported by the fact that they attend school. At the secondary level, education has the strongest protective effects. A female has a lower chance of getting married young the longer she spends in school. Even more consistently and effectively than elementary school education, secondary education prevents child marriage. Education for girls has a lasting impact throughout generations. Girls' education in one generation can postpone marriage in their daughters' generation.

CONCLUSIONS AND SUGGESTIONS

Nowadays, every female goes to school. There are several programs the government has introduced (such as cash transfer programs and incentive schemes) to help with this, but the cost of sending kids to school remains a major concern. Continuing your education after getting married is a fantastic idea if you can. Despite having a child, she has the right to complete her study. While running her household, she can continue her education. Marriage shouldn't interfere with a married woman's education, so she must attend school. Even if she gets married, nothing can hurt her.

Governments must make investments in ensuring that females enroll in school, remain enrolled, and feel comfortable while attending classes. The following are action priorities:

- working across sectors to ensure that all children, including girls at risk of child marriage and married girls, have access to 12 years of high-quality, gender-responsive education.
- establishing inclusive, violence-free, and girl-friendly schools.
- In emergency situations, make sure girls have ongoing secure access to education.
- The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) represent a commitment by governments all around the world to stop child marriage by the year 2030. By 2030, the goal of Target 5.3 is to "eradicate all harmful practices, such as child, early, and forced marriage, and female genital mutilations." Without putting an end to child marriage, we cannot accomplish eight of the Sustainable Development Goals. By 2030, 193 nations have endorsed the SDGs' goal of ending child marriage. A widespread issue that affects all nations, ethnicities, and faiths is child marriage. Today's 650 million women and girls were married as young girls. 150 million more girls will be married by 2030 if we don't step up our efforts. We need to encourage development actors working across these goals to in order to truly put an end to child marriage.

This study makes the argument that while encouraging girls to pursue their education has positive social effects in many of these situations and can help prevent early marriage, such initiatives will fall short in the absence of structural and social norm improvements that support women's independence and a wider range of employment options. Education for girls will not be sufficient to solve early marriage and the repercussions of social and health issues that accompany it if there is no wider social change to build on girls' established strengths and with a gender equality focus.

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