

Child Marriage in Bangladesh: A Question to Girlhoods

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Abstract

Bangladesh is the fourth highest country in the world for female child marriage. According to report (State of the World's Children) of UNICEF, Niger is in the first position with the rate of 76% on average and Bangladesh with 65% of girls married before age 18 (UNICEF Report, 2015). As per Child Marriage Restraint Act, 1929 the minimum legal age for marriage is 18 years for females in Bangladesh. Along with this Act child marriage is punishable by law. (Ferdousi Nahid, 2013) The right to free and full consent to a marriage is recognized in the 1948 Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) and in many subsequent human rights instruments -consent that cannot be "free and full" when at least one partner is very immature. (Stark Barbara, 2005) Bangladesh also acceded to the UN Convention on Consent to Marriage, Minimum Age for Marriage and Registration of Marriages on 5 October, 1998. These laws, however, have little impact on the frequency of child marriage in Bangladesh. In past three decades where Bangladesh progress in equal education and earning opportunity of women over the same period the incidents of child marriage has increased which is a fundamental violation of Human Rights and needs to be considered as a serious issue that hinders the development of Bangladesh.

This paper is focused on an impact of early marriage of a girl perpetuates an unequal society restrict personal and psychological development and a hazardous health effects. Regarding these it attempts to cite some recommendations to reduce and eliminate eventually this major drawback. This is a qualitative research methodology collected from secondary sources i.e, Published Articles, Journals and Internet.

The findings suggest that the Bangladesh government will find it impossible to satisfy both their rural constituency and human rights activists simply by reforming child marriage law. The driving factors rooted in traditional patriarchal perception which needs to be change by addressing non-assessable affects and impacts for the life of the girls.

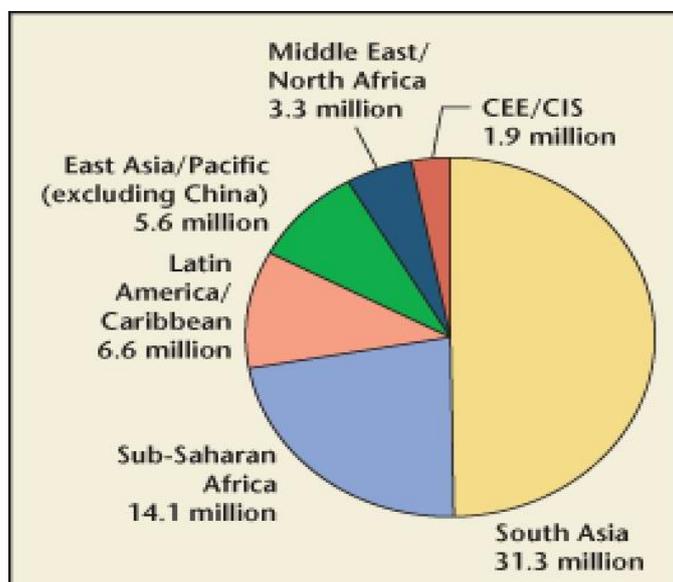
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Introduction

Child Marriage is defined by global organizations as a formal marriage or informal union entered into by an individual before reaching the age of 18. (Unicef Report, 2016) But it is more harsh to face than to defined. It is a practice rooted more in tradition than religious custom, and one that spans the globe, from Asia to Africa to the Americas. With 42% of girls married before 18, South Asia is home to almost half of the world's child brides. (Upreti Mellisa, 2016). Amongst South Asian Countries, Bangladesh stands in the fourth highest position of child marriage around the globe. In spite of numerous official mandates vowing to address child marriage, millions of girls annually wed before their 18th birthday. Many before their 15th. Others before their 10th or 8th or 6th — in spite of the fact that marriage, all too often, leads to the end of their education, their childhoods, and, sometimes, their lives.

In Bangladesh 52% of girls are married by their 18th birthday and 18% by the age of 15. (UNICEF Report, 2016).



This graph shows South Asia covered by 31.3 million which is around half of the world's developing countries affected by Child marriage epidemic. United Nations Children's Fund. Progress for Children: A World Fit for Children Statistical Review. New York: UNICEF; 2007. [http://www.unicef.org/publications/files/Progress for Children No.6 revised.pdf](http://www.unicef.org/publications/files/Progress_for_Children_No.6_revised.pdf)

According to UNICEF's State of the World's Children Report 2011, 66 percent of girls in Bangladesh are married off before the age of 18, and 32 percent before the age of 15 in Bangladesh. The situation in Sylhet, Chapai nawabganj, Rangpur, Jessore, Bhola and parts of Khulna is worse than in the rest of the country. A recent study in 2012 by the International Centre for Disease Research in Bangladesh (ICDDR, 2012) shows that the prevalence of child marriage in urban areas of Bangladesh is 53 percent and

70 percent in rural areas. However, it is nothing new in Bangladesh rather is deeply embedded in the improvised and traditional cultural settings. In practice, certain poorer class communities in the urban rural areas have continued the practice and child marriage are also performed by some high status people who have their own reasons for being ‘traditional’. Often rural families’ parents encourage early marriage out of fear that the dowry price will increase as their daughter ages.

Factors Driving Child Marriage

At its heart, child marriage is rooted in gender inequality and the belief that girls and women are somehow inferior to boys and men. (Girls Not Brides, Report) When a couple lives ‘in union’, as if married – raises the same human rights concerns as marriage. When a girl lives with a man and takes on the role of his caregiver, the assumption is often that she has become an adult, even if she has not yet reached the age of 18. Apart from perception drivers will vary from one community to the next and the practice may look different across regions and countries, even within the same country.

Gender Inequality

Child marriage is a product of social and cultural norms that devalue women and girls and discriminate against them, often limiting their roles to the domestic realm and thus preventing them from accessing educational, vocational or economic opportunities outside the household. According to a United Nations International Children’s Emergency Fund (UNICEF) report, such discrimination “often manifests itself in the form of domestic violence, deprivation of food, a lack of access to information, education and healthcare; and to general impediments to mobility.” Child marriage is both a cause and a consequence of the most severe form of gender discrimination. Just as devaluing women and girls leads to early marriage, so does the child bride’s lack of power and voice result in further gender-based discrimination.

Poverty

More than half of girls from the poorest families in the developing world are married as children. (ICRW Report,2015) Where poverty is acute, families and sometimes girls themselves believe that marriage will be a solution to secure their future. Giving a daughter in marriage allows parents to reduce family expenses by ensuring they have one less person to feed, clothe and educate. Families may also see investing in their son’s education as more worthwhile investment. (Girls Not Brides, Report) In some cases marriage of a daughter is a way to repay debts, manage disputes, or settle social, economic and political alliances. In communities where a dowry or ‘bride price’ is paid, it is often welcome income for poor families; (Girls Not Brides, Report) in those where the bride’s family pays the groom a dowry, they often have to pay less money if the bride is young and uneducated.

Insecurity

Many parents marry their daughters young because they feel it is in her best interest, often to ensure her safety in areas where girls are at high risk of harassment and physical or sexual assault.; (Girls Not Brides, Report)Harassment and intimidation play a major role in driving child marriage. Unmarried adolescent girls often face unwanted advances and threats, including the threat of abduction from suitors, and parents, feeling unable to protect their daughters and with no prospect of help from police or local authorities, see marriage as a solution. (Human Rights Watch, 2015)

Social Pressure

Families are also influenced by social pressures from neighbors in communities where the onset of puberty in a girl is seen as a signal that it is time for her to marry. The widespread practice of girls' families paying dowry to her groom creates additional pressure, as dowry tends to be lower and even avoidable for the youngest of brides. (Human Rights Watch, 2015)

Natural Disasters

Bangladesh's status as one of the most densely populated countries in the world (1,100 people per square kilometer) with a large poor population (47 million people living poverty and 26 million in extreme poverty, out of a population of 166 million) makes its people especially vulnerable when natural disasters occur. (Human Rights Watch, 2015)

Natural disasters feed a family's poverty and fuel the urgency parents feel to protect their daughters and sons. Losing their crops to floods or their homes to land erosion, families can rush to marry off their daughters early before they are displaced or before their economic situation deteriorates further. Loss of life and property damage and the lack of an adequate government safety net for families affected by them, compound the poverty that drives child marriage.

Consequences of Child Marriage

The impact of early marriage on girls is wide-ranging. Within a rights perspective, three key concerns are the denial of childhood and adolescence, the curtailment of personal freedom and the lack of opportunity to develop a full sense of selfhood as well as the denial of psychosocial and emotional well-being, reproductive health and educational opportunity. Early marriage also has implications for the well-being of families and for society as a whole (Mittal Sujata, 2004). Where girls are uneducated and ill-prepared for their roles as mothers and contributors to society, there are costs to be borne at every level, from the individual household to the nation as a whole.

Psychosocial disadvantage

The loss of adolescence, the forced sexual relations, and the denial of freedom and personal development attendant on early marriage have profound psychosocial and emotional consequences. The impact can be subtle and insidious and the damage hard to assess. It includes such intangible factors as the effect of a girl's loss of mobility and her confinement to the home and to household roles. Most girls who are unhappy in an imposed marriage are very isolated. They have nobody to talk to as they are surrounded by people who endorse their situation. Because of this several psychological and physiological problems occur and usually lead to divorce or suicide (Gage, 2013). The unwanted responsibilities, household chores make most of them so traumatized that even they run from home to get rid off from all these stuffs. More often child bride get abandoned by her husband with or without reason. The situation becomes vulnerable for an abandoned bride to survive due to want of economic, educational support and circumstantial drawbacks. Having baby by an abandoned child bride make the situation more worsen (Berhane-Selassie, Tsehai 1993). In the age where they could have joyous lives they pledge a traumatized life to live to endure the life rest.

Denial of education

Although attitudes towards the education of girls have begun to change even in traditional societies, many parents still believe that investment in a girl's education is wasted when she is simply going to be married and work in another household. The costs of the investment in education reinforce the impetus towards the girl's withdrawal from school. Early marriage inevitably denies children of school age their right to the education they need for their personal development, their preparation for adulthood, and their effective contribution to the future wellbeing of their family and society. Indeed, married girls who would like to continue schooling may be both practically and legally excluded from doing so. In Bangladesh, however, is clear – a girl will be with-drawn from school if a good marriage prospect arises (Muhammad Ibrahim,2000). The interaction between the number of years of a girl's schooling and the postponement of marriage is firmly established by demographic and fertility studies. On average, women with seven or more years of education marry four years later and have 2.2 fewer children than those with no education (UNFPA, 1990).

The removal from school of a young girl to marry, or to work in her parents' or another household in preparation for married life, limits her opportunities to develop her intellect (Mittal Sujata, 2004) and many other useful skills. This reduces her chances of developing her own independent

identity. The most important implication of this loss is that the girl grows up with no sense of the right to assert her own point of view– and little experience in articulating one. Lack of schooling also means that those girls and women who must work to earn a living have no qualifications or skills. Illiterate women who are abandoned, widowed or divorced, or who are victims of growing urban poverty, are forced into commercialized versions of their work as wives: cleaning, cooking, child-minding. Human Rights Watch interviews with married girls in Bangladesh found they almost always left education permanently (Mittal Sujata, 2004). They became pregnant early, either because they were pressured to or felt that they should, or because they had no access to contraception and information about family planning. Even if they left their husbands or got divorced early, economic and social pressures often kept them from resuming their studies. (Human Rights Watch, 2015)

Early pregnancy, Non accessibility to Family Planning Health Problems

In Bangladesh and elsewhere, child marriage often leads to early pregnancy, which can have severe health consequences for both mothers and babies, including dramatically elevated rates of mortality. (UNFPA,2012) Women in Bangladesh have a 1 in 110 chance of dying in childbirth, making such deaths “unacceptably common,” according to UNICEF. (UNICEF,2015)Part of the reason for this is a high birth rate among adolescent girls. (UNFPA,2012, State Of the world population 2014) Complications resulting from pregnancy and childbirth are the main cause of death among adolescent girls aged 15-19 years old in developing countries.(UNFPA, 2015) Globally, research shows that girls aged 10-14 are five times more likely to die during delivery than mothers aged 20-24; girls aged 15-19 are still twice as likely to die during delivery than women aged 20-24 (WHO,2011) The children of young mothers also face higher mortality rates. (Nawal M. Nour, 2006)Young mothers are less likely to get prenatal care and often do not have enough information about or access to proper nutrition while pregnant. Babies born to mothers under 20 years of age in low and middle-income countries face a 50 percent higher risk of still birth or dying in the first few weeks versus babies born to mothers aged 20-29 (WHO,2014). Babies born to adolescent mothers are also more likely to have low birth weight, which can have long-term health consequences.(ibid). Due to physical immaturity, young girls are more susceptible to obstructed labor, which is a leading cause of maternal mortality globally. (Nawal Nour,2008). In many rural areas, girls are married off just after they experience their first menstrual flow, between 10 and 15 years of age. These girls become pregnant which leads to many unwanted conditions including mortality and long term morbidity like obstetric fistula” (Kamal Nashid, September,2003).The majority of girls

became pregnant soon after they married, because they had no information about or access to family planning, because their husbands or in-laws demanded that they become pregnant, or because they themselves felt that they needed to have children as soon as possible. (Fatima A. and Ayesha L, Rumi C. October,28,2014). Early pregnancy and consecutive pregnancies cause them a serious health problem which increase maternal mortality to other gynecological problems too.

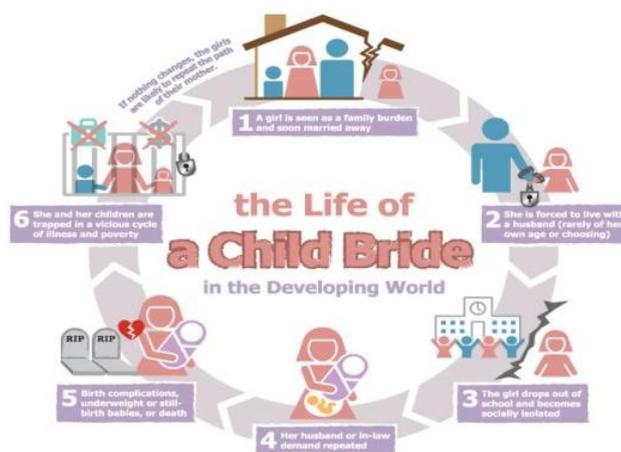
Greater exposure to domestic and sexual violence

Girls who are married early are more likely to be abused sexually, physically and emotionally. Girls who married before age 18 reported experiencing physical violence twice as often, and sexual violence three times as often as girls who married at a later age. (ICRW,2005) In addition, child brides are least likely to take action against this abuse.(IPPF and the Forum on Marriage and the Rights of Women and Girls, 2006) Domestic violence seriously endangers the physical and mental health of women and girls and can even put their lives at risk.

Violation of Human and Child Rights

The UN predicts that over 140 million girls will become child brides in the decade leading up to 2020 if this phenomenon continues, which equates to 14 million every year or nearly 39,000 girls married every day.The report says early child marriage affects young girls in many ways, robbing them of their right to a childhood. It leads to violence, abuse and forced sexual relations, meaning girls are at risk of sexually transmitted diseases and early pregnancy. Every year, nearly 13.7 million 15-19 year olds in the developing world give birth while married, with harrowing consequences. Complications in pregnancy and childbirth are the key cause of death for these girls, while babies born to young mothers are more likely to be stillborn, premature or are at a heightened risk of dying.

Rather than receiving support from family and friends, these young girls are left to face the terrifying prospect of early marriage and pregnancy on their own. They are left vulnerable and socially isolated, with little or no support to help them deal with marriage at such a young age or what is expected of them. The United Nations and other international agencies have declared that child marriage violates human rights and children's rights. The Universal Declaration of Human Rights states that individuals must enter marriage freely with full consent and must be at full age. (Nour NM. 2009) In 1979, the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women stated that child marriage is illegal. In 1989, the Convention on the Rights of the Child defined "children" as persons under the age of 18 years. Many countries passed laws changing the legal age of marriage to 18 years, but enforcement of these laws, and of laws requiring marriages to be registered, is weak (Nour NM.2006).



Loopholes

Despite the fact that 158 countries have set the legal age for marriage at 18 years, laws are rarely enforced since the practice of marrying young children is upheld by (Eshetu Getnet, 2014) tradition and social norms. Laws and different policies by the government are in place to prevent early marriage. But the initiatives are yet to meet with significant success in Bangladesh. There is a specific state law relating to the age of marriage, the Child Marriage Restraint Act 1929. As per the Act the legal marriage age in Bangladesh is 21 for boys, 18 for girls. So, marriage below 18 for girls and 21 for boys is considered an offence. Muslim law, on the other hand, lays down certain rules and prescriptions relating to the age of marriage, which sometimes come directly into conflict with statutory laws (Huda 1997). In practice, most of the time, the legal minimum age at marriage is ignored; the inadequacy of birth registration systems reinforces early marriage in Bangladesh. Apart from these, thousands of marriages go unregistered in this country. The Act provides punishment to men who marry children, those who solemnize child marriage and parents or guardians who permit child marriage. Unfortunately, enforcement efforts of the legal provisions are weakened prosecutions are rare for breach of the law. There is also contradiction of domestic laws. Early marriage committees in the district and upazila levels are mostly inactive. In modern world, many developing countries adopt the child friendly mechanism to uphold the norms of national legislation as well as to prevent of the child marriage. Being a signatory country of CRC, Bangladesh should incorporate the various rules of CRC in national plans and policies to prevent child marriage. In some other ways, Bangladesh has been cited as a development success story, including in the area of women's rights, primary and secondary school enrollment, maternal mortality etc. but these successes in achieving some development goals begs the question of why the country's rate of child marriage remains so high, among the worst in the world. In 2014, Bangladesh Government committed to ending child marriage. At the Girl Summit, Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina, pledged to end marriage under the

age of 15 by 2021 and of 18 by 2041. Yet it is hard to see how these girls will be allowed to reach their potential unless the way in which young women are viewed changes. (Haider Farhana, 2016) Bangladesh government is yet to take sufficient step to end child marriage and long way to go.



International Human Rights Instruments and Early Marriage

A number of human rights instruments lay down norms to be applied to marriage, covering issues of age, consent, equality within marriage, and the personal and property rights of women. The key instruments and articles are as follows (paraphrased for clarity in some cases):

Article 16 of the 1948 Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) states

(1) Men and women of full age... have the right to marry and found a family. They are entitled to equal rights as to marriage, during marriage and at its dissolution. (2) Marriage shall be entered into only with the free and full consent of the intending parties.

Similar provisions are included in the **1966 International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights** and the **1966 International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights**.

Article 1 of the 1956 Convention on Consent to Marriage, Minimum Age for

Marriage and Registration of Marriages state

(1) No marriage shall be legally entered into without the full and free consent of both parties, such consent to be expressed by them in person as prescribed by law. (2) States Parties to the present

Convention shall... specify a minimum age for marriage (“not less than 15 years” according to the non-binding recommendation accompanying this Convention). No marriage shall be legally entered into by any person under this age, except where a competent authority has granted a dispensation as to age, for serious reasons, in the interests of the intending spouses. (3) All marriages shall be registered by the competent authority.

Early Marriage and the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC)

Virtually every provision of the CRC is of some relevance to the issue of early marriage. Among the most pertinent, however, are the following (paraphrased for clarity in some cases):

Article 1

A child means every human being below the age of eighteen years unless, under the law applicable to the child, majority is attained earlier.

Article 2

Freedom from discrimination on any grounds, including sex, religion, ethnic or social origin, birth or other status.

Article 3

In all actions concerning children ... the best interests of the child shall be a primary consideration.

Article 6

Maximum support for survival and development.

Article 12

The right to express his or her views freely in all matters affecting the child in accordance with age and maturity.

Article 19

The right to protection from all forms of physical or mental violence, injury or abuse, maltreatment or exploitation, including sexual abuse, while in the care of parents, guardian, or any other person.

Article 24

The right to health, and to access to health services; and to be protected from harmful traditional practices.

Articles 28 and 29

The right to education on the basis of equal opportunity.

Article 34

The right to protection from all forms of sexual exploitation and sexual abuse.

Article 35

The right to protection from abduction, sale or trafficking.

Article 36

The right to protection from all forms of exploitation prejudicial to any aspect of the child's welfare.

The Statutory Regulation and Its Enforcement

There are exist number of legal provisions for protection of Children in Bangladesh. It needs to assess to what extent the statutory laws cooperating the International laws for children wellbeing. In Bangladeshi context, it has been found that since independence of Bangladesh 1971, the Constitution of Bangladesh has focused children's rights in its directive principles of state policy in Articles 15, 17 and 25(1) and the fundamental rights in Articles 27, 28(1)(2)(3)(4), 31, 32, and 39(1)(2). Articles 27, 28 and 31 of the constitution lay down the general principles regarding the protection of children from all forms of discrimination. The constitution in these articles provide that all citizens being equal before the law and being entitled to equal protection, must be treated in accordance with law without any discrimination. However, Bangladesh adopted the Child Marriage Restraint Act of 1929 which was amended in 1984, prevails over religious law. This Act prohibits the marriage of girls under 18 and boys under 21. According to this act early marriage is punishable by law. Due to pre-dating with the CRC, these laws not conform to international standards. Though it is mentioned that the religious law will prevail over ordinary legislation in case of conflict between these two laws but in particular cases the Child Marriage Restrain Act prevails over religious law. Under Muslim personal law, majority begins with puberty, which is presumed to begin at the age of 12 for girls and 15 for boys and in most of the developing countries children under 18 can and do marry in both the Civil and the Personal law and remain unregistered where there is provision of marriage registration in ordinary laws.

Child Marriage Restrain Act 1929(Amendment 1984)

Prohibits the marriage between a male under twenty-one and female under eighteen years of age. So as per the Act the minimum legal age at marriage is eighteen years for females. This Act also imposes punishment on parents and guardians involved in child marriages. **Section 3** stated about punishment for male adult below twenty one years of age marrying a child.3 Moreover, **section 5** of the said Act stipulated about punishment for solemnizing a child marriage. According to this section, whoever performs conducts or directs any child marriage shall be punishable with simple imprisonment which may extend to three months and shall also be liable to fine, unless he proves that he had reason to believe that the marriage was not a child marriage. Furthermore, section 6 mentioned the following

punishment for parent or guardian concerned in a child marriage: (1) Where a minor contracts a child marriage, any person having charge of the minor, whether as parent or guardian or in any other capacity, lawful or unlawful, who does any act to promote the marriage or permits it to be solemnised, or negligently fails to prevent it from being solemnised, shall be punishable with simple imprisonment which may extend to three months and shall also be liable to fine. It provided that no woman shall be punishable with imprisonment. (2) For the purposes of this section, it shall be presumed, unless and until the contrary is proved, that where a minor has contracted a child marriage, the person having charge of such minor has negligently failed to prevent the marriage from being solemnized. In this context, Article 34 of the Children Act, 1974 specifically stipulates the penalty to be imposed for cruelty to children. According to section 34, if any person over the age of sixteen years, who has the custody, charge or care of any child assaults, ill treats, neglects, abandons or exposes such child or causes such child to be assaulted, ill-treated, neglected, abandoned or exposed in a manner likely to cause such child unnecessary suffering or injury to his health, including loss of sight or hearing or injury to limb or organ of the body and any mental derangement, such person shall be punishable with imprisonment for a term which may extend to two years, or with fine which may extend to Taka one thousand or with both.

Birth and Death Registration Act, 2006 also requires birth registration that will evident the age of a child and could be effective enough for ending child marriage.

Initiatives

Bangladesh government is one of the member state agreed on Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) set by United Nations in September 2015. With 17 goals it has prioritized ending child marriage with the vows of world leaders of developing countries to end child marriage gravely affected by this epidemic. Government Organizations (GOs) and non government organizations(NGOs) of Bangladesh are working together to make changes by different awareness programs and action plans. Bangladesh government has authorized the mobile court to take prompt action for occurrence of child marriage within its jurisdiction. The Child marriage Restrain Act 2014 draft has been approved in cabinet of Bangladesh in 2014 to choke off the high rate of child marriage in Bangladesh, keeping the provision of maximum two years in prison and Tk50,000 According to the proposed law, anyone under 18 years of age will be considered child, while a male under 21 years of age and a female under 18 years will be considered as minors. According to the draft act, the offence also carries a minimum sentence of six months, or Tk10,000 fine, or both for the violation of the law. The male offenders will be punished with both the sentence and the fine, while the female offenders will be charged with the fine only. The family court will have the authority to cancel the marriage, in case of necessity. In this draft

the penalty has been increased as mentioned in Child Marriage Restrain Act 1929 (Amendment 1984). Effective implementation of this act will be a positive step towards the vow of Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina to end child marriage by 2041. MGD Fund in partnership with the development organization BRAC, local government and NGOs, trained more than 25,000 men, women and adolescents to prevent child marriage. Training emphasizing the negative physical and mental effects due to child marriage. Once trained, advocates disseminate success stories and work to end violence against women through yard meetings and other community gatherings. So far, the initiative has prevented more than 33 child marriages. So action to reduce child marriage is continuing since decades in Bangladesh. Changing a social norm like child marriage might seem daunting. But the experience in Bangladesh and elsewhere shows that it can be done, if everyone plays their part - the government at all levels, civil society organizations, community and religious leaders, families and the girls themselves - and if they are properly supported by development partners and UN agencies. (Mabel van Orange, 2015)

Recommendations

Bangladesh is one of the world's poorest countries and working to end the practice of child marriage. In this context, governments should adopt following steps to mitigate some of the worst abuses linked to child marriage in Bangladesh:

Need to regulate marriage age

At first there should be fixed the minimum age of marriage for girls to 18 years. Similarly, it should be required verification of the full and meaningful consent of both spouses. Moreover, it is need to structure of safeguard by law a victim's right to seek financial compensation after voiding, annulling, divorcing, or otherwise dissolving the marriage and protect the rights of children born out of such a marriage.

Compulsory of Marriage Registration

As per the law marriage registration is mandatory in Bangladesh and every marriage should be registered. Besides this, based on the law, the marriage certificate is an official document which permits the formation of a family by a man and a woman and sets forth certain responsibilities for both parties. Children can get remedy for any kind of family problem (like divorce, maintenance, guardianship) through register marriage.

Strengthen birth registration system

Birth certificate should be issued for all children. It is regarded as original age certificate of a child. So, in future when there is a matter of marriage then no confusion will arise. A much more systematic approach to enforcing birth registration would greatly help in enforcing child marriage laws and reducing prevalence. Birth registration is a critical measure to check the

practice of child marriage as it provides proof of age, based on which an underage marriage can be identified and halted and those abetting it can be punished.

Improve law enforcement mechanisms

Despite Bangladesh's progressive child marriage law, the practice continues to flourish in the country. Improved enforcement would help make the law more effective and prevent the practice easily. Law enforcement training and child marriage education for police and other law enforcement officials, judiciary personnel and community leaders would be an effective first step. (Australian AID, ICRW, UNFPA Report) A monitoring system would help identify and impose strict fines on parents who fail to register their children's births. Birth registration is a critical step to counter the practice of child marriage as it provides the proof of age of the bride. Such needs capacity building and such helps in enforcing related laws. (Dr. H.E. Momen Abdul)

Expand girl's education

It is a very useful strategic tool to stop child marriage. There is clear inverse relationship between education and child marriage. (Dr. H.E. Momen Abdul)

Persuading parents to keep their daughters in school is critical for the overall development of girls and in the postponement of marriage. It is need to expand girl's education facilities, particularly at secondary level. In Bangladesh, only government school program provides free cost of school fees and books for girls in school. It is need to provide this facilities in private school also. Moreover, for elimination the child marriage from the society with a bid to slash the maternal mortality rate in the country the government should establish secondary school registration program with parent's commitment about not to marry their daughters until they reach age 18. In this context more school would be established in every village with lower cost and skill teachers. It would be important to increase the number of teachers and sensitize them to the issue of dropouts as well as engage them in efforts to encourage parents to send their daughters to school.

Provide supportive economic opportunities

Education and economic options should also be offered to young married girl. Special stipend for girls should be increased their enrollment in schools. Stipend has certain criteria, and one of them is that she cannot marry before the age of 18. When girls are educated they are more likely to educate their children. Consequently, mother is able to earn a small income for her family, the whole family begins to change their attitude towards child marriage and keep their daughters in the family. It is strongly recommended that policymakers support strategic interventions at the national and local levels that economically empower girls and women, specifically in locations of high prevalence of child marriage in

marginalized communities. At the same time, efforts to enforce property and inheritance laws and to mobilize community efforts may also be required (UNEPA & ICRW 2010).

Improve Healthcare facilities

Healthcare facilities should be made available among the poor and in remote areas for better health of both mother and child in Bangladesh. Cooperate with the relevant authorities, mainly the ministries of health, education, youth, culture and promote programs based on partnerships with NGOs in order to improve the status of this issue in their activities and resources. It should be prepared a survey of the size and characteristics of the early marriage and publish live testimonies and case studies.

Awareness raising campaign

To prevent child marriage, there should be taken awareness raising campaign and advocacy programs and people need to work together to stop this practice. At first it is needed to inform parents and young people about the negative implications of child marriage. Further, local government administrators should be active to dissemination of information regarding the impact of early marriage as well as violence among organizations and media. Similarly, there is need to improve the awareness related consequences of child marriage among religious and community leaders, village elders and members of local and local government if they were approached with awareness campaigns and training workshops. It is needed to create awareness among people, particularly them arginal groups. The Ministry of Education could also help by ensuring that all schools include lessons about the negative life repercussions of child marriage in classroom curricula. It is high time to raise consciousness about the comprehensiveness of child marriage and its negative impacts. Government should make new laws to control child marriage and establish nonviolent places for girls to gather and socialize to upsurge access to economic skills and resources.

Conclusion

Child marriage is a very common but international problem. So, country approach need to addressing the problem properly with local circumstances for successfully remove this problem. Early marriage is a big challenge in Bangladesh. Children are the most neglected segment of the society and hardly have any voice, even within the home. It is because of social norms, patriarchal values, social practice and tradition, poverty, insecurity, parents' concept of safety, etc. As a result, they are consistently becoming easy victims of all sorts of violence. Child Marriage has serious social, economic, cultural negative connotation as well as high-health cost. But no girl should be robbed of her childhood, her education and health, and her aspirations. This issue needs urgent attention to government and public. With a greater concern we need to think what we pledge that will be generated in forthcoming future.

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