

THE SITUATION OF CHILD BRIDES

IN ANDHRA PRADESH



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This report is for Plan India and Mahita to design their advocacy under Girls Advocacy Alliance (GAA) in Andhra Pradesh. Hence, readers who wish to use the findings for research purpose, are suggested to take written permission from Plan India or Mahita (mahitahyd2002@yahoo.com) Hyderabad office.

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DISCLAIMER

What data speaks is reflected in the report and the statements are the views of child brides and authors and do not necessarily reflect the policies of the views of the Plan India, Mahita and PLF.

SUGGESTED CITATION

PLF (2019) The situation of child brides in the state of Andhra Pradesh, Poverty Learning Foundation, Hyderabad, plf.org.in

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ACKNOWLEDGMENT

Girls Advocacy Alliance (GAA) has been working on the issues of Child Marriage and Trafficking for sexual exploitation in the two states of Andhra Pradesh and Telangana since 2016. In our journey, we realized that there is a need to amplify the voices of child brides and their plight, as they are often perceived as voiceless and are not part of the advocacy efforts. With the commissioning of the study, 'The Situation of Child Brides in Andhra Pradesh' to the Poverty Learning Foundation, we hope to ensure that voices of child brides are incorporated in the process.

We are extremely thankful to Prof. S Vijay Kumar of Poverty Learning Foundation (PLF) and his entire team for enabling this study. We are especially thankful to Sri. S. P Tucker, IAS (Retd), Chairman of PLF for his guidance. Special thanks to Smt. K. Damayanthi, IAS, Principal Secretary to Government, Dr. Kritika Shukla, IAS, Director Women and Child Development, Andhra Pradesh Government for their support that has helped immensely in completing the research at Visakhapatnam, Krishna and Kurnool Districts. We are very appreciative of all the Government officials especially Project Directors and CDPO of the districts for their time and guidance during the field research. We are thankful to Plan India for their technical inputs during the course of the study.

We hope that this study would contribute to the knowledge documents existing on the situation of child brides and be able to significantly steer efforts of the government and NGOs on addressing the issues of child brides.

MAHITA

HOW TO READ THIS REPORT

- Section ONE** Executive summary briefs about the critical findings on prevalence of child marriages, legal provisions and policies, and consequences and aspirations of child brides. It concludes with policy implications.
- Section TWO** Briefly explains the most important drivers of child marriages.
- Section THREE** Highlights the prevalence of child marriages. It briefs about the status of girls in the age group of 10 to 20 years and married before 18 years of age.
- Section FOUR** Summarizes the provisions for institutional and legal support systems to prevent child marriages.
- Section FIVE** Briefs the consequences of child marriages from the field level evidences. Besides, it describes the aspirations and the demands of child brides.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

CONTEXT

The negative effects of child marriage, at individual level and at societal level, are manifested in several ways. If one imagines the life of a girl who gets married at the age of 10 or 14 or below 18, who is neither physically nor emotionally ready to become a wife and a mother. She might get pregnant before her body has fully developed, which can result in peri and post-natal. Infant mortality and maternal mortality are the two common risks before child brides. She may be subjected to domestic violence that may affect her morale, mental and psychological life. She has to forgo career opportunities, because of school dropout, and spend her life in poverty. Lack of economic freedom, she will not be able to provide better nutrition to her infants, better education to her children and adequate care of her family. If this cycle continues, there is every possibility of her children likely to face the similar challenges as she faced. Child brides choice aims to break this cycle and give a chance to design her life.

It requires multi-sectoral approach to end child marriages. Government ministries, service providers, development experts, advocacy agencies, and community groups should come together, have a national and state level action plan, which is more critical to end child marriages, and act. It is the governments to coordinate work led by different sectors and to make sure each sector has the funding it needs to respond effectively. Then only, achieving SDGs, specifically: poverty, nutrition, health, education, economic growth and reduction of gender in equality is possible by 2030.

THE STUDY

Girls Advocacy Alliance (GAA) Programme, is focusing on combating violence against girls and young women and increasing their economic participation in developing countries, including in India. Its aim is ensuring 'Equal Rights and Opportunities to Girls and Young Women'.

In this context, Plan India and Mahita (Lead implementer of GAA in Andhra Pradesh), the consortium members of GAA, commissioned a short and quick study with three objectives: through secondary literature document the prevalence and status of child brides; document the current provisions for institutional and legal support extended to victims of child marriages; and through primary data, analyze the impact of child marriages from the perspective of child brides, their aspirations, and provide recommendations on prevention, rehabilitation and reintegration of child brides from the perspective of child brides themselves.

This study was commissioned to the Poverty Learning Foundation (PLF), a macro level think tank working on micro and macro level issues and support the governments with proper implementation science. Using scientifically validated research methods and instruments, PLF has executed the study between September and December 2019 and drafted this report.

This report helps in understanding the statistical trends in child marriages, how policies are working to stop them and what are the perceptions of child brides on their choices and chances to build their future.

FINDINGS

1. DRIVERS

In Andhra Pradesh, Traditions, Social Norms and Beliefs, Poverty, Access to secondary education and Social pressure are the critical drivers encouraging child marriages over the years. These are very deep rooted drivers in the society.

2. STATISTICAL TRENDS

Using data from Census 2011, NFHS 4 (2015-16), DLHS (3 rounds till 2013 from 2012) were computed and analysed to understand the trends and status of women in the age group of 10 to 21 who are married before 18 years of age.

According to Census 2011, 2.6% ever married women who are between the ages of 10-14 years and 9.7% were between 15-18 years are in Andhra Pradesh. On an average, 5.85% of the women (n. 321,764) aged 10 to 21 who were married below 18 years of age. Four districts: Prakasham (8.53%), Guntur (8.39%), Kurnool (6.06%) and East Godavari (6.05%) are above the state average and remaining nine are below the average (The range is between 4.68% lowest to 8.53% highest).

According to National Family Health Survey NFHS 4 (2015-2016), in Andhra Pradesh 33% of women aged 20 to 24 were married below 18 years of age.

Four districts: Kurnool (43.3%), Prakasham (41.6%), Guntur (38.9%) and Nellore (38.7%) districts are above the state average and rest of the nine districts are below the state average.

The District Level Household and facility Survey (DLHS) round 2 (2002-04), 3 (2007-08), and 4 (2012-2013) shows the declining trends of child marriages in the state.

Women aged 10 to 20 married below 18 years of age are

- Literates (69.8%) however there are considerable number (29.11%) who are illiterate.
- Non-workers (53.04%), followed by main workers (35.51%), agriculture labour (26.09%), cultivators (3.93%) and household industry workers (0.89%).
- About 13.2% were already mothers or pregnant. Prakasham has highest percentage of such women (21.7%) followed by Vizianagaram (19.4%) and Guntur (17%).
- Nearly 43.1% have accessed public health services of delivery and 49.2% private health facilities.
- Only 39.2% had full profile of Anti-natal care. About 77.5% had 2 or 3 ANC visits, 92.6% got TT injection and 90% received IFA tablets.

3. REAL TIME DATA

It is mandatory for child protection unit in the department of WD&CW to collect and update their data on child marriages and vulnerable villages across the state. Though department is putting their best efforts, most of the early marriage incidences are not coming to the notice of the department. This is one of the challenges in identifying such probable cases and preventing them. The real time data given by the department says that in Visakhapatnam, between 2014 and 2019, 30 child marriage cases were registered, of which 100% prevented by the district administration. However, studies are showing child marriages are high in tribal areas and also among fishing communities. In Krishna, 35 such cases registered, of which 28 were prevented. In Kurnool, 35 cases registered and 31 prevented. Researchers of this study found that there are several successful incidences in these districts. Local political leaders, gram panchayat representatives and community leaders are supporting the child marriages. This is one of the reasons preventing the department officials to react timely.

4. SAFEGUARDS

Constitutional provisions: Child Early and Forced Marriages (CEFM), Art. 14 ensures equality before the law; Article 15 prohibits all forms of discrimination against any citizen; Article 21 ensures protection of life and personal liberty; Article 21A ensures free and compulsory education to be provided by the State to all children aged 6–14.

Under Part IV of the Indian Constitution, “Directive Principles”, Art. 39(f) states that children shall be given opportunities and facilities to develop in a healthy manner and in conditions of freedom and dignity and that childhood and youth are protected against moral and material abandonment. Art. 45, says that the “State shall endeavor to provide early childhood care and education for all children until they complete the age of six years”.

Similarly, under Part IV A of the Constitution including Art. 51 (j), envisioned Fundamental Duties for its citizens, requiring citizens to strive towards excellence in all spheres of individual and collective activity so that the nation constantly rises to higher levels of endeavor and achievement, and Art. 51(k), which requires citizens who are parents or guardians to provide opportunities for education to their children or wards between the ages of 6 and 14.3.

Besides, there are certain laws prohibiting child marriages (CMPA) which is said to be active in the state. However, the reality is other way – every day in one place or other girl children are forced to get married. Poor inter-departmental coordination is the reason talked much by the researchers and activists, but none of them think on how to strengthen implementation mechanism, how to bring all levels and cadres of stakeholders together to work on this issue.

5. COPENHAGEN CONSENSUS

It has done interesting background work, analysed four policy interventions: (1) bicycle transfers, (2) conditional cash payments for secondary school attendance, (3) the construction and maintenance of girls’ toilets in secondary schools and (4) 18-month vocational training programs – and concluded that significantly positive Benefit-Cost Ratios (BCRs) with benefits coming from both economic value derived from future employment and income opportunities, and social value resulting from a reduction in domestic violence, improvement in maternal and child health and lower rates of fertility. These interventions will help in zero down child marriages. This could be one of the critical point on which Plan India and Mahita can think while advocating with the government.

6. CONSEQUENCES OF CHILD MARRIAGES – VOICES FROM CHILD BRIDES

Financial dependency, not able to access proper health care, often abuse and violence within the family and community, ill treatment by neighbours, early pregnancy, prolonged delivery, high bleeding during delivery, hypertension, stunted children, isolated social life, no scope for further education, and less freedom are the critical consequences of early marriage expressed by the child brides.

To address critical challenges, most of the child brides are looking at Gram Panchayat support in preventing child marriages, accessing development services/provisions. Similarly larger majority are demanding the health services, particularly post and pre-natal services and immunisation services, and Anganwadi services for their infants, particularly for those who are stunted (malnourished) and often falling sick. One of the critical point emerged is the proper and timely support from Anganwadi/health centre to address the anaemic conditions among adolescent girls. Majority of the child brides said that they have less or no knowledge about family planning methods and spacing the family, for which they are demanding proper support from health services. Another

7. ASPIRATIONS & DEMANDS FROM CHILD BRIDES PERSPECTIVE AND POLICY IMPLICATIONS:

However, their aspirations says that their confidence levels are high and to fulfil their aspirations they are putting critical demands to be fulfilled by the government. Data has been collected from 55 child brides from Visakhapatnam (No. 17), Krishna (No. 19) and Kurnool (No. 19) who got married between 12 and 17 years of age.

7.1 SMALL FAMILY NORMS: Many aspired for small family with two children, however awareness on family planning is very low. Mother in law and husbands are the decision makers in spacing the family. Demand made by them is proper counselling to their husbands and mother-in-law's on consequences of early marriage, sexual life, and birth spacing. In this context, there is a need to improve the reach out of primary health care and Anganwadi services to those girls who were married before 18 years of age.

7.2 ECONOMIC INDEPENDENCE: Most of the child brides aspire for economic independence, however their educational background is not supporting them. Some of them have told that they need vocational training on job-oriented programs including soft skills. Those who are not interested to pursue further education after marriage, strongly aspire to have skill training

course that will give chance to earn. It is therefore, job oriented vocational skill trainings have to be embedded into the present curriculum starting from secondary/higher education. Department of education has to rethink on how best the existing curriculum at secondary and high schools linked with vocational training courses, including soft skills. It is essential to map the local skill training centres run by the government, corporates and NGOs and link them with the existing structure of education.

7.3 SCHOLARSHIPSTO PURSUE HIGHER EDUCATION: It is one of the widely talked points. Some of the child brides have said that due to financial difficulties in the family, they were forced to dropout from schools. If such support exists or accessible to them, perhaps their parents would have not thought of early marriage and forced them to drop out from school. In such cases, it is important to think about conditional cash transfers, bicycles to girls in secondary education, hygienic sanitation facilities in schools, and embedded vocational education in to secondary schools as suggested by Copenhagen Consensus in their recent report.

7.4 HEALTH LIFE: Majority aspired to lead healthy life, particularly to their infants. Those who had early pregnancy are demanding Anganwadi services. Those who are not pregnant also looking for Anganwadi services. Particularly this category of child brides is either malnourished or anemic. Here, primary health care has to focus more on adolescent girls (either married early or unmarried) provide proper knowledge about menstrual cycle and hygiene, importance of Iron Folic, family planning methods, pre and post-natal care and immunization.

7.5 DEMAND FOR SERVICES: Anganwadi, Panchayat, PHC and Secondary education are the most demanded services by the child brides. Particularly to Gram Panchayat their demand is to involve at right time to prevent child marriages. Those who are in urban area demanded timely support from policy as well as from legal services. Members of Gram Panchayat has to be sensitized on the socio-economic consequences of child marriages and made accountable to prevent such incidents. If they act properly, most of the child marriages can be prevented.

7.6 DEMAND FOR INFORMATION: Majority of the child brides have no or low awareness about their entitlements, child marriage prevention act and other child protection measures. It is essential to include such informative syllabus from the secondary education level.

It is the issue between choice and chance of lifestyle of child brides. They have lesser voice, least exposure to education; their husbands' age is also less to have a matured thinking and decisions. In such circumstances, though there is a chance, they are not able to make choices in many issues related to their personal and family life.

To end this persistent practice, policymakers should recognize that addressing child marriage is not only a moral imperative, but it is also a cost-effective and strategic move to achieve Sustainable Development Goal 5 by 2030. Public-private partnerships and other collaborative mechanisms need to be designed to support efforts by civil society and the private sector to combat child marriage. Given the social norms, traditions and beliefs to the perpetuation of child marriage, programs that collaborate with political, community and religious leaders, self-help groups, and youth clubs should be a particular focus.

Government policy on child marriages should focus on three critical areas: maternal and child health, family planning, and girls' secondary education. These are either one way or other related to child marriages and survival of the victims. It is also important for policy makers to ensure that efforts should address the girls who are already married and their children.

Monitoring and Evaluation is one of the critical factors in addressing the child marriages. In this context, it is important to identify vulnerable children, vulnerable families in specific vulnerable geographical regions, collect accurate data and accordingly investments need to be planned and monitored.

SECTION ONE

THE CONTEXT

An 18-year-old girl killed her two-day-old son in *Shahdol* district of Madhya Pradesh during April 2013, as she feared motherhood might put an end to her dreams of studying further¹. Sunita Yadav had taken her Class 12 exam on April 2 and delivered a boy three days later. When the baby disappeared from the hospital on April 7, she accused a nurse of stealing her son. However, police investigation and interrogations revealed that Sunita herself had killed her baby. Such an action, however desperate, cannot be condoned. But the reality is that millions of reluctant young brides like Sunita are being forced to bury their aspirations and juggle the roles of 'wife' and 'mother' in their teens. India has the largest number of child brides in the world, with 47% girls married under the legal age of 18, according to UNFPA². Early marriage often has a strong physical, psychological and emotional impact on them, often cutting off any chances of education and personal growth.

For the past few decades, Government of India is trying to address the age old, culturally promoted child marriages. However, the achievement is not impressive. Despite having the Prohibition of Child Marriage Act, 2006, which prevents child marriage, protect the children involved and prosecute the offenders, Census 2011 says that 33.8 million child marriages were reported for girls aged less than 18 and boys below 21 years. High variance has been noted across regions, states and between urban and rural areas in the prevalence child marriage within India³.

Where the traditions and social norms take upper hand in deciding the marriages, Andhra Pradesh registered with 1,71,083 girls below 18 years and 1,72,934 boys below 21 years got married between 2012 and 2016⁴. Some of the districts, for instance Krishna is having highest number of child marriages during the same reference period.

Department of Women Development and Child Welfare, State Women's Commission along with few non-government international organizations, for instance UNICEF, Plan India, and Save the Children with the support of local organizations, activists and opinion makers are making their efforts to zero down the child marriages in the state. In this context, mention should be made about Girls Advocacy Alliance, the campaign launched jointly by Plan India, Terres-des Hommes - Netherlands and Mahita the local non-profit organizations, advocating with policy keepers, and practitioners to improve the implementation science and ensure effectiveness of legislation, public policies, programs and entitlements to elimination of gender-based violence and economic exclusion of girls and young women.

To have a framework for policy level advocacy, Mahita and Plan India thought of having a comprehensive research report by examining – the prevalence, policy and programs and aspirations of child brides. The aim of this research is to present the status of child brides, their perceptions and examine the social, economic, health, familial, and educational aspects. In this context, Poverty Learning Foundation executed the research in selected districts – Visakhapatnam, Krishna and Kurnool and reflected on following key objectives –

- i. Statistical representation of prevalence and status of child brides through secondary data,
- ii. Current provisions for institutional and legal support extended to victims of child marriages,
- iii. Analyze the impact of child marriages from the perspective of child brides through primary data examining health, physical, mental, sexual, social, economic aspects, along with their aspirations, and
- iv. Recommend the prevention, rehabilitation and reintegration of child brides from the perspective of child brides themselves.

The research being carried out between September and December 2019.

APPROACH

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Mixed methods – both qualitative and quantitative methods were used to collect the data and information. The objective wise research methods and source of data is presented in table 1.

TABLE 1: SUMMARY OF RESEARCH FRAMEWORK

Objective	Data Collection methods	Source of Data/ Information	Key questions
1. Statistical representation of prevalence and status of child brides	Qualitative method - desk review of secondary source of information	Census 2011; Annual Health Survey; DLHS; NFHS; Department of Women and Child Welfare & any other sources having authentication.	State level prevalence; District level prevalence; District development and prevalence of child marriages.
2. Current provisions for institutional and legal support extended to victims of child marriages.	Qualitative method - (1) desk review of secondary source of information;	State specific Acts; ICPS; Constitutional provisions; Policies, Programs, Schemes Government Orders (No:13)	Critical analysis on strengths and weakness in existing institutional and legal mechanisms
3. Impact of CM from the perspective of child brides through primary data focusing on health, physical, mental, sexual, social, economic aspects, along with their perceptions about their future.	Quantitative method - (1) Individual Interviews with child brides.	(1) Randomly selected brides from the child marriage lists.	(1) Synthesis or relevant published literature, and (2) Key units for assessment - education; health; physical; mental/ psychological; social and financial impacts on brides.
4. Recommendations on the prevention, rehabilitation and reintegration of child brides from the perspective of child brides themselves.	Using the final outputs from (1) Synthesizing the outputs from the critical review of objective 1 & 2; and (2) Impact analysis from case studies and narratives - recommendations will be made on the existing policies and institutional mechanisms including the provisions for child brides to address the challenges arising out of early marriage in terms of education; health; socio-psychological and financial issues.		

Research methods adopted in this study are – desk review; and one-to-one interviews with selected child brides. Final report presented here includes district specific prevalence rates; perceptions of child brides; and consequences of child marriages. Inadequacy and challenges in the legal systems and details about policies, programs and schemes were analysed and incorporated in the report. The report is more comprehensive to plan district focused advocacy.

QUESTIONNAIRE

To collect the information from child brides (third objective), semi-structured questionnaire has been developed. It covers all important variables– (a) profile of the informants; (b) general and specific perceptions; (c) their knowledge on policies, programs and schemes; (d) their aspirations; (e) their confidence levels; (f) challenges related to early marriage and teen age pregnancy, financial, physical and mental health. Questions also focuses on anxiety, self-control, vitality, positive well-being, general health. To quantify the responses, study used five point *Likart* scale (See Anexure 1). Based on answer, further probing was done to know more on why she agree/disagree on particular question. This has helped in quantifying the perceptions and aspirations in a more robust way.

Questions in draft questionnaire have been validated by PLF team to find out its relevance and possibility/probability of getting answers from the child brides. Based on the field level experiences and observations, draft questionnaire has been wetted out further and finalized.

FINALIZING THE SAMPLE FOR INTERVIEWS

As per the third objective, the minimum unit of sample is “child bride” (the girl got married before 18 the legal age of marriage). The selection of the informants was made in the following steps –

- FIRST STEP** District wise list of child marriages was obtained from the Department of Women Development and child Welfare, Hyderabad with special permission from the Director. Segregated the registered cases (including cases which are not prevented due to various reasons/unnoticed) in line with caste and geographical areas.
- SECOND STEP** Purposive selection of child brides from the list giving equal scope to select from SC, ST, OBC and minority communities.
- THIRD STEP** Further segregation according to the age, with and without infants/ children. The assumption is that these factors also influence the life styles of the child brides.

SETTING THE FIELD FOR INTERVIEWS

A team of 15 members involved in data collection. Field investigators are handpicked by the PLF and PLF internal team has supervised the work. A day long thorough training has been given to the investigators.

After getting clarity on geographical distribution of child brides in the state, investigators with the support of ICDS team and local NGOs, approached the child brides, explained the purpose of the interview and taken their consent. Few agreed and participated till the end of the interview (average time taken for each interview is two hours), and few left in between. Investigators have respected their time and moved to other interview.

Field work has been carried out in the month of November 2019. Analysis and Interpretations were completed during the second and third weeks of December 2019. Though more than 60 child brides were approached by the research team, few have left without completing the interviews. Finally data from a total number of 55 child brides (17 from Visakhapatnam, 19 from Krishna and 19 from Kurnool districts) was used in the analysis.

REPORT STRUCTURE

Final report will have six sections

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- SECTION 1:** Introduction with the context, methods and sample framework
- SECTION 2:** State Specific Drivers of Child Marriages
- SECTION 3:** Prevalence of child marriages
- SECTION 4:** Provisions for institutional and legal support extended to victims of child marriages
- SECTION 5:** Consequences of early marriage on child brides and their aspirations about future.
- SECTION 6:** Recommendations on the prevention, rehabilitation and reintegration of child brides from the perspective of child brides themselves
- SECTION 7:** Appendix and Annexures

SECTION TWO

STATE SPECIFIC DRIVERS OF CHILD MARRIAGES

Child, early and forced marriage is a global problem that violates girls' human rights, curtails their schooling, harms their health, and sharply constrains their futures^{5, 6}. Low status of child brides in their marital households can subject them to long hours of labour, abuse, social isolation, physical, sexual, and emotional violence, the risks related to early pregnancy, and having little say over anything that affects them⁷. Boys too have negative affects early marriage, however in patriarchal dominant society the power relations empower boys with greater say, and also do not suffer like girl children.

Influence of social norms on the community underpinning child marriage range across domains of the transition to adulthood, sexuality, age hierarchies, religious beliefs, gender inequality, and women's and men's respective economic roles⁸. An anthropological analysis of female genital cutting and early marriage in Ethiopia, for example, highlights the role these practices are perceived to play in protecting family reputation and heritage, contributing to the well-being of girls, and helping to define the transition to adulthood⁹. A study of child marriage among ethnic Roma immigrants in France describes the way in which describing them as 'traditional' sets them up as wrong and in conflict with the 'modern' standards of the European Union, and does not recognise internal resistance to the practice; yet it seems that anti-racism efforts then support child marriage by treating it as a practice that is essential to Roma identity¹⁰.

Much of the normative structure underpinning systems of marriage is patriarchal. Some of the norms which inherently serve to preserve a patriarchal organisation of power in

society, and which also lend themselves to permitting and condoning the marriage of girls as children, include norms, beliefs and ideologies surrounding: transitions to adulthood; the social construction of sexuality; obedience to elders or filial piety; religious and cosmological understandings and expectations; the centrality of marriage for girls' life project; the economic value of men versus women; and romantic expectations¹¹.

Empirical work has shown demographic consequences of child marriage including higher overall fertility, closer birth spacing, and less control by women of family planning and contraceptive use, and health impacts of early childbearing include higher risk of maternal mortality, fistula and undernourishment¹².

Patriarchal social norms are deeply rooted in Indian society and controls the behaviour of the individual, family and community. One of the research carried out by Centre for Economic and Social Studies¹³

underline the beliefs, social norms and traditions are the key drivers of child marriages in Andhra Pradesh. Broadly the beliefs about the child marriage are: it is the responsibility of the parents to ensure their daughters marriage by early adulthood, women's role in the society as wives and mothers, importance of female sexual purity, and parents and elders authority over children's life trajectories. Inequality is one of the injunctive norm, which says that girl should marry young, in other words attaining biological maturity is the sign for marriage. Similarly, descriptive norm says that girls get married by the time they reach 18 years of age.

It is evident that child marriage is driven by gender inequality and the belief that girls are somehow inferior to boys. In Andhra Pradesh, child marriage is largely driven by (i) Traditions, social norms and beliefs, (ii) Poverty, (iii) Access to secondary education and (iv) Social pressure.

In order to protect the ancestral property, strengthen the kinships ties as well as political power, most of the families prefer the consanguineous marriages. In this context, age of the girl is not much important and the only criteria are biological maturity of the girl. Another factor is pressure from grandparents, which also forces the parents to perform child marriages. In few communities, for instance, among the fishing community, performing child marriage is a routine and customary practice.

There are certain social norms, for instance, parents prefer to get their girls married off before their sons. Similarly, the death of a family member must precede a girl's marriage. In such a scenario, the age of the girl is not taken into consideration. There is a belief among the rural communities that the 'higher the education, the higher the dowry'. Due to this, few parents prefer to marry off their girls' as and when they get a suitable bridegroom and they do not want to send their girl children for higher levels of education. If the family has more number of girl children, irrespective of their young age, parents opt for child marriages and want to be free from responsibilities. These are the key driving factors classified under traditions, social norms and beliefs.

The cycle of intergenerational poverty is also contributing to child marriages. Families with economic insecurity (because of no or less dependable income/assets) prefer child marriages. For example, in Anantapur district, where drought is more common, parents from poor families migrate to nearby districts in Karnataka state for livelihoods. In such families, to avoid the risks associated with leaving the young girls behind with grandparents, parents opt for child marriages. If both the parents are illiterate, in general, their awareness levels are low, and they cannot understand the consequences of child marriages. Hence, child marriages are common among such families. This factor is again linked to poverty.

Access to secondary education is another important issue behind the prevalence of child marriages. In specific geographical areas, where secondary education is not accessible, parents do not want to keep girl children for long in the family. Instead of engaging girl children into other household and livelihood activities, parents prefer to get their girl children married. This is also to avoid male harassment within the school, or when girls are commuting to school or workplace. Lack of transportation to reach secondary schooling, lack of or poor sanitation facilities in secondary schools are also driving factors behind child marriages. Sometimes, academic failure of a girl child, negatively influences her aspirations regarding higher education. In such circumstances, she is more likely to drop out of school and alternatively, parents prepare for her marriage.

Sometimes, forces the parents to marry off their children at an early age in order to avoid facing caste councils and punishments. In few cases it appears that social and electronic media also influence both young boys and girls to fall in love and elope. In general, child marriage is a common practice among the families headed by women (single parent families). In addition to poverty, pressure from the community, elders and caste leaders force the single parents to encourage and support child marriage of girl.

A number of factors are known to contribute to the practice of child marriage, including the civil registration system, the lack of legislative framework and enforcement mechanisms, and the existence of traditional and religious laws that support the practice. An effective implementable legal framework, which is supported by financial resources and enforcement mechanisms, provides a protective framework that ensures a girl's right to decide when and whom to marry. It also provides an enabling and supportive environment that will help to guide advocates and activists to mobilise communities to end child marriage.

To conclude, following critical drivers have emerged at community level, influencing few communities to practice girl child marriages.

TRADITIONS AND CUSTOMS: Customary laws based on religion are a major barrier in ending child marriage in India. Social pressure to marry at puberty can be enormous within certain castes.

POVERTY: To reduce their economic burden, few poorest families prefer early marriages to their girl children.

SOCIAL NORMS: It is more common customary practice among few communities that as soon as the girls born, to secure their future as well as the family property, parents enter into a gentleman agreement with boy's parents about the marriage. As soon as the girl reaches biological maturity, formal marriage took place with the consent of family elders, community and religious leaders.

EDUCATION: There is a strong belief among few communities that daughters need not educated to higher level. Investing on them is not advisable as they are considered as someone else's wealth. Thus educating daughters is considered less priority as compared to educating sons. Besides, another belief is – higher the education to girl, higher the dowry. This is also one of the reasons influencing poorest families to perform early marriage to their daughters.

GENDER NORMS: In few communities, lower social value attached to daughters and girls are expected to be adaptable, docile, hardworking and talented wives. Child marriages are sometimes used to control female sexuality, sanctify sex and ensure reproduction.

PRE-MARITAL SEX: Many families are more concerned about purity/virginity of girls as soon as they reach puberty. Due to the advancement in technology and social media, often teenagers are falling in love that sometimes leading to elopement. Parents consider that their social status and prestige fall down within communities if their daughters have sex or get married without their consent.

SECTION THREE

PREVALENCE OF CHILD MARRIAGE

(OBJECTIVE 1)

Child Marriage has been recognized as social evil and as a goal for reduction in the erstwhile Millennium Development Goals (MDG) and the current Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) 2030 adopted by 193 countries including India. SDG goal number 5.3 calls for elimination of all harmful practices, such as, child, early and forced marriages and female genital mutilation. According to the 2019 SDG Dashboard, India is stagnating in its progress towards achieving SDG 5. There is 28.5% gap achieving it SDG goal 5.

TABLE 2: SHOWS PERFORMANCE OF VARIOUS SOUTH ASIAN COUNTRIES FOR SDG GOAL 5.

Country	Progress	Pace towards achieving SDG 5 by 2030
Bangladesh	Significant changes remaining	Stagnating
Bhutan	Major Challenges Remaining	Moderately increasing
India	Major Challenges Remaining	Stagnating
Pakistan	Major Challenges Remaining	Stagnating
Afghanistan	Major Challenges Remaining	Stagnating
Sri Lanka	Major Challenges Remaining	Stagnating
Nepal	Major Challenges Remaining	Moderately increasing

Source: 2019 SDG 2030 Dashboard

This section analyses the secondary data on prevalence of child marriages in the state of Andhra Pradesh. To analyse the prevalence's, data from three main sources: Census 2011, National Family and Health Survey 4 (NFHS 4 – 2015-2016) and District Level House Hold Survey (DLHS – 2,3,& 4 during the years 2002-2004; 2007-2008 and 2012-2013) were used and computed the prevalence of girl child marriages in the state, with district and residence level segregation.

PREVALENCE OF CHILD MARRIAGES IN ANDHRA PRADESH

According to the 2011 Census, the population of India is slightly over 1.2 billion, around 48 percent of which is female and approximately 69 percent of these women live in rural parts of the country. Women in rural areas have fewer opportunities and lack the ability to participate in decision making. As a result of patriarchal mindsets and gender norms, young girls are subject to social evils like child marriage and female genital mutilation. Child marriage in India is still widely practiced and according to the census in 2011, 17 million children between the age of 10 and 19 were already married, out of which 76% were girls. The incidents of child marriage vary across different regions and states in India. Rajasthan, Jharkhand, Uttar Pradesh, Karnataka, Madhya Pradesh and Andhra Pradesh have the highest prevalence of child marriages. This section establishes the prevalence of child marriages in Andhra Pradesh and using data from Census 2011, National Family and Health Survey (NFHS) and District Level Household Survey (DLHS).

FINDINGS FROM 2011 CENSUS DATA

The table below shows the number of child marriages in united Andhra Pradesh in 2011 which is very similar to the national rates. According to 2011 census, 2.6% of ever married in Andhra Pradesh were between the ages of 10-14 years and 9.7% were between 15-18 years¹⁴.

DISTRICT LEVEL ANALYSIS ON CHILD MARRIAGES IN ANDHRA PRADESH

In present day Andhra Pradesh, the district-wise analysis of the census data for women aged 10 to 21 years who were married below 18 years indicates that Prakasam (19.8%) and Guntur (18.8 %) have the highest incidents of child marriages while in Andhra Pradesh it was at 15.4% (Fig 1).

The 2011 census data was analysed to understand the prevalence of child marriages using the data on age at marriage of ever married women aged 10 to 21 whose duration of marriage is 0-4 years. The percentage of women aged 10 to 21 who were married below 18 was calculated¹⁵.

Data in table 3 shows that 5.85 percent of the women (n.321,764) aged 10 to 21 who were married below 18 years of age in Andhra Pradesh. Three districts: Prakasham, Guntur, Kurnool and East Godavari districts are above state average and remaining ten districts are below the average.

TABLE 3 STATISTICAL REPRESENTATION OF WOMEN AGE 10 TO 21 MARRIED BELOW 18 YEARS OF AGE

District	Absolute Number of women aged 10 to 21 who were married below 18 years	Population of Women Aged 10 to 21 years	Percentage of Women aged 10 to 21 who were married below 18 years
Srikakulam	16287	304,525	5.35
Vizianagaram	14006	258,212	5.42
Visakhapatnam	24736	477,281	5.18
East Godavari	35379	584,319	6.05
West Godavari	23861	442,630	5.39
Krishna	23919	501,103	4.77
Guntur	42024	501,103	8.39
Prakasam	31846	373,217	8.53
Nellore	16911	333,633	5.07
Cuddapah	15590	319,658	4.88
Kurnool	30236	498,701	6.06
Ananthapur	26025	458,929	5.67
Chittoor	20944	447,638	4.68
Andhra Pradesh	3,21,764	5,500,949	5.85

NFHS 4 (2014-16) DATA ON PREVALENCE OF CHILD MARRIAGES ANDHRA PRADESH

According to NFHS 4, in Andhra Pradesh 33% of women aged 20 to 24 were married below 18 years of age. Four districts: Kurnool (43.3%), Prakasham (41.6%), Guntur (38.9%) and Nellore (38.7%) districts are above the state average and rest of the nine districts are below the state average (Fig2).

DLHS DATA ON PREVALENCE OF CHILD MARRIAGES IN ANDHRA PRADESH

The District Level Household and facility Survey is a household survey that is conducted at the district level. Data from DLHS 2 (2002-04), DLHS 3 (2007-08), and DLHS 4 (2012-2013) has been analyzed to understand the trend in prevalence of child marriages

across the districts of Andhra Pradesh. It shows that the incidents of child marriage have been declining in Andhra Pradesh (Fig 3). Srikakulam district saw a significant decrease in child marriages from 59.6 % during DLHS 2 to 4.3% during DLHS 4 and in Prakasham district child marriages decreased from 55.2% (DLHS 2) to 14.3% (DLHS 4). A similar trend can be observed in all the other districts of Andhra Pradesh.

STATUS OF CHILD BRIDES

LITERACY LEVELS

The 2011 census data has been analyzed using age at marriage for women aged 10 to 21 based on their literacy levels¹⁶. Census has used the seven categories: Literates, Illiterates, Literate but below primary, Primary but below middle, Middle but below metric and secondary, Matric or secondary but below graduate, and Graduate and above while analysing the literacy levels. On similar lines, present calculations were made to see the patterns of literacy levels and women who are in 10 to 21 years of age married before 18 years of age.

The percentage of literate women aged 10 to 21 married below 18 is 69.86% in the state. The percentage of illiterate women of this category is 29.11%. The percentage of literate but below primary is 4.86%. The percentage of primary but below middle is 25.38%. The percentage of middle but below metric and secondary is 15.67%. The percentage of matric or secondary but below graduate 34.92%. The percentage of graduate and above is 0.18% only (Fig 4).

The district with highest percentage of literate women aged 10 to 21 married below 18 is Nellore (94.67%) followed by West Godavari (85.47%). The district with highest percentage of illiterate women of this category is in Kurnool (52.71%) followed by Prakasam (37.55%). The district with highest percentage of literate but below primary is Nellore and (7.03%) followed by Krishna (6.24%). The district with highest percentage of primary but below middle is in Nellore (36.91%) followed by East Godavari (31.98%). The district with highest percentage of middle but below metric and secondary is in Visakhapatnam (72.50%) followed by Vizianagaram (23.78%). The district with highest percentage of matric or secondary but below graduate is Viaskhapatnam (34.12%) followed by West Godavari (32.29%). The district with highest percentage of graduate and above is in Chittoor (0.35%) followed by Prakasam (0.10%) and Kurnool (0.10%).

ECONOMIC ACTIVITY

The 2011 census data has been analyzed using age at marriage for women aged 10 to 21 based on their economic activity¹⁷. The Census has categorised seven types of economic activities: Total Main Workers, Cultivators, Agricultural Labourers, Household Industry Workers, Other Workers, Marginal Workers, and Non-Workers.

In Andhra Pradesh state, the percentage of total main workers amongst women aged 10 to 21 married below 18 is 35.31%. The percentage of Cultivators in women of this category is 3.93%. The percentage of agricultural labourers is 26.09%. The percentage of household industry workers is 0.89%. The percentage of Other Workers is 5.15%. The percentage of marginal workers is 12.99%. The percentage of non-workers is 53.04% only (Fig 5).

The district with highest percentage total main workers amongst women aged 10 to 21 married below 18 is Kurnool at 54.92% followed by Prakasam at 46.04%. The district with highest percentage of cultivators of this category is Chittoor at 8.05% followed by Kurnool at 7.17%. The district with highest percentage of agricultural labourers is Kurnool at 39.73% followed by Guntur at 36.89%. The district with highest percentage of household industry workers is Ananthapur at 2.01% followed by Kurnool at 1.43%. The district with highest percentage of other workers is Nellore at 18.40% followed by Kurnool at 6.59%. The district with highest percentage of marginal workers is Srikakulam at 21.10% followed by Nellore at 18.40%. The district with highest percentage of non-workers is East Godavari at 79.43% followed by Nellore at 74.88%.

NFHS4 - AGE AT PREGNANCY AND REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH INDICATORS

According to NFHS4 data on Andhra Pradesh, 13.2% of women aged 15 to 19 were already mothers or pregnant at the time of survey. Prakasam has highest percentage of such women at 21.7% followed by Vizianagaram at 19.4% and Guntur at 17%.

ANTENATAL CARE INDICATORS

According to NFHS4 in Andhra Pradesh, the 77.5% of pregnant mothers below 20 who had four or three ANC visits. 79.9% had an ANC visit in the first trimester of pregnancy. 92.6%, percentage who received two or more TT injections during pregnancy, 96.2% whose last live birth was protected against neonatal tetanus, 90.2% who were given or brought iron and folic acid tablets, 48.8% had taken iron and folic acid tablets for at least 100 days, 39.2% had full ante care is only 39.2%, and 21.6% has intestinal parasite drug is 21.6%.

POSTNATAL CARE INDICATORS

According to NFHS4 Data in Andhra Pradesh percentage of pregnant women below age of 20 who had delivered in a public health facility is 43.1%, percentage who delivered in a private health facility is 49.2%, percentage who delivered in a health facility is 92.3%, percentage who delivered with assistance from a health-personnel is 92.8%, percentage of women with post-natal check-up is 85%, percentage of women with post-natal check within two months of birth is 80.5%.

The above description is based on the secondary sources (ex: Census, NFHS and DLHS). Following tables are generated from the data obtained from the Department of Women Development and Child Welfare, Government of Andhra Pradesh. Data for three districts: Visakhapatnam, Krishna and Kurnool where GAA is working is presented in the following three tables.

Overall the data obtained from the Department of Women Development and Child Welfare says that number of child marriages are coming down in the state. Based on the history of child marriages, Department has identified vulnerable villages and with close vigilance and monitoring, trying to prevent the child marriages.

However, in reality, researchers found that number of child marriages are occurring in some parts of the state. Most of the time, information not reaching in time from field level to higher officials to react. Lack of coordination between the departments is allowing child marriage to happen. Besides, it is evident that most of the child marriages are taking place with the blessings of local political leaders and representatives of gram panchayat.

Due to these reasons, women and child development department officials are not able to keep their data base on child marriages up-to-date. Data given by the WD&CW department indicates that in Visakhapatnam district (Table 4), 30 child marriages are reported in 13 villages, and department is claiming that all 30 incidences are prevented by the department officials. As per the data, no child marriage occurred in the identified vulnerable villages in the district.

TABLE 4 VILLAGES IN VISAKHAPATNAM DISTRICT WHERE CHILD MARRIAGES ARE REPORTED BETWEEN 2009 AND 2019 (31ST AUGUST, 2019) (SOURCE: WDCW AP)

S. No	Name of the Mandal	Names of the Village Vulnerable	No. of Child Marriages Reported	No. of Child Marriages Prevented	No. of Child Marriages Occurred
1	Chinagadili	Arilova	3	3	0
2	Devarapalli	Vakapalli	3	3	0
3	Gajuwaka	Gajuwaka	3	3	0
4	Narsipatnam	Duggada	3	3	0
5	Parawada	Parawada	2	2	0
6	Visakhapatnam	Kancharapalem	2	2	0
7	Visakhapatnam (U)-I	Relliveedhi	2	2	0
8	Visakhapatnam (U)-I	Thatichetlapalem	2	2	0
9	Visakhapatnam (U)-I	PM Palem	2	2	0
10	Visakhapatnam (U)-I	Marripalem	2	2	0
11	Pendurthi	Chinthalagraharam	2	2	0
12	Pendurthi	Narava	2	2	0
13	Pendurthi	57 Ward	2	2	0
	Total		30	30	0

Similarly, in Krishna district 10 villages were identified as the most vulnerable villages where 35 incidences are reported. Of this, 28 were prevented by the department staff and 7 marriages has taken place (Table: 5).

TABLE 5 VILLAGES IN KRISHNA DISTRICT WHERE CHILD MARRIAGES RECORDED, BETWEEN 2009 AND 2019 (31ST AUGUST, 2019)

S. No	Name of the Mandal	Names of the Vulnerable Village	No. of Child Marriages Reported	No. of Child Marriages Prevented	No. of Child Marriages Occured
1	Vijayawada	Gunadala	6	5	1
2	Machilipatnam	Polatitippa	4	3	1
3	Challapalli	Challapalli	2	1	1
4	Pedana	Pedana	3	2	1
5	Kankipadu	Kankipadu	2	1	1
6	Gudlavalleru	Gudlavalleru	3	3	0
7	Gudiwada	Gudiwada	4	3	1
8	A Konduru	A Konduru	2	2	0
9	vuyyuru	vuyyuru	4	3	1
10	Nuzvid	Nuzvid	5	5	0
	Total		35	28	7

In Kurnool, 10 most vulnerable villages were identified by the department. In these villages, 35 incidences were reported and department able to prevent 31 marriages and 4 child marriages have occurred without any interruption (Table 6).

TABLE 6 VILLAGES IN KURNOOL DISTRICT WHERE CHILD MARRIAGES ARE REPORTED, BETWEEN 2009 AND 2019 (31ST AUGUST, 2019), (SOURCE: WDCW AP)

S. No	Name of the Mandal	Names of the Vulnerable Village	No. of Child Marriages Reported	No. of Child Marriages Prevented	No. of Child Marriages Occured
1	Peddakadabur	Rangapuram	6	6	0
2	Nandavaram	Halaharvi	5	5	0
3	Yemmiganur	Soganur	2	2	0
4		Enugubala	2	2	0
5	Tuggali	Chennampalli	3	3	0
6	Devanakonda	P.Kotakonda	4	4	0
7	Kodumur	Pyalakurthy	7	4	3
8	Gonegandla	Ironbanda	2	1	1
9	Holagunda	Hebbatam	2	2	0
10	Kowthalam	Ganjihalli	2	2	0
	Total		35	21	4

SECTION **FOUR**

PROVISIONS FOR INSTITUTIONAL AND LEGAL SUPPORT

(OBJECTIVE 2)

The international community has recognized the detrimental effects of child marriage and has put in place various legislative measure to curb this social evil. Universal Declaration on Human Rights (UDHR), Convention on the consent of marriage, minimum age of marriage, Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG 5.3) are some of the conventions that are working towards eradicating the practice of child marriage.

Policy makers and government officials in India have been working towards reducing child marriages ever since its pre independence days. In addition to the International Legal framework¹⁸ that protects the rights of child brides, the government of India has a legal framework, policies and various state provisions to end this practice. This section analyzes the various laws and policies around child marriages in India. The last section of this chapter outlines the schemes and provisions specific to the states of Andhra Pradesh.

TABLE 7 LIST OF LEGAL FRAMEWORKS

International Legal Framework	Universal Declaration on Human Rights
	International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights
	International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights
	Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women
	Convention on the Rights of the Child
	Convention on the Consent of Marriage, Minimum age of Marriage
	Millennium Development Goals
National Legal Framework	Prohibition of Child Marriage Act, 2006
	Compulsory Registration of Marriage
	Legalisation on other related issues - Care and Protection of Children, Dowry, Trafficking & Domestic Violence
Policies and Plans	National Policy for Children 2003
	National Policy for the Empowerment of Women
	National Youth Policy
	National Plan for Children
	Eleventh Five Year Plan (provisions relating to the rights of children)
Schemes and Programs	National Schemes being implemented by the Concerned Ministries directly or indirectly through State Departments
	State Schemes largely implemented by the State Department of Women and Child Development and other departments
	Schemes as identified by the Supreme Court of India in PUCL Vs Union of India

CONSTITUTIONAL PROVISIONS

On 26 November 1949, the Constitution of the Federal Democratic Republic of India was adopted by the Constituent Assembly. The same has been entered into force on 26 January 1950. The text was consolidated in 2007, incorporating all amendments made by the Parliament up to and including the Constitution (Ninety-fourth Amendment) Act of 2006.

Part III of the Indian Constitution speaks about the Indian citizens certain fundamental rights and stipulates in Article 13(1) that “all laws in force in the territory of India immediately before the commencement of this Constitution, in so far as they are inconsistent with the provisions of this Part, shall, to the extent of such inconsistency, be void”; Art. 13(2) provides that “the State shall not make any law which takes away or abridges the rights conferred by this Part and any law made in contravention of this clause shall, to the extent of the contravention, be void”.

Constitutional provisions relevant to the issue of Child Early and Forced Marriages (CEFM), Art. 14 ensures equality before the law: “the State shall not deny to any person equality before the law or the equal protection of the laws within the territory of India”. Article 15 prohibits all forms of discrimination against any citizen “on grounds of religion, race, caste, sex or place of birth or any of them”. Article 21 ensures protection of life and personal liberty and states that no person shall be deprived of his life or personal liberty except according to the procedure established by law. Article 21A ensures free and compulsory education to be provided by the State to all children aged 6–14.

Under Part IV of the Indian Constitution, “Directive Principles”, Art. 39(f) states that children shall be given opportunities and facilities to develop in a healthy manner and in conditions of freedom and dignity and that childhood and youth are protected against moral and material abandonment. Besides, under Art. 45, “the State shall endeavor to provide early childhood care and education for all children until they complete the age of six years”.

Along with fundamental rights, covered under Part IV A of the Constitution including Art. 51 (j), the Indian Constitution has envisioned Fundamental Duties for its citizens, requiring citizens to strive towards excellence in all spheres of individual and collective activity so that the nation constantly rises to higher levels of endeavor and achievement, and Art. 51(k), which requires citizens who are parents or guardians to provide opportunities for education to their children or wards between the ages of 6 and 14.3.

Statutory law India has a common law system based on the British model; separate personal codes apply to Muslims, Christians and Hindus. The primary origins of law in India are the Constitution, customary law, case law and statutes (legislation)¹⁹.

In the context of the fight against CEFM, India has taken action, by introducing the Child Marriage Restraint Act (CMRA) in 1929. When Census 1921 reported that there were 600 brides aged one year or below, the Indian political class woke up to the reality of CEFM. Hearing this, Mahatma Gandhi was said to have urged a member of the Central Legislative Council, Harbilas Sarada, to introduce a Bill restraining child marriage, which led to the introduction of the CMRA, popularly known as the Sharda Act. It was further amended in 1978 when the minimum age of marriage was fixed at 21 for boys and 18 for girls, and offences under the Act were made cognizable. The Act's provisions restrain and do not invalidate such marriages.

The Government has introduced Prohibition of Child Marriage Act (PCMA) in 2006, which came in top force from 1 November 2007. In principal, PCMA prohibits the child marriages and punishes those who promote it. It recognizes that girl children below 18 years of age are not mature enough for marriage and prohibits marriage of girl children below 18 years of age and boys below 21 years of age.

The PCMA declares solemnization of child marriages a cognizable and non-bailable offence and authorizes courts to issue injunctions prohibiting such marriages. Any child marriage solemnized whilst the child is taken away from his or her lawful guardian by use of enticement, force or deceitful means, or involving a child who is sold or trafficked for the purpose of marriage, is void under the law.

Section 4 of the PCMA provides that a district court may make an interim or final order directing the male contracting party to a child marriage, and – if this party is a minor – his parents or guardian, to pay maintenance to the female contracting party of any child marriage until her remarriage. The Act provides under Section 6 for the appointment of Child Marriage Prohibition Officers, who will be responsible for preventing the solemnization of child marriages within their respective jurisdictions by approaching the courts for injunctions, collecting evidence against perpetrators, creating awareness about the negative effects of child marriage, collecting relevant data, etc.

CUSTOMARY/RELIGIOUS/TRADITIONAL/TRIBAL FRAMEWORKS

Due to the country's diversified culture, the existence of a multitude of local customs and various conventions, the religious and traditional customs of the Indian people are regulated by different sets of personal laws related to family affairs.

The Muslim Personal Law, as applicable in India, works within the framework of Quran, Hadith and Sunnah. It consolidates and clarifies the provisions of Muslim law and related procedures regarding Muslim marriage, divorce, maintenance, custody of children and inheritance. Under Muslim personal law, a marriage may be solemnized as per Sunnah, between two Muslims, if the following conditions are fulfilled: (i) both parties to the marriage are not within a prohibited relationship; (ii) the man of 21 years and the woman of 18 years of age are both capable of giving consent for an ijab (proposal) and qubul (acceptance), and for the woman such consent can be given either personally or through a wali; (iii) two witnesses are present; and (iv) the man has offered a proper maher (dower) to the woman and such maher will be paid promptly or deferred.

Nikkah (marriage) is defined as an agreement between a man and a woman with mutual rights and obligations, and such marriage is Sunnet-emuakkadah (the Prophet's tradition) if both man and woman are capable of cohabitation and the man has the capacity to provide for maintenance and marital rights to the woman. At the same time, it is also important to note under this law that the wali (guardian) particularly and the legal authority can contract a marriage on behalf of a woman. However, under such circumstances, the Muslim woman (given in marriage by her father or other guardian before she attains the age of 15) is able to repudiate the marriage upon attaining the age of 18.

Similarly, the Hindu Marriage Act of 1955, which governs all Hindus, Buddhists, Jains and Sikhs, defines the minimum age of the bride and groom at marriage as 18 and 21, respectively. However, marriages solemnized before attaining these prescribed ages are neither void nor voidable – although the wife may seek divorce if the marriage was solemnized before her 15th birthday and if she repudiated the marriage after attaining the age of 15 and before turning 18.

The Indian Christian Marriage Act also doesn't bar marriages among minors. The Parsi Marriage and divorce Act, 1954 holds marriage below 18 years of age for girls and 21 for boys as invalid. However it fails to define if a marriage is void from the onset or needs to be invalidated through a legal process. It also doesn't mention issues of consent and punishment.

The solemnization of child marriage is punishable by imprisonment for upto two years or fines of upto one lakh rupees anyone who knowingly performs, conducts, directs or abets any child marriage; and parents, guardians, religious leaders, and others for knowingly promoting, failing to stop or participating in child marriages. Child Marriage Prohibition Officers (CMPO) are to be appointed in every state to prohibit child marriages in accordance to the Act, with a view ensure the protection of the victims as well as prosecution of the offenders.

PROVISIONS AND SANCTIONS

The CMRA of 1929, popularly known as the Sharda Act, as amended in 1978, already prohibited child marriages for girls under 18 and boys under 21. The PCMA of 2006 was enacted to overcome the constraints of the CMRA and to establish a comprehensive mechanism to address CEFM (5). The PCMA provides for punishment of all persons involved in child marriage, including the adult male who contracts child marriage as well as individuals who perform, conduct, promote, permit or abet child marriage, including parents, guardians and/or any other person(s), association(s) or organization(s). Such persons are punishable under section 11 with imprisonment up to two years and a fine of up to one lakh rupees, although no woman is punishable with imprisonment under the Act.

Payment or acceptance of a dowry “as consideration for the marriage” is also an offence criminalized under the Dowry Prohibition (DP) Act 1961. This Act, however, does not apply to gifts given by the bride’s parents (i.e. stridhan) 26.

Section 375 of the Indian Penal Code (IPC), relating to rape, states that “Sexual intercourse by a man with his own wife, the wife not being under 15 years of age, is not rape”. So in dealing with sexual assault, an offence of rape within marital bonds stands only if (a) the wife has not attained the age of 12 years old (in which case the offender shall be punished either with imprisonment from seven years which may extend to life, or with imprisonment up to 10 years and a fine as per the Indian Penal Code 45 of 1860, or if (b) the wife is between 12 and 15 years of age (in which case the offender shall be punished with imprisonment up to two years, a fine or both). Marital rape is therefore criminalized not as a general offence but as a special offence within the context of CEFM.

IPC 366 focuses on kidnapping, abducting or inducing woman to compel her marriage, etc. is a punishable offence under the Indian Penal Code. It makes the accused liable for imprisonment for 10 years. IPC 496 provides imprisonment up to 7 years for whoever marries with dishonest or fraudulent intention, knowing that the marriage is not legal.

All marriages must be registered in India, says Compulsory Registration of Marriages ACT 2006. Every Indian citizens needs to register his or her marriage within ten days of their marriage, irrespective of religion. The Central Government has made it mandatory for all States to make registration of marriages compulsory as the states are in a better position to know the social structure and local conditions of their respective states. However, non-registration of minor's marriage does not render them automatically void.

Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection) Act 2015 included Children at risk of Child Marriages in 'Children in Need of Care and Protection', if the marriage is solemnized by parents, guardians etc (LBSNAA 2017). The Act provides institutional support in forms of CWCs, Children homes and Shelter Homes for prevention of child marriages as well for the protection of children who oppose such marriages. CWCs hold power to intervene and counsel parents and elders.

The POCSO 2013, penalises penetrative sexual assault on a child by anyone related to the child, even through marriage. In the case *Independent Thought v. Union of India*²⁰, the SC issued a landmark judgement declaring sexual relations with a wife less than eighteen years of age with or without her consent as marital rape .

While India fully supports the efforts to prevent and eliminate CEFM and is committed to effective implementation of legal and administrative measures to tackle this issue nationally, there is also a strong understanding of the fact that the roots of the problem of CEFM lie in abject poverty, experienced by generations of people. Besides, CEFM is further perpetuated by social norms, lack of awareness and education. India encourages an holistic approach in order to address the complex mix of root causes and the environment in which such practices thrive.

In June 2014, India presented its consolidated third and fourth periodic report on the Convention on the Rights of the Child to the United Nations (6). The UN Committee on the Rights of Child recommended that India should ensure effective implementation of the 2006 PCMA, including by clarifying that the PCMA supersedes the different religious-based Personal Status Laws. The Committee also recommends that the State Party take the necessary measures to combat dowry, child marriage and devadasi, including by conducting awareness-raising programmes and campaigns with a view to changing attitudes, as well as counselling and reproductive education, to prevent and combat child marriages, which are harmful to the health and well-being of girls.

In July 2014, India presented its combined fourth and fifth periodic reports on the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women to the United Nations (7). The UN Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women recommended that India should: (i) speedily enact legislation to require compulsory registration of all marriages and to consider withdrawing its declaration regarding article 16(2) of the Convention; (ii) ensure that the PCMA is implemented without exception; (iii) automatically void all child marriages and ensure that the Protection of Children from Sexual Offences Act applies also to child brides; (iv) strengthen efforts to raise awareness about the prohibition of child marriage and the harmful effects of the practice on the health and education of girls; and (v) effectively investigate, prosecute and punish cases of forced and early marriage.

CHALLENGES AND LOOPHOLES WITH THE INDIAN LAWS REGARDING CHILD MARRIAGES

LEGAL BARRIERS Available data is indicative of the fact that there is a lack of prosecution, completion of trial and conviction of those involved in the execution and performance of child marriages. Legally it is not mandated that maintenance be paid to brides in the case of ab initio marriages which are voided and in the case of trafficking. This creates an unclear path as there is no precedence for the court to adopt, and this leaves the girl child vulnerable as there is a dearth of shelters and homes willing to take them in. PCMA vs Personal Laws-There is confusion over the importance of personal laws, which have their own standards regarding the age of marriage. These personal laws contradict the PCMA due to which there is ambiguity regarding the law. In 2017, the Supreme Court established that PCMA has primacy over personal laws but this clarification has not been disseminated effectively.

IMPROPER IMPLEMENTATION OF THE ACT Although the Act specifies that the rules pertaining to it must be drafted by the state itself and published in the State Gazette, many states have neglected in doing so. Among the states which have drafted the rules, there is also a failure to report the status of implementation of the same and data in this regard is simply not available. Many states have also failed to appoint a dedicated CPMO and simply assign the duties to an already existing administrative official, thereby decreasing their efficiency (as is the case with Andhra Pradesh and Telangana State).

PREVALENCE OF SOCIAL NORMS Entrenched social norms make it difficult for girls to exercise their agency in either stopping a child marriage from taking place, or leave a child marriage once it happens. They also face stigma in case they are set to undergo a child marriage and it is suddenly halted. CMPOs, police, government functionaries and other officials are all part of the same social fabric in which child marriages take

place, as a result of which they believe in the same traditions and norms which drive such marriages are stronger than the law. Implementation also becomes a hindrance for them because they face flak in the hands of those who are in support of child marriages in the form of violent retaliation.

POLICY FRAMEWORK

Policy makers formulated the following policies and schemes to address the needs and concerns of children in India. While most of the policies deal with the overall development of the child, there are some policies that are relevant in the context of the issue of child marriage. Following table presents brief summary on national policies relevant to child marriages.

TABLE 8 SUMMARY - NATIONAL POLICIES RELEVANT TO CHILD MARRIAGE AND EARLY CHILD-BEARING	
Policies	Relevance to child marriage/early child-bearing
National Population Policy, 2000	Aims to achieve 100 per cent registration of births, deaths, marriage and pregnancies by 2010
National Policy for Empowerment of Women, 2001	Conceived to introduce interventions and special programmes to encourage delaying the age of marriage so that by 2010 child marriage is eliminated
National AIDS Prevention and Control Policy, 2002	Aims to promote a better understanding of HIV infection and safer sex practices among the young
The National Youth Policy, 2003, and the more recent National Youth Policy, 2014	Emphasises the multiple needs of the young and identifies 11 priority areas and multipronged actions with specific strategies to address the needs of adolescents in a holistic manner
National Plan of Action for Children, 2005	Aims to achieve 100 per cent registration of births, deaths, marriages and pregnancies by 2010, elimination of child marriages by 2010, and stopping the sale of children and all forms of child trafficking, including for marriage
India's Eleventh and Twelfth Five-Year Plans	The Eleventh Five-Year Plan included a focus on the 'compulsory registration of marriages and verification of age at the time of marriage', and the Twelfth proposed a Girl Child Specific District Plan of Action towards 'advancing rights of the Girl Child with measurable outcomes on increased CSR [child sex ratio] and age at marriage', particularly for districts with a low CSR and a high incidence of child marriage (MWCD 2013: 3).

Policies	Relevance to child marriage/early child-bearing
Draft National Strategy Document on the Prevention of Child Marriage (2013)	Identifies strategic areas of intervention, including law enforcement, access to quality education and other opportunities, changing mind-sets and social norms, the empowerment of adolescents, knowledge and data management and the development of monitorable indicators. The draft has yet to be finalised (MWCD 2013: 3).
BetiBachao, BetiPadhao scheme (2015)	Aims to improve the Child Sex Ratio in 100 Gender Critical Districts (MWCD 2014), the imbalance of which exacerbates the buying of young brides in some states (HAQ: Centre for Child Rights 2006). It also aims to address the 'patriarchal mind-set' to ensure gender equality for girls, as well as to increase access to education and improve the participation of girls at 'all levels of social, economic and political leadership' (MWCD 2014: 2).
Policy for Skill Development and Entrepreneurship (2015)	Identifies increasing the participation of women in the labour force as key to improving the economic growth of the country. Includes provisions regarding the delivery of skills training to out-of-school children, adolescent girls, housewives and rural young people (Tandon forthcoming).
Other laws that include provisions relating to child marriage and/or to adolescent sexual and reproductive health include Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Act (JJ Act) of 2000 and its subsequent Amendment Act of 2006; the Indian Penal Code (and Amendment of 2013); the Protection of Women from Domestic Violence Act, 2005; the Medical Termination of Pregnancy Act, 1971 (and Amendment of 2002); the Protection of Children from Sexual Abuse Act, 2013; the National Commission for Women Act, 1990; the Immoral Traffic (Prevention) Act, 1956 (ITPA); and the Commission for Protection of Child Rights Act, 2005.	

National Strategy Document on Prevention of Child Marriage 2013 emphasise son bringing about a change in mind-sets and social norms revolving around child marriage. It lays stress on ensuring linkages with ICPS structure and other statutory bodies to ensure detection and redressal of child marriage cases in a timely manner. Moreover, it states that married children should have non-discriminatory and equal access to health and education.

National Population Policy 2000 recommends implementation of programmes to encourage delayed marriage (after 20 not before 18) and increase child bearing age especially in the rural areas. One of the themes is – “Empowering Women for Improved Health and Nutrition” and makes a special mention on adolescents and addressing their special requirements. The policy also envisions 100% registration of marriages.

National policy for empowerment of women 2001 emphasizes on introducing intervention and special programs to impact delaying of marriage by 2010 so that it is eliminated.

The National Youth Policy 2003 aims at sensitizing adolescents on the appropriate age for marriage. The policy commits to the all-round development of all youth in the country in the age group of 13 to 35 years. The policy also emphasises on promoting good health and safe environment free of diseases. It identifies key areas of concern such as employment and family welfare.

National Plan of Action for Children 2013 deals with reducing the prevalence of child marriage by 15% by 2021, overall child protection, tracking, rescuing rehabilitation of out of school children including married children. Moreover, the State will ensure all children have equal opportunity and that no custom, traditional, cultural or religious practice is allowed to violate or restrict or prevent children from enjoying their rights.

Integrated Child Protection Scheme ICPS was launched by the National Ministry of Women and Child Development in 2009 to strengthen institution and non-institutional structures to protect children from victimization. ICPS integrates all existing child protection schemes of the Ministry under one window and proposes an increased allocation for child protection programmes in the Union Budget. The rationale is to impart institutional legitimacy to services as well build capacity and database in order to build a protection mechanism for children at community, family and individual level. There by building a robust inter-sectoral response network. ICPS focuses its activities on Children in need of care and protection; Children in conflict with law; who are alleged to have committed an offence; Children in contact with law; who have come into contact

with the law as a victim, witness or under any other circumstance; Any other vulnerable child - children of migrant families, children living on the street.

TABLE 9 ILLUSTRATION OF THE DESIGN OF ICPS AND THE COLLABORATIVE NETWORK OF BODIES THAT IT WORKS WITH²¹.

STATE INITIATIVES TO PREVENT CHILD MARRIAGES

In the state of erstwhile Andhra Pradesh, a Government Order was issued outlining “The Andhra Pradesh Prohibition of Child Marriage Rules” on the 19th of March, 2012. The GO directed that the District Collector would be the District Child Marriage Prohibition Officer (CMPO), and continued to appoint different civil servants as directed by the Act until the village level. It also goes into details of the duties and powers of the CMPO, and specifies that disciplinary action will be taken against them in case of dereliction of duties. The GO further outlines the composition of a ‘Village Child Marriage Prohibition and Monitoring Committee’ comprising of the Gram Panchayat Sarpanch, Panchayat Secretary, Village Administrative Officer of the Revenue Department, a local school teacher, members of self-help group/Gram Samakhya, elected Panchayat women members, ANM, NGO functioning in the area, member from Youth Organisation (preferably woman), Village Officers, ASHA and Anganwadi workers. It directs the CPMOs and all concerned officials to take all the necessary steps to prevent the mass solemnization of child marriages during special occasions such as Akshaya Tiritiya, as previously directed by the PCMA, 2006 as well.

The following schemes and programmes are aimed at reducing child marriages and protecting victims of child marriage in Andhra Pradesh.

GIRL CHILD PROTECTION SCHEME Andhra Pradesh is aimed at preventing gender discrimination by empowering and protecting rights of girl children through direct investment from the State Government. It provides a number of incentives to promote the empowerment of the girl child²².

CONDITIONAL CASH TRANSFERS Both the governments of Andhra Pradesh and Telangana State, run conditional cash transfer schemes which award the bride or the family of the bride a certain lump sum at the time of her marriage, provided the bride is over the age of eighteen years at the time of her wedding. The aim of these schemes, however, is to change the societal outlook that a female child and her marriage are a burden to the family. While the schemes mandate that the girl child is above the legal age of marriage, they do not address the multi-dimensional nature of child marriage. They succeed in bringing about a change in action, but do not address the much required attitudinal change in the Indian society, in this regard.

Bangaru Thalli is a welfare scheme for girls launched by Government of Andhra Pradesh. The scheme supports the family of a girl from her birth till her graduation. All the Below Poverty Line white card holders are eligible for the scheme.

MAHILA POLICE VOLUNTEERS The central government has issued guidelines for appointing 'Mahila Police Volunteers' (MPV), an honorary position filled by empowered women, who will serve as a bridge between the police and those women subject to domestic violence, sexual abuse, sexual harassment and child marriages, among other things. The cost of this undertaking will be borne by the centre: state in the ratio 60:40 and the central funding will come out of the Nirbhaya Fund, Ministry of Women and Child Development. As of 7th July, the state of Andhra Pradesh issued a notification regarding the recruitment of women for this purpose.

BETI BACHAO, BETI PADHAO This scheme was very recently operationalized for multi-sectoral action in the following districts – Kadapa, Nellore, Anantapur, Chittoor, Prakasam, Krishna, Kurnool, Nellore, and Guntur. This means that in these districts, the central government will undertake measures to ensure protection and survival of the girl child, as well as education and participation. Although this directly does not address the issue of child marriage, ensuring the education and empowerment of the girl child will result in tackling the problem to a certain extent. The mandate of the scheme also explicitly states "Prevention of Early/ Child Marriage may be done aggressively in order to highlight the importance of allowing girls to complete their school education and preferably opt for higher education/ career/ skill building/vocational education etc".

COPENHAGEN CONSENSUS (FOR DETAILED REPORT, SEE APPENDIX)

In association with Tata Trust, Copenhagen Consensus²³ has done a research on cost benefit analysis of the important interventions that could help in addressing the child marriages in Andhra Pradesh. It argues that the most effective policy interventions to reduce child marriage are based on the economic empowerment of the girl child through secondary education and vocational training, qualifying her for employment and the creation of a sustainable income stream. The assumption is building economic value for women creating behaviour change with a multiplier effect.

Copenhagen Consensus has analysed four policy interventions – bicycle transfers, conditional cash payments for secondary school attendance, the construction and maintenance of girls' toilets in secondary schools and an 18-month vocational training programs – and concluded that significantly positive Benefit-Cost Ratios (BCRs) with benefits coming from both economic value derived from future employment and income opportunities, and social value resulting from a reduction in domestic violence, improvement in maternal and child health and lower rates of fertility.

To zero down the problem, numerous schemes have been launched – mostly in the last 10-15 years – with a focus on girls but some also targeted at boys and families at

the central and state levels (as discussed in the earlier section). The impact of the programs has not been evaluated consistently and data from various sources suggests, predictably, that success has been a function of local political support, community advocacy and underlying social norms. Categorised by the drivers of change, following programs (most of them are common across the states), have emphasised several approaches to address child marriages are –

- i. Conditional transfer programs directly incentivizing delayed marriage. including cash transfers and education subsidies.
- ii. Programs emphasizing safe, affordable and quality secondary education.
- iii. Empowerment programs for women, girls, men and boys.
- iv. Agenda building, public awareness and advocacy efforts.
- v. Legal measures and enforcement of existing laws.

Most schemes have emphasized conditional cash transfers, to directly incentivize families to delay marriage for girls beyond the legal age of 18, and transfers related to education for girls, where families are provided with an education stipend or supplement to cover other ancillary or household costs including transportation.

Copenhagen Consensus argues²⁴ that the most effective policy interventions to reduce child marriage are based on the economic empowerment of the girl child, through secondary education and vocational training that qualifies her for employment, creating the possibility for her to develop a sustainable income stream. Building economic value for women creates behavior changes with a multiplier effect. First, for women that access these opportunities leading to a change in their lives, and second, through the creation of role models that influence behavior at a broader social level.

An analysis of the costs and benefits of each intervention are based on determining eligibility from underlying data included in government statistics. The quantitative impact of the interventions is drawn from academic literature assessing the effect of similar policies implemented either in India or in other countries with a high incidence of child marriage. The costs including the total cost of the intervention and the opportunity cost of being at school or in a training program are calculated for the baseline cohort of eligible girls. Benefits include both the economic benefits in terms of the present value of a long-term income stream and the social and welfare benefits that come from lower levels of fertility and domestic violence, an improvement in children's health and a decline in maternal mortality.

Each of the interventions analyzed independently yield significantly positive BCRs, discounted at 3%, 5% and 8%. Not surprisingly, the direct subsidy for secondary school yields a lower BCR relative to the bicycle transfer and the provision of girls' toilets intervention, both of which have the cost of the education subsidy embedded within their cost structure. The higher BCRs for bicycle transfers are also reflective of the one-time and very low cost of providing a bicycle. For toilet construction, the costs are substantially higher but are also front-loaded at the beginning of the four-year life span of the intervention, with benefits accruing over multiple years.

Conceptually, the sizable increase in BCRs when either transportation or sanitation facilities are added to the underlying education subsidy reinforces the value of these indirect interventions on the demand side for secondary school enrolment and highlights their incremental value. The vocational training intervention also produces positive results, but micro-level estimates of training costs will need to be included prior to implementation from a state government perspective. Ultimately, the choice of intervention is not simply a function of the BCR as in practical terms it will be dependent on the feasibility of implementation, and the ability to scale across the state²⁵.

SECTION FIVE

CONSEQUENCES OF EARLY MARRIAGE AND ASPIRATIONS ABOUT FUTURE

(OBJECTIVE 3)

Aspirations can relate to many aspects of life. Caroline Sarojini Hart argues that aspirations are future-oriented, driven by conscious and unconscious motivations and they are indicative of an individual or group's commitments towards a particular trajectory or end point²⁶. An individual might set their aspirations in relation to what they know they can achieve or they might set aspirations more ambitiously to strive for ways of being and doing they are not sure of realizing. Some individuals might aspire in a non-specified way in terms of wanting "a better life," whereas others might strive for specific transformative social change, such as a change in the law²⁷.

This study of 55 child brides in the age group of 15 to 24 who got married before 18 years of age, and were interviewed in Visakhapatnam (n.17), Krishna (n.19) and Kurnool (n.19), found that every child bride (100 %) reported having aspirations, however, they had never shared with anyone else. It is mainly because they don't have voice or no one in the family listen to their views and aspirations. It appears that, most of the time they are afraid to tell other people about their aspirations. Child brides interviewed revealed aspirations therefore only give a partial view of an individual's "aspiration set". Unshared, aspirations may also form important elements of an individual's aspiration set. Furthermore, aspirations are shaped and constrained by many factors but this is not necessarily readily apparent.

Study tried to elicit the aspirations of child brides through probing on their viewpoints/ aspirations about their education, family, children and so on. Besides, attempt has been made to document the health, psychological and social consequences of early marriages.

PROFILE OF THE CHILD BRIDES

Of the 55 child brides interviewed, 18% have married in the age between 11 and 14 years. Larger majority (82%) got married between 15 and 18 years of age (Fig 10).

Several reports says that early marriage of girl leads to early pregnancy and early pregnancy results in several sever health complications that may lead to infant and maternal mortality. In this context, the assumption could be those girls who got married before 14 years of age may have larger risk factors than those who got married between 15 and 18 years of age.

Data in fig 11 indicates the mean age of marriages for different religious groups. Hindus have lower mean age of marriage. By and large Muslims and Christians have a higher mean age of marriage. However given that number of respondents is extremely high for Hindu respondents when compared to Christians and Muslims this may not be a very accurate conclusion. Overall however the mean age of marriage remains 15.82 which is lower than the legal age of 18.

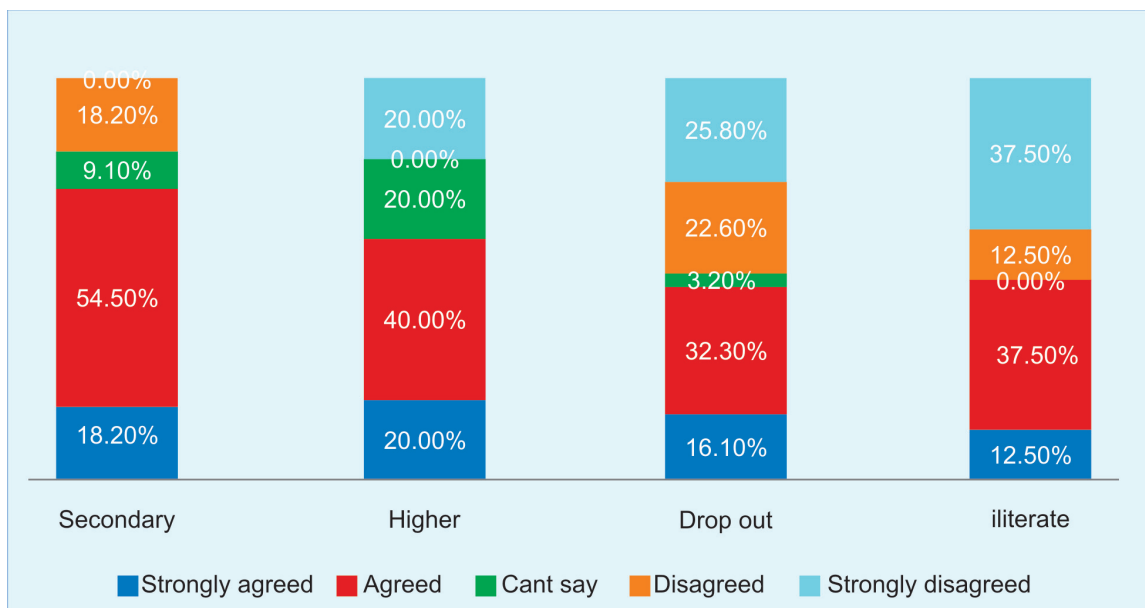
On an average the mean age for marriage for SCs, STs and OBCs remains around 17 years. However, the mean age for BCs is lower of around 15, but then again this group had the largest number of respondents so the data could be biased against them (Fig 12)

Data in fig 13 shows girls who have dropped out of school, post marriage their main economic activity remains household work. About 65% of the girls who had dropped out of education worked as household help and about 16% of the same were engaged in agriculture. About 37.5% of the illiterates were engaged as agriculture laborers and the same percentage were employed as non-agricultural laborers. Among those with secondary education, 55% of the girls were housewives and 27% were agricultural labors. About 40% of those who completed higher education were involved in housework.

In the Fig 14, it can be concluded that about 54% of secondary school educated child brides agreed to the fact that they have a say on income and expenditure and 18% of the same strongly agreed to having a say in family maintenance. Around 40% of those with higher education agreed to having a say in family income and expenditure.

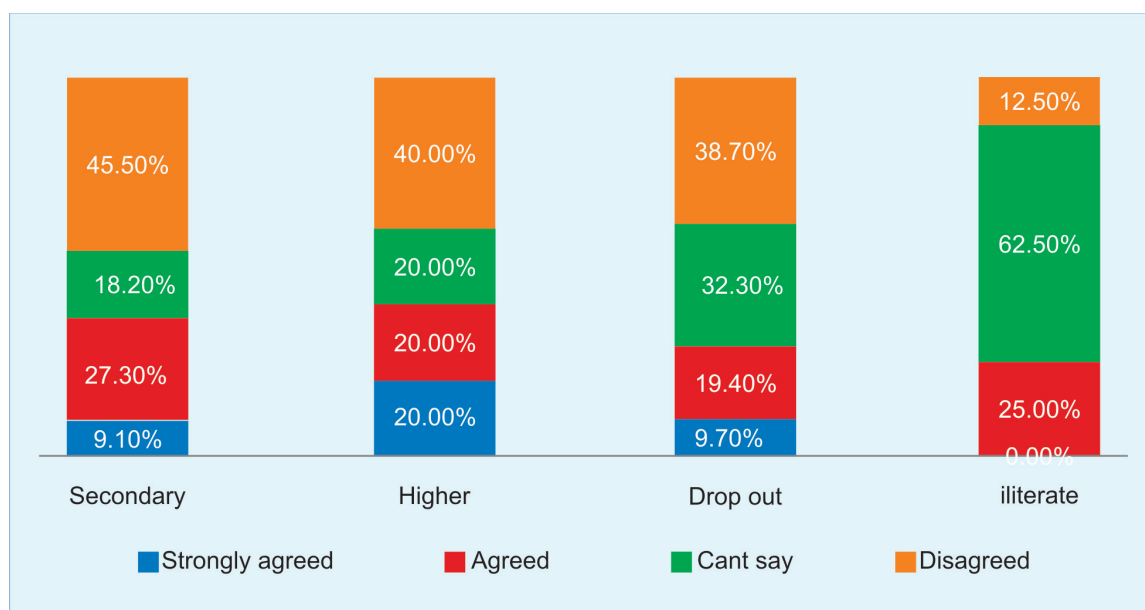
Only 32% of the young dropout girls interviewed agreed to having a say in family maintenance, 25.8% and 22% of the same group strongly disagreed and disagreed respectively to having some sort of a voice in matters of income and expenditure. Thus it could be assumed that educated young girls commanded greater respect and say in family matter as compared to those who were less educated.

FIG 14 EDUCATION AT THE TIME OF MARRIAGE AND HAVING A SAY OVER FAMILY MAINTENANCE, INCLUDING ON INCOME AND EXPENDITURE CROSSTABLATION



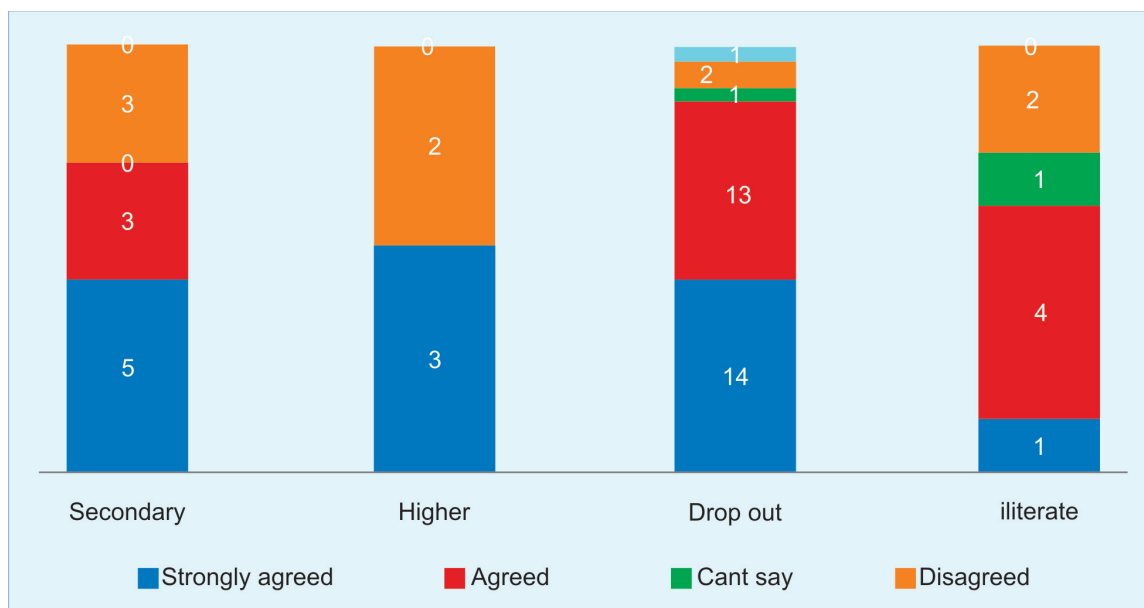
About 45% of the child brides who had completed secondary education at the time of marriage, strongly disagreed to having faced abuse in the family but 27.30% agreed to abuse from the family. Around 39% and 32% of those women who had dropped out of the education at the time of marriage strongly disagreed and disagreed respectively to having faced abuse within the family, whereas 19.4% of the same group agree to have experienced abuse within the family (Fig 15).

FIG 15 EDUCATION AT THE TIME OF MARRIAGE/ OFTEN EXPERIENCED ABUSE WITHIN THE FAMILY (CROSSTABLATION)



Among those child brides who were illiterates at the time of marriage 62.5% disagreed to having faced abuse but 25% agreed to having faced abuse within the family. Of the 55 respondents from all groups of education only 9% strongly agreed to any form of abuse within the family. The child brides in the district surveyed seemed to have fewer complains of abuse by family member (Fig 16).

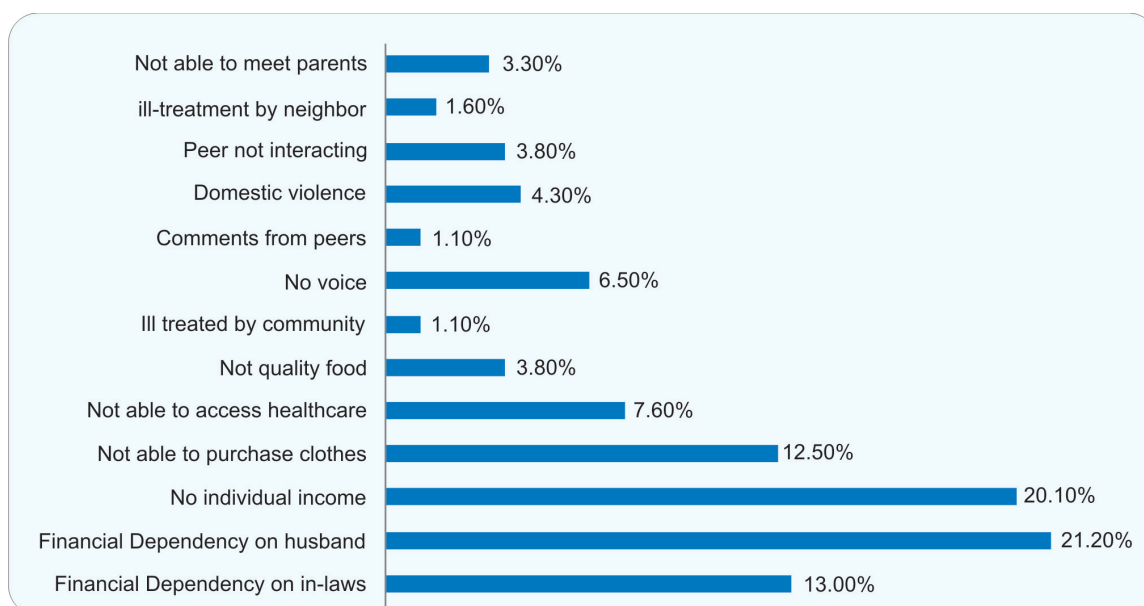
FIG: 16 EDUCATION AT THE TIME OF MARRIAGE/UNPREPARED FOR SEXUAL LIFE AND EARLY PREGNANCY CROSSTABULATION (%)



PROBLEMS OF CHILD BRIDES

Out the total respondents across all levels of education, 41.80% of the child brides strongly agreed to being unprepared for sexual life and early pregnancy and 40% of them agreed to the same sentiment. Among the girl who were dropouts at the time of marriage 45% and 42% strongly agreed and agreed respectively to having been unprepared for sexual life and early pregnancy. Even among secondary school and higher educated 45.5% and 60% respectively strongly agreed to being unprepared to deal with rigors of childbirth and sexual life. Only 27% of those with secondary disagreed to having being unprepared. Hence it can be assessed that child brides despite some form of education, are unprepared to deal with the complications of early marriage

FIG 17 KEY PROBLEMS FACED BY CHILD BRIDES



Above fig 17 presents an analysis of the key problems being faced by Child brides. 21.2% of the brides expressed problems due to financial dependency on husband, followed by 20% of them facing problems due to lack of individual income. About 13% of the respondents expressed troubles with financial dependency on in-laws, closely followed by 12% having concerns over not be able to purchase clothes. These problems stem from poor financial status of the child brides owing to lack of education and endemic poverty of these families. 7.6% of the respondents expressed concerns over lack of health care and absence of quality food was felt by a few of them. A small proportion also expressed that their voice is not heard. Being subjected to domestic violence, isolation from peers and unable to meet their parents were also some concerns expressed by these child brides.

It is to be noted that, child brides are not able to say much about the violence and abuse. This is mainly because, according to majority of the child brides, abuse is the most common feature within the family and they used to it. In few cases, they are reluctant to discuss about the violence either in the family or in the society. Few said that they are not supposed to talk about such issues with outsiders.

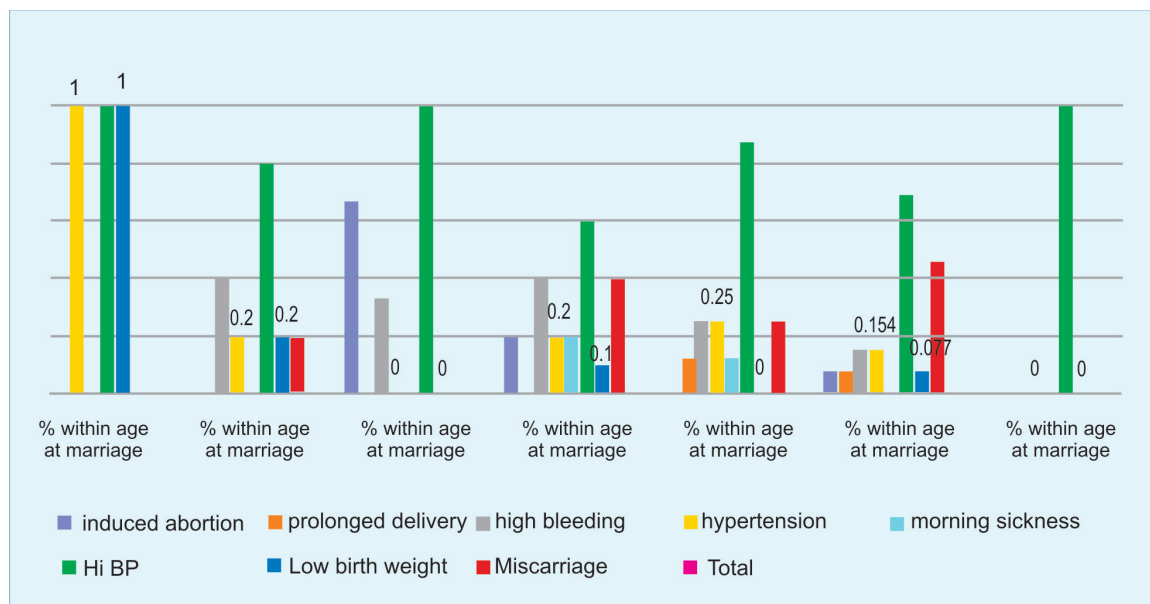
TABLE 9 AGE AND PREGNANCY RELATED COMPLICATIONS.

	Had pregnancy related complications	N	Mean
Age at marriage	Yes	41	15.5122
	No	14	16.71429

Data in table 9 says that the child brides, with the lower mean age of 15.5 had pregnancy related complications. The group with no pregnancy related complications is comprised with a higher mean of 16.7. Hence, we can conclude that pregnancy complication are much higher in women married early. 74% of the child brides interviewed had faced pregnancy related complication.

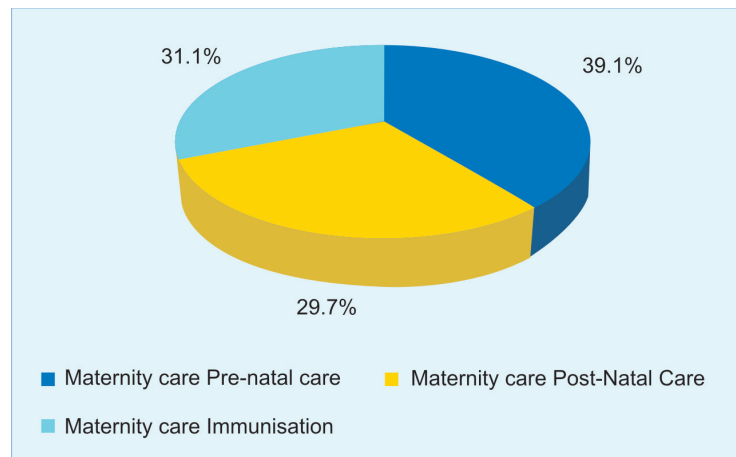
All Child Brides faced multiple problems during childbirth. However those married at 18 , faced the least number of problems when compared to other age groups. Early marriage thus result in a host of complications like high bleeding, hypertension, prolonged delivery and even miscarriage, given the unpreparedness of a young girl to give birth (Fig 18).

FIG 18 AGE AT MARRIAGE/CHILDBIRTH PROBLEMS (CROSSTABULATION)



Among the child brides interviewed 39% received pre-natal care, even fewer about 29% received post-natal care. Only 43% accessed immunization services. This points to the deficits that girls below 18, face in accessing maternal health benefits. Since most maternal health programs are

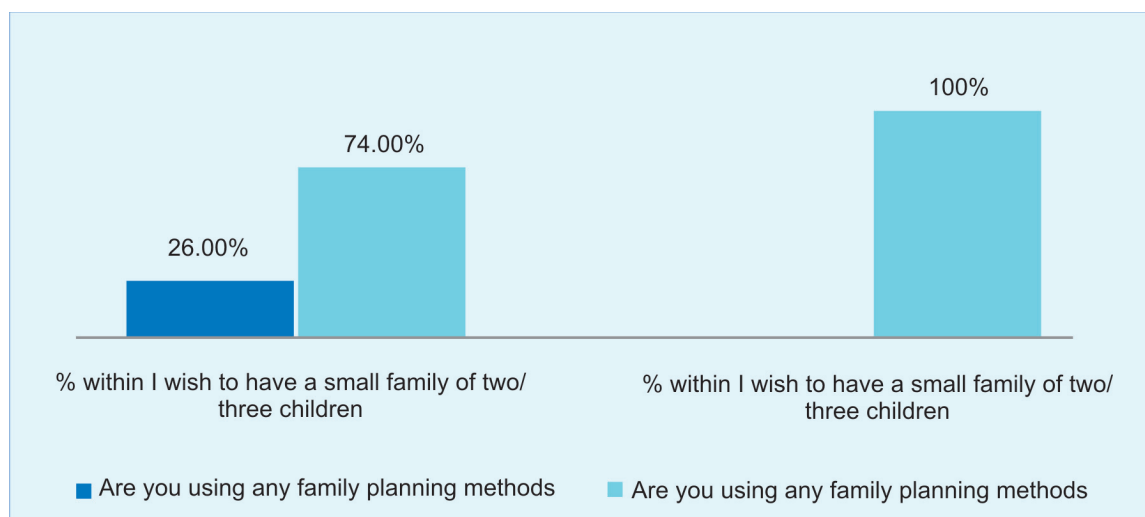
FIG 19 PERCENTAGE RECEIVING MATERNITY CARE



designed for girls above 18 years of age, child brides are excluded from this service (Fig 19).

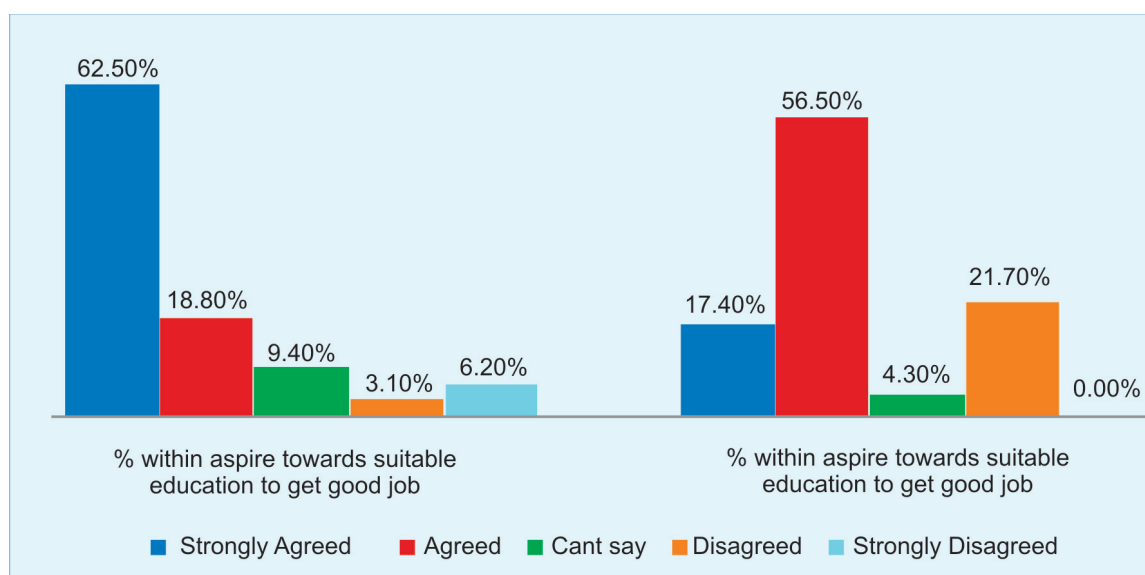
ASPIRATIONS

FIG 20 WISH TO HAVE A SMALL FAMILY OF TWO OR THREE CHILDREN/USING ANY FAMILY PLANNING METHODS CROSSTABULATION



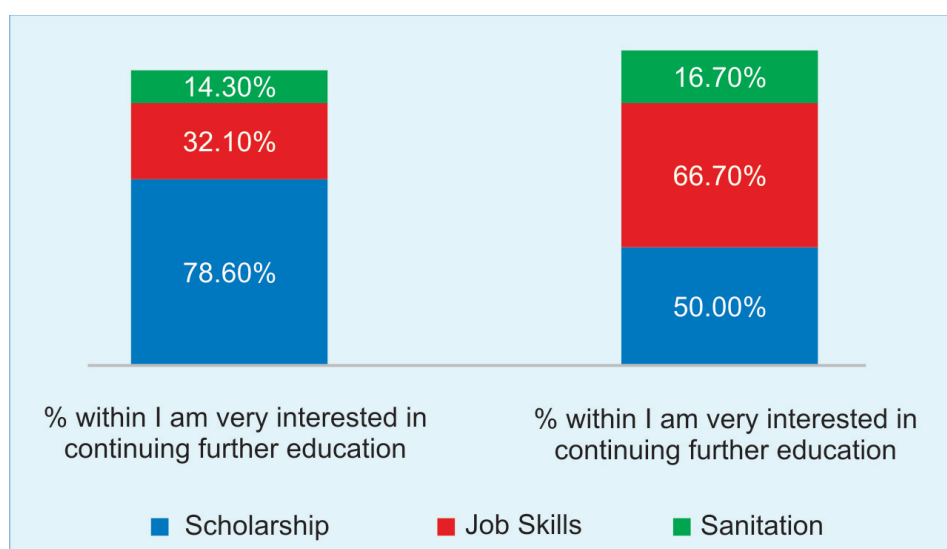
From the fig 20 above, it is evident that 74% of the child brides interviewed who wish to have a small family do not using any family planning methods. Only 26% of those aspiring for a small family are using family planning method. This reflects the lack of awareness as well as the societal norms prevalent, hindering young girls from making choices. In most of the cases, it was told that spacing the family is not in her control and husband and mother in law is taking decisions.

FIG 21 ASPIRE TOWARDS SUITABLE EDUCATION VS. ECONOMIC INDEPENDENCE



From the data presented in Fig 21 it is evident, that 62.5% of the child brides who wished for financial independence also aspired for good education to get a job. Even from those who didn't aspire for higher education 56.5% agreed to the importance and desire of being economical independent. Most of them have told that financial independence facilitate them in providing better nutrition to their children and educate them properly. In other words, financial independence gives chance to mould their families in better way.

FIG 22 INTERESTED IN CONTINUING FURTHER EDUCATION VS EDUCATIONAL SUPPORT FROM GOVT.

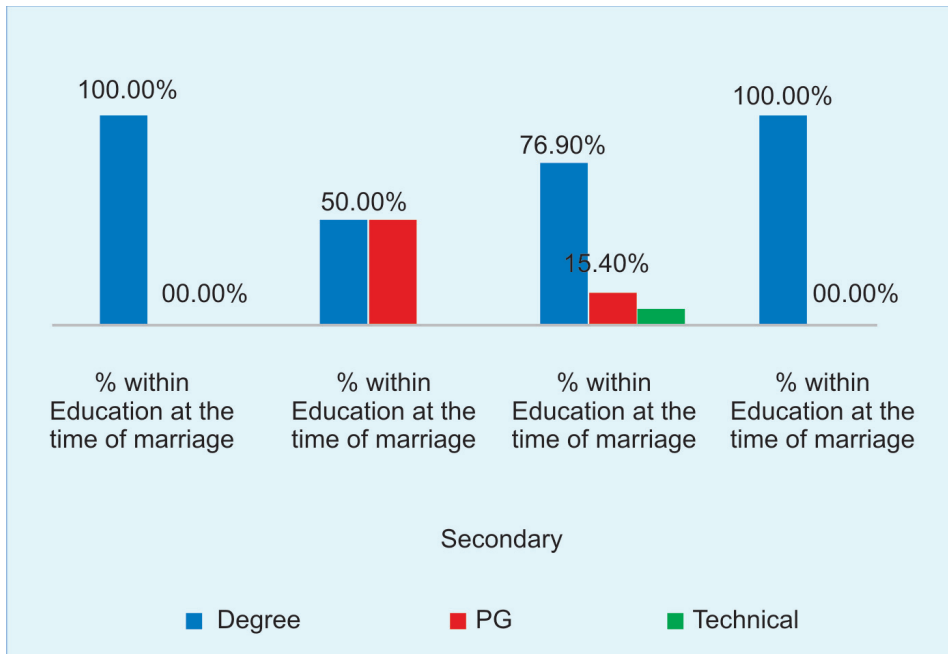


Data in fig 22 illustrates of those child brides interested in pursuing further education 78.6% require scholarship from the government. This reflects that often these girls are forced to discontinue their education owing to their financial situation. Within the group of respondents who were not interested in pursuing further education, 66.7% demand vocational training to enhance their livelihood options. However, a very miniscule portion of the girls were not in favour of pursuing higher education.

From the fig 23, it is evident that for all groups secondary school, higher education, dropouts and illiterates getting a degree is of prime concern. These trends underline the need for degree education to child brides is important factor.

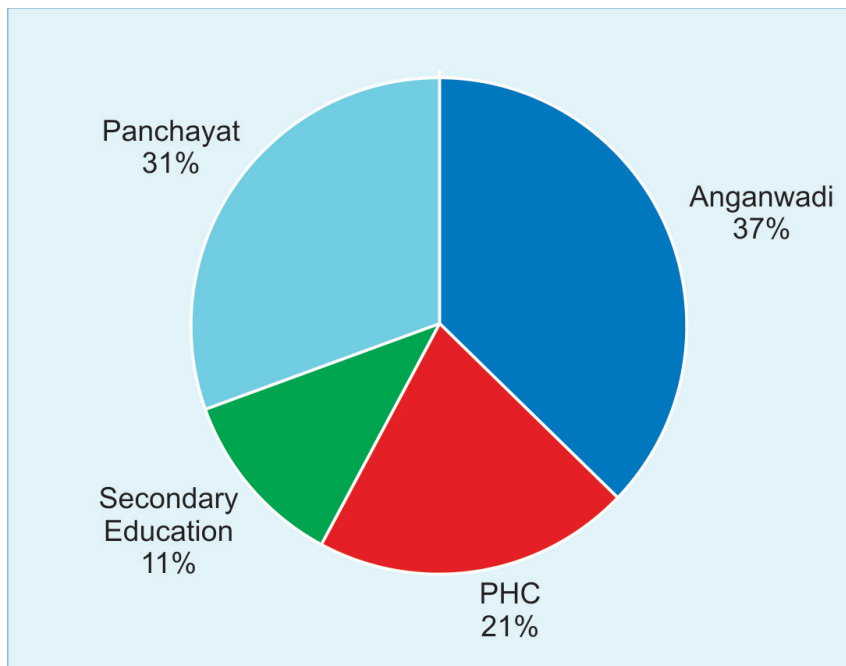
In other words, even if girl child got married early and discontinued her education, it is essential to sensitize the families, particularly grooms family on the importance of higher education to girls.

FIG 23 EDUCATION AT THE TIME OF MARRIAGE AND ASPIRATION (CROSSTABULATION)



From the pie-chart, it is evident that Anganwadi services are the used and desired by 37% of the Child Brides interviewed. Most of this category child brides are either pregnant and or having infants. Though few don't have children or pregnancy, seeking Anganwadi support to come out from anaemia and malnutrition (Fig 24).

FIG 24 PERCENTAGE OF DEMAND FOR SERVICES



Besides, quite a few talked about SABLA/ Adolescent girls scheme through which girls belong to BPL families and school drop-outs are selected and attached to the local Anganwadi Centres for six-monthly stints of learning and training activities. So that they can increase self-confidence, boost moral and give dignity. Also it will help to avoid early marriages.

The demand to access Panchayat services is also 31%. This category is mainly concern about the role of GPs in preventing child marriages. About 21% of the respondents wish to access a Primary Health Centre. Most of this category child brides are having pre and post pregnancy related health complications. About 11% feel the need for access to secondary education and continue to complete higher education that helps in fetching income to maintain their families.

A small percentage also wished to access GHMC and police services. Specifically demanding police service to address family violence. The trend suggests that Anganwadi centres are reaching out to these young girls and have are far more reliable than other government services.

About 58% of the Child Brides under study requested for scholarships to continue further education. About 30% requested for Job-Oriented Training and a small percentage of 11% also demanded sanitation facilities in school. A few of the girls requested for transport facilities, better faculty and books. This reflects the inadequacy of the services at educational machinery in the village (Fig 25).

FIG 25 PERCENTAGE DEMAND FOR EDUCATIONAL SERVICES

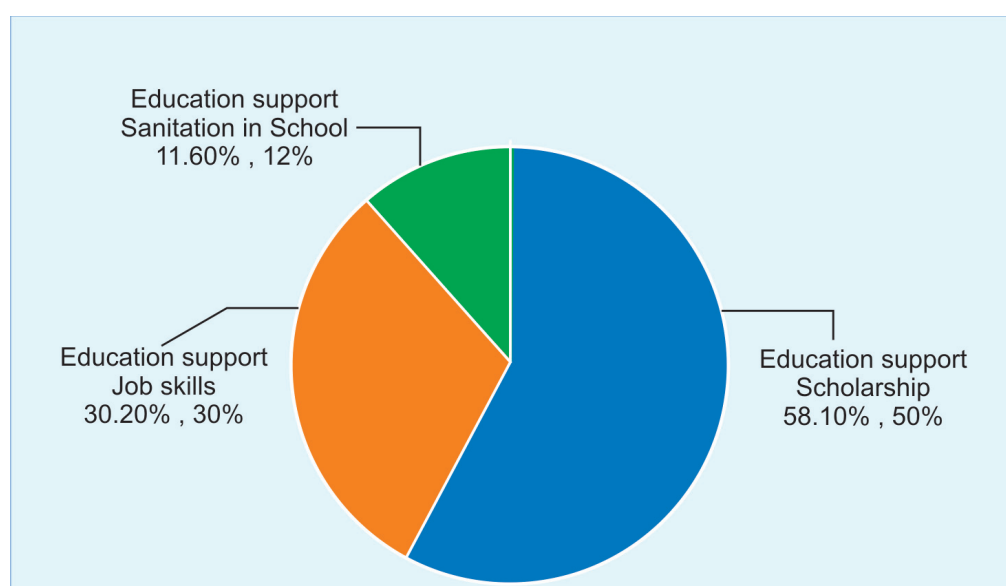
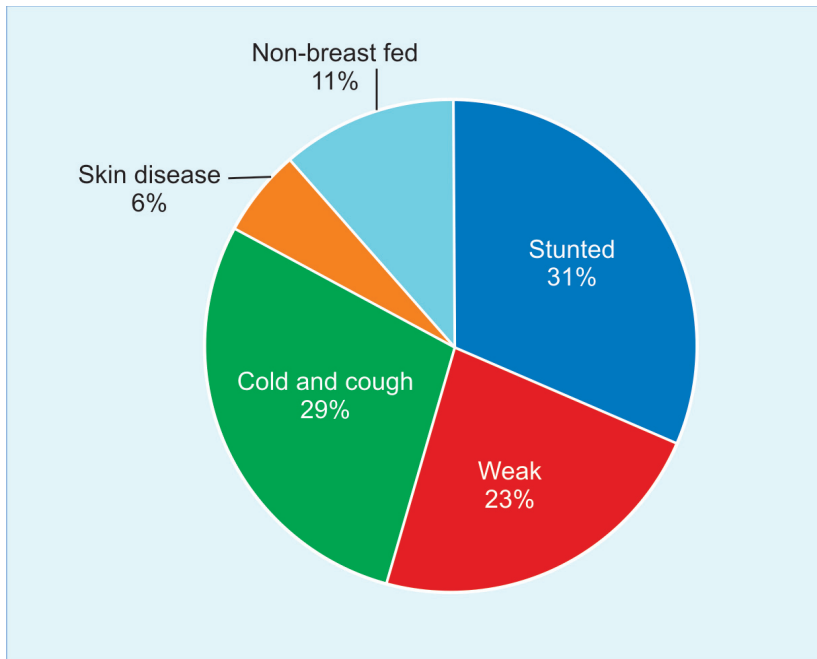


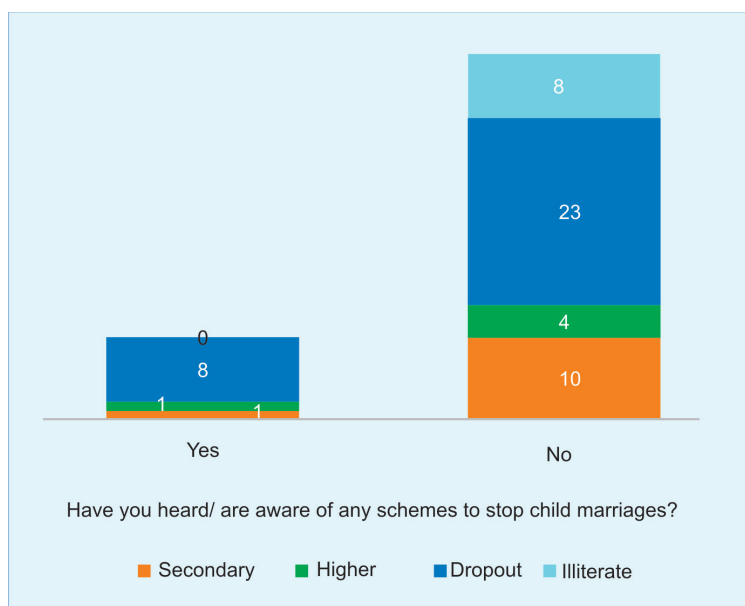
FIG: 26 HEALTH PROBLEMS IN INFANTS OF CHILD BRIDES



The data in Fig 26 illustrates health problems encountered by children born to adolescent mothers who are unprepared to take rigors of childbirth. About 31% infants reported to have low birth weight and are stunted. About 29% of infants are having cold and cough too frequently. Child Brides are often physically weak and hence they bear weak children. 23% of the children born are reported to be malnourished. 11% of the infant are not breast fed.

The data in fig 27 narrates the impact of educational attainment on awareness of schemes to prevent child marriage.

FIG 27 EDUCATION AND AWARENESS OF SCHEMES



In general, awareness remains low, for about 81.8% child brides had no idea about child protection schemes, such as legal services, child marriage prevention acts, etc.

Only 18% from all the groups were aware of schemes regarding child marriages. Among the 31 dropouts interviewed, 74% of them were unaware of schemes. 10 out of 11 with secondary education and 4 out of 5 with higher education claimed to have no idea of schemes regarding prohibition of child marriage.

REFLECTIONS OF CHILD BRIDES

To understand more about the challenges and aspirations, the study had used quite a few probing questions during the one-to-one interviews with child brides. The core reflections are presented hereunder:

- ❑ Many of them feel that though they did not want to have a child marriage they are currently happy as their husband/ in-laws take care of them well.
- ❑ Some of them are not happy as they feel a lot of stress and ill treatment by their husband/in-laws.
- ❑ Most child brides say that their opinion is not important or not taken into consideration.
- ❑ A few of them state that their opinion is given importance and taken into consideration by their husband.
- ❑ Conflicting opinions were observed as even though husbands and in-laws are supportive of further education, girls have not enrolled for reasons like lack of interest or embarrassed to go back to school after marriage.
- ❑ While most of the young brides felt they were confident, a few felt that early marriage has deprived them of education and income opportunities and thus leading to lower self-respect and confidence.
- ❑ A significant portion of the respondents had faced some sort of verbal and physical abuse by their in-laws and husbands.
- ❑ Most of the respondents stated that violence against women is rampant in the community and feel that it is a regular happening in society even if it is wrong.
- ❑ Most of the respondents discontinued their education after they got married because of either pressure from in-laws, husband, parents or burden of children. Some also felt ashamed of going to school post-marriage.

- ❑ Most of them want to study but feel that their in-laws and husband will not agree
- ❑ Some feel that there is freedom to study but they cannot pursue education as they have to take care of children.
- ❑ Some of them lost interest in studies after marriage with increased responsibilities at home to take care of husband, in-laws and children.
- ❑ Most respondents would have liked to study and pursue some career like teacher, doctor or nurse.
- ❑ While those respondents staying with their in-laws reported to have little or no control over their finances, some staying alone reported to have full financial control.
- ❑ In some instances, they are given a certain amount every month and in case they need to buy anything beyond the basic necessities they have to seek the permission of in-laws and husband.
- ❑ Many of them feel that as the family does not treat them properly, it has led to lower self-confidence and in return feel they cannot maintain their self-respect.
- ❑ Some of them are too scared to speak up for self.
- ❑ Some of them feel that their husband takes care of them well so feel that they can maintain their self-respect.
- ❑ Most respondents faced some sort of restrictions on leaving the house as per their will. They were accountable to their in-laws and husbands when visiting friends or parents and have time restrictions.
- ❑ Most of the respondents felt that their parents didn't benefit monetarily from the marriage. Most of them instead spent a lot for the wedding and took loans for the same.
- ❑ Most respondents who have been married in their home town/ village state that they do not experience loneliness.
- ❑ Some of them stated that they experience loneliness as they do not feel comfortable in sharing their feelings and thoughts with their husband/in-laws family.
- ❑ All of the respondents feel that their responsibilities have increased in terms of both work and relationships. Prior to this they were studying or not working in their maternal home.

- ❑ Almost all respondents believe that they should not be married before 18 as they are unprepared for responsibilities and challenges that come with marriage.
- ❑ All the respondents believe in being financially independent.
- ❑ All respondents strongly agree to educating their children at least up to graduation.

VOICES OF CHILD BRIDES

As a part of the work, this study has done more in-depth interviews with six child brides and their voices and expressions are as follows -

MAHALAKSHMI (KRISHNA DISTRICT, MOVVA MANDAL)

At the age of 17, Mahalakshmi comes to talk to me with a 1-year old child in her arms. Over the course of our conversation, I learn that the child is the apple of her eye as she was born after much difficulty and three painful mis-carriages – all within the span of the last 3 years (since her marriage at age 14). The conditions under which she had to discontinue her education were unfortunate, as both she and her brother had to forego their schooling after the sudden demise of her father. They needed to go to work in the field and supplement the dwindling family income. Soon after this, her mother got remarried as a means of alleviating their burden, to a man whose first wife was still alive. This led to the creation of more problems, fights and eventually culminated in her requiring to be married off. Upon probing as to whether this would have differed had the circumstances been better, or her parents had been better off, she admits *“No, because this is the way of my caste. People prefer to get their daughters married at a really early age rather than keep unmarried girls at home.”*

Since the time her marriage was settled, Mahalakshmi has been fighting every step of the way. Once the arrangements had been made and she knew there would soon be no other choice than to get married, she alerted the authorities regarding her age and the intentions of her parents. This resulted in her being taken to a rehabilitation home (against her will) and her mother, in-laws, fiancé and other relatives being taken into police custody. She recalls with horror, what she calls the worst three months of her life. She was severely homesick for her family, and her mother and other relatives (including fiancé) faced physical abuse in the hands of the police. In a desperate attempt to escape the loneliness she slit her wrists, after which her family was contacted and she was allowed to go home.

Once she was home, her parents and family got her married covertly, after which she staunchly refused to move in with her in-laws. Months passed and the family pressure became too much for her to handle and she was forced to move out. In this tussle, she ended up hitting her head against an electrical pole and with a deep gash on her forehead, requiring stitches. After finally moving in to her in-law's house, having to have sex with her husband became another point of contention because she was always disgusted by the very idea and it caused her immense pain. Every time her husband tried to be intimate her, she exhibited violent tendencies towards him and ran away to her maternal home. This caused many tensions in both the households.

Eventually she got pregnant and this eased the tensions among the households, until she miscarried. However, after the birth of her daughter, everybody is relatively happier. Despite this, her maternal family did not give her dowry and are due to pay it at the time of her turning 18, after a function called "Pavu Cheeralu – Pilla Manadhi" and she is nervous that non-payment of the same might cause more problems in her marital life.

ANASUYA (KRISHNA DISTRICT, AVANIGADDA MANDAL)

Anasuya walks into the Anganwadi centre with a slight limp and winces as she sits down to talk to me. Upon enquiring as to why she is in so much constant pain, she says the doctors have concluded that because of her multiple early pregnancies and extreme malnutrition, her pelvis and femur have been adversely affected resulting in long-term bone damage. Married off at the young age of 12, she is only 20 years old at the time of the interview. However, she is already a mother of 4 children, with her first born having severe birth defects and being unable to walk.

Anasuya never went to school or received formal education of any kind, and being married off at the age of 12 seemed like the most obvious next step for her family at the time, and they did not pause to think of the impact this would have on her life. She recalls that people within the society thought she was too young to be married off, but her father thought of her as a burden he needed to get rid of. As a result, she is often left home alone, caring for the children or isolated. She is never allowed to meet her peers and rarely visits her parents who live considerably far off, who also view her as a burden. The only times she leaves the house is when she needs to go for work – which she is forced to undertake in order to pay off the loans her husband took against their house.

She is often subject to domestic abuse (both verbal and physical) by her husband and sisters in-law when she tries to maintain contact with certain members of her maternal

family, and this is mentally troubling for her, giving rise to anxiety and nervousness. She is also treated differentially because of her disabled daughter, who is seen as an extra burden on the household, though this was of no fault of hers. She got married at an age where she had no awareness regarding family planning and could not say no to her husband and in-laws who wanted them to have more children, and having so many mouths to feed is pushing them further into poverty now. Despite facing so many problems due to her child marriage, Anasuya says *“I will get my daughters married by the age of 13 at the latest, because that is better than to keep mature girls in the home. My sons however, can wait until they are 30 years old to get married. What is the hurry for them?”*

She has no control over the family income, expenditure or even decision making within the household and says *“I handover my wages to my mother-in-law every month, she and my husband together take care of the household expenses. This is extremely bothersome at times, because I need money to buy medicines and other supplies for my oldest daughter who cannot walk, and they do not allow me to do so.”* Upon talking about her children’s education, she says the only reason she is confident that they will be educated until class 10 is because it is mandated by the government and provided free of cost, and even otherwise she believes this is ample education, especially for her girl children.

PRIYA (VISAKHAPATNAM DISTRICT, S. RAYAVARAM MANDAL)

23-year-old Priya informs me that her husband is 40 years old, and then quickly asks me to change his age as he would not like her revealing it to others and she herself only recently found out because he was forced to get an Aadhar card for work. She got married right after she gave her class 10 examinations and has been living in her husband’s shadow ever since. She got pregnant at the age of 16, soon after her marriage. She agrees that she was extremely unprepared for sexual life and the family pressures which came with marriage, and these played a key role in her miscarrying her first pregnancy. Her mother-in-law forced her to go to work even and supplement the family income, though she was mandated bedrest by the doctor and due to this reason, she decided to undertake travel to her maternal home as she was unable to continue working through her pregnancy complications. It was during this travel, that she miscarried and lost her baby.

After this, her husband made her quit work and forced her to stay at home even though she was no longer pregnant. He does not like her venturing out of the house or talking

to the neighbors as he believes they will be a bad influence on her. Even though she wishes to pursue her education or write her open 10th, her husband is not supportive of her aspirations and prevented her from doing so. He is very controlling of her, and in her own words, *“He feels he will lose economic control over the family and fears that I will say ‘I have my own earnings, why do I need to take you into consideration regarding anything?’”* He also indulges in domestic violence when Priya or their daughter disobey his wishes and contact people or relatives that he does not approve of, and she lives in constant fear of being thrown out of the house. Their three-year-old daughter is not allowed to talk to certain children (as her husband views them as a bad influence) who attend the Anganwadi along with her. During the time that she spends talking with me, her husband repeatedly calls her on her cell phone to make sure that she is at the Anganwadi and did not venture elsewhere without his prior permission.

Priya voices that in her opinion the government is simply not doing enough to prevent child marriages from taking place even though it is a known fact that they’re a social evil. She points out that at the time of her marriage, there were so many others which took place and nobody did anything to stop them. She doesn’t feel confident that she can stop her own daughter’s marriage if it gets fixed before she turns 18, although ideally, she does not wish either of her children to get married before the age of 25. She does not even think she is capable of educating her daughter as her husband is inherently biased against girl children and will not entertain her wishes to make her an independent woman. To her, the future looks bleak.

GEETHA (VISAKHAPATNAM DISTRICT, GAJUWAKA)

Geetha, 22 is a resident of Gajuvaka town of Vishakhapatnam district, Andhra Pradesh. She is the mother of two children (girl and boy) aged 5 and 3. She currently works as a helper and cleaner in a hotel in Gajuvaka and earns an annual income of Rs.72,000.

Talking about her childhood she says that she grew up under the care of her grandparents. After the death of her father when she was 3, her mother remarried and moved away. She says that apart from occasional visits, she never spent much of her growing years with her mother. When she turned 15 and had completed her 10th standard, her uncle and grandparents decided to get her married to her cousin. Her cousin was a divorcee and a compulsive drunkard. Despite her protesting against the wedding, her grandparents convinced her to get married to him citing their old age and inability to take care of her.

She finally agreed to the marriage as she thought that this was a chance for her to stay closer to her grandparents and after marriage, they moved in to stay with her grandparents. Her husband was a compulsive drinker and continued drinking even after marriage. Every night he would return home drunk and verbally and physically abuse her. When her grandparents tried to intervene, he would hit them as well. He forced her to discontinue studies and restricted her movements with her friends. After 6 months, her grandparents encouraged them to move out of the house as they thought that her husband would become responsible by taking care of the family. They moved into a rented accommodation in the same locality. However, within the first 2 months, they defaulted on paying the rent. He gave her very meagre money at home and she was finding it difficult to run the household which forced her to take up work as a domestic servant. She cleared the debts and managed to meet the daily expenses through the money she earned.

By that time, she wanted to take a divorce but it was then that she became pregnant with her first child. Her husband did not take for health check-ups or follow-ups with the doctor. Upon the advice of her grandmother she enrolled in the local anganwadi center and took food and nutritional supplements from there. When her husband continued to physically abuse her during her entire pregnancy, she moved back to her mother's house and gave birth to a girl child at the local government hospital. But her mother refused to support her and the child and called her husband to take them away within 15 days of the child birth.

Her husband moved back with them and continued to harass her. Fearing for the safety of the child and herself, she ran away from home with the support of her grandparents and without informing her husband. She moved in with her friend in a locality in Visakhapatnam city and with her help joined as a cleaner in a hospital. Her friend helped in taking care of the child. Slowly she graduated to the level of an attender in the same hospital. Just when things started improving for her, her husband tracked her down and came to stay with her and the child. Her relatives and extended family convinced her to come back and stay with him. Her husband also promised to give up on drinking and take care of the family. Upon repeated assurances she moved back to her husband's house.

Within 3 months her husband went back to his old habits and started drinking again. This time she became pregnant again and gave birth to a boy child. Even after the child was born her husband used to take the children to the wine shop and forget to bring them back. Often when she came back home, she used to find the children

missing. She repeatedly lodged police complaints to find the children and, on a few occasions, even the police refused to help her citing it as a small domestic issue.

The second time she decided that she will not return back to her husband under any circumstances and ran away from home with her two children and is currently staying in Gajuwaka town and is working with a local hotel as an attendant.

Reflecting on her life she says that accepting to get married is probably one of the worst decisions she took. At that age, she did not know how to interact with her husband and did not know how to stop him from abusing her. She says all that physical abuse has taken a toll on her health and currently she suffers from severe fatigue, low blood pressure and her lungs are damaged. The doctors have advised her to refrain from long hours of work but she says that she has to work to take care of her children.

In her words she says *"The government should take strict action to prevent child marriages and should put the preparators of such acts behind bars. Every girl should be allowed to complete at least basic schooling and learn about her rights and family planning measures and be given a choice to do what she likes"*

She says that given a chance she would not allow her children to get married and would encourage them to complete higher studies and have economic independence. She says that in her limited capacities she would work to prevent child marriages at least in her locality.

She cites the attitude of the society in general about the need to get girls married at a young age needs to be changed and society should learn from victims of child marriage and survivors who fought the situation and have stood strong. She says that probably if she was not married as a child bride she would have studied and applied for a job. Since childhood she never had the proper love of her mother and missed out on a lot of care and she does not want her children to miss out on the same and will work to take care of them the best she can.

SUDHA (KRISHNA DISTRICT, VISSANNAPETA MANDAL)

Sudha, 15, is a native of Vissannapeta mandal of Krishna district. She got married at the age of 13 to a man who is 10 years elder to her and stays in a joint family with her husband, in-laws and his 2-elder sisters. She is currently 7 months pregnant and weighs 45 kgs and earns a living by selling trinkets and fancy items from door to door.

Eldest among 5 sisters, Sudha never attended school and spent her initial years in taking care of her sisters and helping her mother with the household work. She

occasionally used to accompany her parents who were into the same profession of selling clips and trinkets in nearby villages. When she was 13, her father suffered a heart attack and subsequent complications. The entire savings of the family was pooled in for his treatment. Fearing his health condition, her relatives suggested her father to get Sudha married to her cousin who was 10 years older to her and repaired gas stoves for a living. As the proposal was between relatives and since the family could not afford dowry payment, her father also agreed to the marriage. She was informed about the wedding only 3 days before the event was to take place. She vaguely remembers what happened on the day of the wedding and remembers that there were a lot of rituals she had to sit through on the wedding day.

Post marriage, she says *“The attitude of my relatives changed post-marriage. My mother-in-law used to interact with me lovingly till then, however she started shouting at me everyday after the marriage. She would taunt me continuously for my cooking or any work that I do. She also often complains that my family did not give them sufficient dowry for the marriage.”*

She says that her husband and sisters-in-law make her do all the household work in addition to her daily business of selling the fancy clips and trinkets in the nearby villages. She says that often she feels that life before marriage was the best as her only work was taking care of her sisters, but now in addition to domestic work she also has to go out and earn money which leaves her feeling exhausted and stressed most of the times. Together she and her husband earn an annual income of Rs.1,17,000.

She came to know of her pregnancy only 2 months later when she noticed that she missed her periods. She was afraid to share the news with her family and only when her bump was visible her family noticed it but they did not take any special care of her. One day as she was moving around selling the fancy items between villages, the local anganwadi workers noticed that she was pregnant and took her to the center. However, she could not be enrolled in the center as she did not have any kind of documentary proof or identity proof. The anganwadi supervisor appealed to the mandallevel Child Protection Officer (CPO) and on her recommendation, she was admitted as a member of the center. She gets daily meals and nutritional supplements and regular health check-ups at the center and the supervisor are guiding her through her pregnancy. She gained 7 kgs weight after enrolling at the center though she still suffers from complications including morning sickness, low BP, fatigue and morning sickness.

Talking about her views on child marriage she says that it is normal for girls in their community to get married at the age of 14-15. She feels that even if the family was in a better off position financially she would have been married by this age, however her only problem is with the way she is being treated post marriage. She says that from her childhood her parents have always told her that girls are meant to do the household work and she thinks that it is justified. She also wants to get her girl children married at the age of 15, since it is a norm in the community and would like them to follow the same profession as her. Though the anganwadi supervisor advised her on family planning measures she says her family will not allow her to follow the same as they have strong preference for male child and she would continue to be pregnant till she can bear a male progeny for the family.

Sudha says that she has no say in the income and expenditure decisions of her family and she is only informed of their decisions. However, she saves a portion of her daily income from the trade and secretly saves it with the local SHG. As she is highly dependent on her husband and in-laws for buying any essentials or clothes, she plans to buy clothes from the premium she will receive from her savings with the group. She says at this point of time she wants to only have a healthy child and a normal delivery.

She also does not have many friends as her husband and in-laws do not like her interacting with many people and she also does not visit her mother's house often. She only visited them 5 times in the last two years despite them staying in the same town. She does not share her joys or her sorrow with anyone as she is not allowed to interact with her friends and she is not comfortable in sharing her feelings with her family.

ANITHA (VISAKHAPATNAM DISTRICT, GAJUWAKA MANDAL)

Anitha from Gajuwaka Mandal of Visakhapatnam District is 22 years. Unfortunately, her husband died this year of AIDS and now she has to raise both her children (girl and boy) aged 4 years and 11 months as a single mother.

Belonging to the BC community, Anitha always had a difficult childhood. Both her parents were daily wage workers and worked at sand quarry. Her parents had a nomadic lifestyle due to which she had to quit school in the 6th standard and join her parents as a daily labor and support the family income. At the age of 17, her parents decided to get her married.

“I wanted to study well and get a decent job but my parents could not afford to send me to school and wanted to get me married instead. Since I have 3 younger sisters, I felt pressured to get married”

Anitha’s life changed drastically after marriage. Suddenly, she was confined to household chores and was constantly subjected to harassment by her mother-in-law and her husband. She says that the first time she experienced abuse within the family was only after she got married. Her mother-in-law would expect her to finish all the household chores and then also work outside as a daily labor. Even when she was 6 months pregnant, Anitha had to work day and night and because of this she had pregnancy related complications. She had her first child when she was 18 and the birth weight of the baby was low.

“My husband was an alcoholic and would often engage in sexual relations with other women. When I would question him about it, he would beat me up. One day he fell very sick and we had to rush him to the hospital and that’s when I found out that he had AIDS”

Fortunately, neither Anitha nor her children contracted HIV. She has been living separately ever since she found out. Her husband was being treated for his condition in a private hospital but he neglected his health and continued to drink everyday and did not take the prescribed medication. Due to his negligence he passed away and now Anitha has to raise her children by herself.

Anitha currently makes Rs. 800 a month and she is yet to receive her widow pension. Because her children are very young she still has to be with them all the time and this restricts her from taking up more work. She is unable to feed herself or her children proper meals or buy clothes for herself. Reflecting on her current life situation, Anitha says that she is extremely unhappy with her life and is always worried about her children and her future. She often feels isolated, stressed and worried and does not feel very hopeful about the future.

“Because I got married at a young age I feel like I was not prepared for life. I didn’t even get the chance to finish my 10th standard and now I am finding it very difficult to get a job. My children are very young and I cannot leave them and go to daily labour work. I feel hopeless about the future but I will not repeat the same mistakes with my children. I don’t want them to have the kind of life I lead. I want to educate them as much as possible will not get them married before the legal age. With the help of government funding, I am confident that I can at least send my children to secondary school”.

SECTION SIX

RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE PERSPECTIVES OF CHILD BRIDES

(OBJECTIVE 4)

CONSEQUENCES OF CHILD MARRIAGES – VOICES FROM CHILD BRIDES

Financial dependency, not able to access proper health care, often abuse and violence within the family and community, ill treatment by neighbours, early pregnancy, prolonged delivery, high bleeding during delivery, hypertension, stunted children, isolated social life, no scope for further education, and less freedom are the critical consequences of early marriage expressed by the child brides.

To address critical challenges, most of the child brides are looking at Gram Panchayat support in preventing child marriages, accessing development services/provisions. Similarly larger majority are demanding the health services, particularly post and pre-natal services and immunisation services, and Anganwadi services for their infants, particularly for those who are stunted (malnourished) and often falling sick. One of the critical point emerged is the proper and timely support from Anganwadi/health centre to address the anaemic conditions among adolescent girls. Majority of the child brides said that they have less or no knowledge about family planning methods and spacing the family, for which they are demanding proper support from health services.

1. ASPIRATIONS, & DEMANDS FROM CHILD BRIDES PERSPECTIVE AND POLICY IMPLICATIONS

However, their aspirations says that their confidence levels are high and to fulfil their aspirations they are putting critical demands to be fulfilled by the government.

1.1 SMALL FAMILY NORMS: Many aspired for small family with two children, however awareness on family planning is very low. Mother in law and husbands are the decision makers in spacing the family. Demand made by them is proper counselling to their husbands and mother-in-law's on consequences of early marriage, sexual life, and birth spacing. In this context, there is a need to

improve the reach out of primary health care and Anganwadi services to those girls who were married before 18 years of age.

- 1.2 ECONOMIC INDEPENDENCE:** Most of the child brides aspire for economic independence, however their educational background is not supporting them. Some of them have told that they need vocational training on job-oriented programs including soft skills. Those who are not interested to pursue further education after marriage, strongly aspire to have skill training course that will give chance to earn. It is therefore, job oriented vocational skill trainings have to be embedded into the present curriculum starting from secondary/higher education. Department of education has to rethink on how best the existing curriculum at secondary and high schools linked with vocational training courses, including soft skills. It is essential to map the local skill training centres run by the government, corporates and NGOs and link them with the existing structure of education.
- 1.3 SCHOLARSHIPS TO PURSUE HIGHER EDUCATION:** It is one of the widely talked point. Some of the child brides have said that due to financial difficulties in the family, they were forced to dropout from schools. If such support exists or accessible to them, perhaps their parents would have not thought of early marriage and forced them to drop out from school. In such cases, it is important to think about conditional cash transfers, bicycles to girls in secondary education, hygienic sanitation facilities in schools, and embedded vocational education in to secondary schools as suggested by Copenhagen Consensus in their recent report.
- 1.4 HEALTHY LIFE:** Majority aspired to lead healthy life, particularly to their infants. Those who had early pregnancy are demanding Anganwadi services. Those who are not pregnant also looking for Anganwadi services. Particularly this category of child brides is either malnourished or anemic. Here, primary health care has to focus more on adolescent girls (either married early or unmarried) provide proper knowledge about menstrual cycle and hygiene, importance of Iron Folic, family planning methods, pre and post-natal care and immunization.
- 1.5 DEMAND FOR SERVICES:** Anganwadi, Panchayat, PHC and Secondary education are the most demanded services by the child brides. Particularly to Gram Panchayat their demand is to involve at right time to prevent child marriages. Those who are in urban area demanded timely support from policy as well

as from legal services. Members of Gram Panchayat has to be sensitized on the socio-economic consequences of child marriages and made accountable to prevent such incidents. If they act properly, most of the child marriages can be prevented.

- 1.6 DEMAND FOR INFORMATION:** Majority of the child brides have no or low awareness about their entitlements, child marriage prevention act and other child protection measures. It is essential to include such informative syllabus from the secondary education level.
- 1.7 ROLE OF PARENTS:** Most of the child brides' have told that, mothers should play an intermediary role between girl children and the father and council father not to opt girl's marriage. In many cases, fathers are the decision makers about their daughters. In this context, it is essential to sensitize the parents on adverse impact of child marriages. Mothers committees (Like school education committees – as told by child brides) has to be formed in each one of the vulnerable village. Link it with other core stakeholders, starting from Panchayat, School, SHGs and front line health functionaries to watch the families which are vulnerable and may opt girl child marriages. Most of the child brides strongly suggested that prevention should start from village itself.

FINALLY THIS STUDY BRINGS FOLLOWING POLICY POINTS

To end this persistent practice, policymakers should recognize that addressing child marriage is not only a moral imperative, but it is also a cost-effective and strategic move to achieve Sustainable Development Goal 5 by 2030. Public-private partnerships and other collaborative mechanisms need to be designed to support efforts by civil society and the private sector to combat child marriage. Given the social norms, traditions and beliefs to the perpetuation of child marriage, programs that collaborate with political, community and religious leaders, self-help groups, and youth clubs should be a particular focus.

Government policy on child marriages should focus on three critical areas: maternal and child health, family planning, and girls' secondary education. These are either one way or other related to child marriages and survival of the victims. It is also important for policy makers to ensure that efforts should address the girls who are already married and their children.

Monitoring and Evaluation is one of the critical factors in addressing the child marriages. In this context, it is important to identify vulnerable children, vulnerable families in specific vulnerable geographical regions, collect accurate data and accordingly investments need to be planned and monitored.

SECTION SEVEN

APPENDIX & ANNEXURE

APPENDIX

COST BENEFIT RESEARCH TO ADDRESS CHILD MARRIAGES (WORKING PAPER FROM COPENHAGEN CONSENSUS CENTRE)

The Tata Trust in partnership with Copenhagen Consensus Centre has aimed to identify the smartest solutions to some of India's most pressing development challenges, including child marriages in Andhra Pradesh and Rajasthan, over 2017 and 2018. The output showcases the academic evidence on where a State (or other organizations) can help do the very most social, economic and environmental good for every rupee spent. The state-wide prioritizations based on evidences and extensive consultations. In this process, expert economists were involved in doing cost benefit research estimated how much an additional rupee spent on each of the interventions, to address child marriages, will yield in terms of social, and economic benefits. The outcomes are expected to inform decision makers in government, think tanks, civil society, and business as they set priorities for the years ahead²⁸.

Since the results from cost benefit research on child marriages helps the advocacy policy of Plan India and Mahita – Girls Advocacy Alliance (GAA), the synthesized results of this analysis has been included in this report. In this context, PLF research team acknowledge the Copenhagen Consensus Centre and the author of the working paper²⁹.

As discussed elsewhere, Andhra Pradesh is in the bottom quartile of the states across the country with data from the most recent National Family Health Survey (NFHS-4 2015/16) showing that 33% of women between the ages of 20-24 were still married

before age 18. Several economists, including Copenhagen Consensus argues that the most effective policy interventions to reduce child marriage are based on the economic empowerment of the girl child through secondary education and vocational training, qualifying her for employment and the creation of a sustainable income stream. The assumption is building economic value for women creates behavior change with a multiplier effect.

Copenhagen Consensus has analysed four policy interventions – bicycle transfers, conditional cash payments for secondary school attendance, the construction and maintenance of girls' toilets in secondary schools and an 18-month vocational training programs – and concluded that significantly positive Benefit-Cost Ratios (BCRs) with benefits coming from both economic value derived from future employment and income opportunities, and social value resulting from a reduction in domestic violence, improvement in maternal and child health and lower rates of fertility.

It is evident from the study that although efforts to reduce child marriage in India and in Andhra Pradesh by the government and private sector have sharply accelerated over the past two decades, data from National Family Health Survey(NFHS-4 2015/16) shows that while child marriage overall has declined substantially over the last ten years, an average of 26.8% of women between the ages of 20-24 were still married before age 18 (relative to 47.4% a decade earlier). In Andhra Pradesh, the numbers fell from 54.8% to 33% over this period, but it still remains in the bottom quartile of states across India.

To zero down the problem, numerous schemes have been launched – mostly in the last 10-15 years – with a focus on girls but some also targeted at boys and families at the central and state levels (as discussed in the earlier section). The impact of the programs has not been evaluated consistently and data from various sources suggests, predictably, that success has been a function of local political support, community advocacy and underlying social norms. Categorized by the drivers of change, following programs (most of them are common across the states), have emphasised several approaches to address child marriages are –

- i. Conditional transfer programs directly incentivizing delayed marriage. including cash transfers and education subsidies.
- ii. Programs emphasizing safe, affordable and quality secondary education.
- iii. Empowerment programs for women, girls, men and boys.

- iv. Agenda building, public awareness and advocacy efforts.
- v. Legal measures and enforcement of existing laws.

Most schemes have emphasized conditional cash transfers, to directly incentivize families to delay marriage for girls beyond the legal age of 18, and transfers related to education for girls, where families are provided with an education stipend or supplement to cover other ancillary or household costs including transportation.

Copenhagen Consensus argues that the most effective policy interventions to reduce child marriage are based on the economic empowerment of the girl child, through secondary education and vocational training that qualifies her for employment, creating the possibility for her to develop a sustainable income stream. Building economic value for women creates behavior changes with a multiplier effect. First, for women that access these opportunities leading to a change in their lives, and second, through the creation of role models that influence behavior at a broader social level.

The Benefit Cost Ratio (BCR) analysis presented below indicates significantly positive BCRs for each intervention – bicycle transfers and the provision of girls' toilets include the school subsidy and therefore eliminate the constraint of both education cost and another significant barrier on the demand side. The analysis highlights the incremental value of transportation and sanitation (assuming education costs are covered) in addressing significant challenges relating to girls' attendance of secondary school.

INTERVENTION ONE

CONDITIONAL BICYCLE TRANSFERS FOR SECONDARY SCHOOL GIRLS

Bicycle Transfers to all eligible secondary school girls age 14 in the first year of the intervention (in 2017-18). The intervention will be implemented for 455,530 girls (14 year old girls in AP according to Census 2011) by the state government. Education stipend (school subsidy) is also provided to all eligible girls for four years.

The core considerations are - the intervention will be implemented for four years with the same cohort of girls. The costs and benefits are calculated over four years, taking into account the present value of wages over a longer period i.e. the beneficiary's working life span. The risks of the intervention include fraud associated with school registration, early withdrawal without notification, undocumented absenteeism, loss or damage of bicycles.

COSTS AND BENEFITS

For each intervention, baseline data from the 2011 census and government surveys (NSS 71) at the state level are used to calculate the total number of girls eligible for the intervention i.e. potential beneficiaries. The projected number of beneficiaries relative to the number of girls that receive the intervention is calculated based on data from academic studies, evaluating the impact of similar interventions already implemented in other Indian states or countries with comparable demographics and social structures. The Census provides the number of girls age 14 in each state. NSS 71's survey shows that in Andhra Pradesh 52.1% of girls age 14-15 are enrolled in secondary school and that 51.2% of girls age 16-17 are enrolled in higher secondary school.

The next step is to calculate the projected number of beneficiaries of the intervention. Using Muralidharan and Prakash (2016)'s calculation for bicycle transfers in Bihar, the number of girls in school increases to 69% after the first year of the intervention (see results for the next three years in the discussion of social costs Section 1.2.1). The first year enrolment boost is 32% of the current female net enrolment rate, second year is 18% followed by 12% for the third year and 6% for the final year, adjusted by appropriate dropout rates derived from DISE.

COSTS

The cost of the intervention is the sum of three categories of costs. The first is the cost of the bicycle multiplied by the *number of girls that enroll in school due to the intervention*, i.e. the product of Rs. 3850 (current market price of bicycles) and 69% of eligible girls enrolled in the first year post-intervention. The second is the cost of secondary education *per additional girl enrolled in school following the intervention* which is Rs. 7895 (from NSS 71) multiplied by the 16.7% of girls in the state added to the cohort of girls in school. For this pool of additional girls we also add the opportunity cost of being at school (measured in terms of lost wages). It is Rs. 5790 drawn from the Labour and Employment Survey 2015-16 and is the average annual wage of a girl that has completed the previous level of education adjusted for labour force participation and unemployment. The sum total is Rs. 4929 for the first year. In the subsequent three years of the intervention, the bicycle cost is not incurred (since it is one time purchase), though the opportunity costs of further education increase for those that continue schooling. The total cost of the intervention for one cohort of 14 year old girls over four years is Rs. 387 crore (at a 5% discount rate), of which 31% represents the cost of the bicycles.

BENEFITS

The total benefits of the intervention are the sum of the direct benefit and the social benefits from reduced child marriages. The direct benefit is also the sum of three components. The first part is the discounted value of higher future wages resulting from the increase in education attainment due to the intervention. The income stream varies based on the education level completed by the girl; where the income stream is adjusted by the distribution of girls by terminating school year. Added to this is the value of the bicycle (which is a cost of the intervention but also a transfer in kind to the beneficiary) multiplied by the number of girls who receive the bicycle (this is the same number as in the cost calculation above). The third component is the cost savings of Rs. 735 per girl on alternative forms of public transportation (derived from NSS 71) multiplied by the girls receiving the intervention. The total direct benefit is Rs. 3514 crore, 93% of which represents higher lifetime wages from further secondary education.

Given the relationship between further secondary education and child marriage, it is estimated this intervention will avoid 8419 early marriages for this cohort. Social (early marriage avoided) benefits described in Section 1.2.1 are calculated at Rs 1011 crore. The total benefits from the intervention are therefore Rs 4525 crore over four years.

INTERVENTION 2

CONDITIONAL CASH TRANSFER FOR SECONDARY SCHOOL GIRLS

OVERVIEW

Provision of a cash transfer, equivalent to 9.3% of average consumption, conditional on secondary school enrolment for all girls eligible for secondary school. According to Census 2011, one cohort of 14 year old girls in Andhra Pradesh is 455,530

IMPLEMENTATION CONSIDERATIONS

The intervention will be implemented for all four years of secondary school. For the purposes of the analysis, we calculate the costs and benefits over four years, from the perspective of a cohort of 14 year old girls about to enter the first year of secondary school. The risks of the intervention include fraud associated with school registration, early withdrawal without notification, undocumented absenteeism.

COSTS AND BENEFITS

The baseline numbers are the same as in the bicycle transfer intervention discussed above and are derived from Census 2011 and NSS 71, which drive the calculation of the number of girls eligible for the intervention. Fiszbien and Shady (2009) summarize the results of numerous studies on the impact of conditional cash transfers (CCTs) on the enrolment of girls (specifically) and girls and boys in secondary school, finding a

positive impact across the board, and although there is no specific analysis of India, we use average data for Bangladesh, Cambodia and Pakistan. The analysis shows an average of 18.9% increase in enrollment in secondary education schools as a result of a targeted CCT equal to 9.3% of consumption. Increasing the baseline enrollment by 18.9% each year and reducing the total by an assumed dropout rate from DISE, provides the total number of girls benefiting from the intervention on an annual basis – this amounts to 62% of eligible girls in the first year, 60.4% in the second year, 58.4% in the third year and 57.6% in the last year of secondary school.

COSTS

In the first year, the cost of the cash transfer is Rs 7472 and is applied to all girls entering school each year. For girls who are compelled to enter school because of the intervention we also add the cost of education (Rs. 7895) and the opportunity cost of foregone earnings (Rs 5790). For subsequent years, the cost numbers are adjusted by different levels of incremental enrolment in school, and different opportunity costs, as in the bicycle transfer case. The total cost of the intervention over four years is Rs 1099 crore (at a 5% discount rate).

BENEFITS

The economic benefit of the intervention is the present value of higher wages in adulthood based on increased education attainment from the intervention. We add the cash transfer comprising the school subsidy to the benefits since it is a real economic windfall for the girl's family. The total direct benefit from the intervention is Rs 4504 crore (5% discount). It is estimated the intervention will avoid 10,588 child marriages for this cohort, which has benefits of Rs 1210 crore (5% discount). Total benefits from the intervention are therefore Rs 5714 crore.

INTERVENTION 3

PROVISION AND MAINTENANCE OF GIRLS' TOILETS IN SECONDARY SCHOOLS

OVERVIEW

Provision of new toilets for girls in all eligible secondary schools across the state; maintenance and updating of existing toilets in schools. Underlying studies are Khandker et al. (2003) for Bangladesh, Filmer and Shady (2008) for Cambodia, and Chaudhury and Parajuli (2008) for Pakistan. All studies report statistically significant coefficients in percentage point terms. The 2016 ASER State of Education report identifies 30% of secondary schools without a separate girls toilet, with a girls toilet but locked or unusable or without any toilet at all. These 4183 schools are the target of the intervention.

IMPLEMENTATION CONSIDERATIONS

The toilets will have to be constructed before the official start date of the intervention from when school enrolment is measured. Updating of existing toilets will have to be completed at the same time. Ongoing maintenance of all toilets will have to be supervised. Changing social norms to enforce use of toilets and prevention of male use of girls' toilets is a risk.

COSTS AND BENEFITS

Aduika (2016) reports that the construction of a girls-only toilet for cohorts analyzed across India increased upper primary school (6th-8th grades) female enrolment by 11%. We calculate the increase in school enrolment in Andhra Pradesh following the intervention, finding that the baseline rate of secondary school enrolment of 52.1% increases to 53.8%. For upper secondary, toilet construction increases the baseline rate of enrolment of 51.2% to 52.5%. We assume each toilet, properly maintained will last for twenty years, and so the costs and benefits presented below represent the costs for this many cohorts of school attendees affected by the intervention.

COSTS

The costs are divided into two categories, the first of which are direct individual-level costs: the cost of secondary school and the opportunity cost of being in school. These are exactly the same as in the bicycle transfer and CCT interventions described above but are adjusted by different proportions of girls based on the impact of the toilet construction on new school enrolment reported in the previous paragraph.

The second category of cost is the cost of toilet construction and maintenance, and in cases where toilets already exist and have to be repaired, the incremental cost of repairing. We use data from ASER 2016 to estimate the number of toilets that need to be constructed or updated – the data provides a detailed distribution of toilets in schools across the state for single-sex and unisex toilets, and toilets that are unused or locked. The cost of construction of a toilet is derived from *Swacch Bharat: Swacch Vidyalaya*, is Rs. 3.55 lakhs including washrooms, we infer that the cost of construction of a girls' only toilet is Rs. 1.3 lakhs, and that the updating of existing toilets for use by girls is Rs. 60,000 also sourced from *Swacch Bharat: Swacch Vidyalaya*. The total cost of toilets then is the number of schools that require toilets (construction, only for girls or updating) multiplied by the cost in each of these three categories.

The total 20 year cost of the intervention is Rs 1621 crore (5% discount). Approximately 8% of this is the upfront investment cost of building or repairing toilets, while the rest

represents ongoing maintenance as well as opportunity and education costs from the new girls going to school as a result of a toilet being present.

BENEFITS

As with the previous interventions, the primary benefit is the higher wages resulting from increased education attainment brought about by the intervention. We calculate this for the 20 year life of each toilet and adjust for expected growth in real incomes. This is Rs 15,736 crore (5% discount).

The intervention has a modest effect on early marriage at any point in time, reducing prevalence by 1.3%. However, because the effect lasts twenty years, the absolute impact of toilet construction is substantial even after adjusting for a natural downward trend in early marriage. The benefits of avoided early marriage are INR 3558 crore and therefore the total benefits of the intervention are Rs 19,294 crore (5% discount).

INTERVENTION 4

VOCATIONAL TRAINING (TAILORING) FOR 1MM GIRLS AGE 16 AND ABOVE

OVERVIEW

Vocational training and skill development programs for eligible (age 16 and above) girls in the state – start program with tailoring. The intervention covers 1,000,000 girls and will be implemented by the state government over a period of 18 months.

IMPLEMENTATION CONSIDERATIONS

Choice of vocational training program should be limited to one or two verticals: recommended vertical to start is tailoring. Choice of the cohort of 1MM girls: what are the criteria? Considerations of location, income level, family structure, prior and current education level etc. Counseling regarding future employment opportunities can be included in the program including advice on self-employment. The intervention does not include job placement.

COSTS AND BENEFITS

COSTS

The proposed intervention is a vocational training program for 1 million girls across the state. Eligibility is not derived from school enrolment data as girls attending school can also participate in the program. Girls with no secondary school education are eligible as long as they are 16 years old or more. The costs and economic benefits of the program are from Maitra and Mani (2017). The cost of the program per girl is Rs. 1910 for 18 months.

BENEFITS

For the calculation of benefits, we focus on the increase in wages. Based on the evidence in Maitra and Mani (2017), the future stream of wages rises by 32% as a consequence of the training. The assumption is that the wage premium benefit will last for ten years. The value of this benefit for the 1m women targeted by the intervention is Rs 2245 crore.

Five percent of the 1m girls in the intervention will be below the age of 18, and this will have a small effect on the prevalence of early marriage, reducing early marriages by 0.05 percentage points (242 early marriages avoided). This has benefits of 26 crore for total benefits of Rs 2272 crore.

SUMMARY TABLE ANDHRA PRADESH

Interventions	Benefits	Total Cost	Benefit Cost Ratio	Quality of Evidence
Bicycle Transfer (per cohort of girls)	4,525	387	11.7	Medium
Conditional Cash Transfer (per cohort of girls)	5,714	1,099	5.2	Medium
Provision of Girls' Toilets (over 20 years)	19,294	1,621	11.9	Medium
Vocational Training (10 lakhs girls)	2,272	521	4.4	Limited

NOTES: All figures assume a 5% discount rate; benefits and costs are in crores of INR.

ANNEXURES

VALIDATED TOOL USED TO INTERVIEW THE SELECTED CHILD BRIDES IN THE FIELD

STUDY ON THE SITUATION OF CHILD BRIDES IN THE STATES OF AP AND TELANGANA

One of the objectives of the study is to analyse the impact of child marriages from the perspective of child brides through primary data on health, physical, mental, sexual, social, economic aspects, and aspirations. It helps in advocating with policymakers to ensure “no early marriages as more” and improve the needed services for those who got married at an early age. Ensure that the information provided by her will be kept confidential and will not disclose her name and information to any third person. Whatever information collected in this interview will be used for report writing, and after three months from the date of the interview, it will be scrapped from all sources. Don't pressurize the informant to answer sensitive questions. Use the logical mode of discussions, conduct the interview in a place comfortable to her, and avoid interview in public places.

CONSENT TO TAKE PART IN RESEARCH

I..... (Pseudo name) voluntarily agree to participate in this research study. I understand that even if I agree to participate now, I can withdraw at any time or refuse to answer any question without any consequences of any kind. I understand that data from my interview within three months after the interview will be deleted. I have had the purpose and nature of the study explained to me in writing, and I have had the opportunity to ask questions about the study. I understand that I will not benefit directly from participating in this research. I understand that all the information I provide for this study will be treated confidentially. I understand that in any report on the results of this research, my identity will remain anonymous. It will be done by changing my name and disguising any details of my interview, which may reveal my identity or the identity of the people I speak about. I understand that disguised extracts from my interview may be quoted in the report, conference presentation, and published papers.

AGREE | REJECTED | AGREE BUT SOME OTHER TIME

1	ID Number					
2	District					
3	Mandal					
4	Village					
5	Town					
6	Name (pseudo)					
7	Your age at present					
8	Your husbands age					
9	Your age at marriage					
10	Year of marriage					
11	Social group (Caste)	ST	SC	BC	OBC	Others
12	Religion	Hindu	Muslim	Christian	Others	
13	Present family type (In laws family)	Joint	Nuclear	Others		
14	Presently living with	In-laws	Parents	With husband separately	Others	
15	Economic status of parents family	Same as husband family	Better than husbands family	Worse than husbands family	Cannot say	
16	Your education at the time of marriage	Secondary	Higher	Dropout	Illiterate	Literate but no formal education
17	Your husbands education at the time of marriage	Secondary	Higher	Dropout	Illiterate	Literate but no formal education
18	Your present economic activity	Agriculture	Agri-labour	Non-agri labour	Technical	House hold work

19	Your husbands economic activity	Agriculture	Agri-labour	Non-agri labour	Technical	Nothing
20	Total family income per year (approx)					
21	How many children do you have?					

GENERAL

Question	Category of answer					
22	I am happy with my life	Strongly agreed	Agreed	Cannot say	Disagreed	Strongly disagreed
22.1 Probe:						
23	My voice is heard	Strongly agreed	Agreed	Cannot say	Disagreed	Strongly disagreed
23.1 Probe:						
24	I have freedom to pursue further education	Strongly agreed	Agreed	Cannot say	Disagreed	Strongly disagreed
24.1 Probe:						
25	I maintain my self-respect	Strongly agreed	Agreed	Cannot say	Disagreed	Strongly disagreed
25.1 Probe:						
26	I often experienced abuse within the family	Strongly agreed	Agreed	Cannot say	Disagreed	Strongly disagreed
26.1 Probe:						
27	I often experienced abuse with in the community	Strongly agreed	Agreed	Cannot say	Disagreed	Strongly disagreed
27.1 Probe:						
28	I often experience verbal/ physical violence from the peer and community	Strongly agreed	Agreed	Cannot say	Disagreed	Strongly disagreed
28.1 Probe:						
29	Violence against women is a common phenomenon in our community	Strongly agreed	Agreed	Cannot say	Disagreed	Strongly disagreed
29.1 Probe:						

30	I discontinued my studies even though I did not wish to	Strongly agreed	Agreed	Cannot say	Disagreed	Strongly disagreed
30.1 Probe:						
31	I dislike studies	Strongly agreed	Agreed	Cannot say	Disagreed	Strongly disagreed
31.1 Probe:						
32	I have a say over family maintenance, including on income and expenditure	Strongly agreed	Agreed	Cannot say	Disagreed	Strongly disagreed
32.1 Probe:						
33	My movements are largely restricted/ cannot meet peers/cannot leave house as per will	Strongly agreed	Agreed	Cannot say	Disagreed	Strongly disagreed
33.1 Probe:						
34	My parents financially benefitted from my marriage	Strongly agreed	Agreed	Cannot say	Disagreed	Strongly disagreed
34.1 Probe:						
35	I experienced family pressure to do domestic work as well as undertake economic activities	Strongly agreed	Agreed	Cannot say	Disagreed	Strongly disagreed
35.1 Probe:						
36	I experience social isolation	Strongly agreed	Agreed	Cannot say	Disagreed	Strongly disagreed
36.1 Probe:						
37	I do not have an independent identity	Strongly agreed	Agreed	Cannot say	Disagreed	Strongly disagreed
37.1 Probe:						
38	After marriage my social status has decreased within the society	Strongly agreed	Agreed	Cannot say	Disagreed	Strongly disagreed
38.1 Probe:						

39	Choosing marriage over education is not acceptable for girls	Strongly agreed	Agreed	Cannot say	Disagreed	Strongly disagreed
39.1 Probe:						
40	I agree with girls' marriage before 18 years of age	Strongly agreed	Agreed	Cannot say	Disagreed	Strongly disagreed
40.1 Probe						
41	My stress has increased after marriage	Strongly agreed	Agreed	Cannot say	Disagreed	Strongly disagreed
41.1 Probe						
42	I am un prepared for sexual life and early pregnancy	Strongly agreed	Agreed	Cannot say	Disagreed	Strongly disagreed
43	My relation with my husband is good	Strongly agreed	Agreed	Cannot say	Disagreed	Strongly disagreed
44	My relations with In-laws is good	Strongly agreed	Agreed	Cannot say	Disagreed	Strongly disagreed
45	My relations with my parents is good	Strongly agreed	Agreed	Cannot say	Disagreed	Strongly disagreed
PROGRAMS & SCHEMES						
46	Have you heard/are aware of any schemes to stop child marriages?					Yes/No
47	If Yes, Can you name the schemes					
48	My limited education doesn't permit me to understand the schemes to stop child marriages	Strongly agreed	Agreed	Cannot say	Disagreed	Strongly disagreed
49	I don't know about vocational skill trainings for girls	Strongly agreed	Agreed	Cannot say	Disagreed	Strongly disagreed
50	I heard about KalyanLaxmi / bicycle scheme for girls					Yes/No
51	Government has less concern about child marriages	Strongly agreed	Agreed	Cannot say	Disagreed	Strongly disagreed
52	Which support system do you wish to access	Anganwadi	Primary health care	Secondary education	Panchayat	Others

53	There are few legislations and Government Orders to prevent child marriages. Have you heard about them?					Yes/No
54	Do you think such information has to be included in the social science subjects	Strongly agreed	Agreed	Cannot say	Disagreed	Strongly disagreed
ASPIRATIONS						
55	I am very interested in continuing further education					Yes/No
56	I aspire to complete	Degree	Post-Graduation	Technical (B.Tech etc)	Others	
57	If Yes, what support you wish to receive from the government	Scholarships	Job oriented Skills	Basic sanitation in schools	Others	
58	I aspire towards suitable education to get good job					Yes/No
59	I wish to become a	Teacher	Police	Engineer	Doctor	Advocate
60	I wish to have a small family of two/three children					Yes/No
61	I don't want my children to get married before 18 years for girls/21 years for boys	Strongly agreed	Agreed	Cannot say	Disagreed	Strongly disagreed
61.1 Probe						
62	I wish to educate my girl children up to	Graduation	Post-Graduation	Technical (B.Techetc)	Others	Cannot say
63	I should have economic independency	Strongly agreed	Agreed	Cannot say	Disagreed	Strongly disagreed
63.1 Probe						
CONFIDENCE						
64	I can educate my children to higher degree	Strongly agreed	Agreed	Cannot say	Disagreed	Strongly disagreed
64.1 Probe						
65	If financial support systems are in place, my parents would have not opted for child marriage	Strongly agreed	Agreed	Cannot say	Disagreed	Strongly disagreed

66	Even after early marriage, my confidence might have increased if I had job	Strongly agreed	Agreed	Cannot say	Disagreed	Strongly disagreed
HEALTH						
67	I had pregnancy related complications					Yes/ No
68	What are they	Mis-cariage (Loss of baby before 20 week of pregnancy)	Induced Abortion (forced abortion)	Prolonged delivery (between 14 to 20 or more hours)	High bleeding during delivery	Hypertension
		Morning sickness (Vomiting)	High blood pressure	low birth weight of baby	Others	
69	Have you accessed	Pre-natal care	Post-natal care	Basic immunization of children	Others	
70	If you have children, where the delivery has taken place	PHC	Govt Gen. Hospital	Private clinic	In home without medical assistance	In home with medical assistance
71	For first child					
72	For second child					
73	For third child					
74	Is it normal delivery or C-section?	Normal	C-sections	Still birth (delivery after 20th week of pregnancy of a baby who has died)		
75	First child					
76	Second child					
77	Third child					
78	Any still births?	Yes/No				
79	If Yes, number of still births					
80	My children are	Stunted (low birth weight)	Weak (Malnutrition)	Often suffering with cold and cough	Skin diseases	Non-breastfed children
81	First child					

82	Second child				
83	Third child				
84	Are you using any family planning methods			Yes/No	
85	Are you aware of such measures?		Yes/No		

MENTAL/PSYCHOLOGICAL/SOCIAL/ECONOMIC PROBLEMS

86	Feeling loneliness	Always	Sometimes	Never	Cannot say	
87	Feeling anxiety	Always	Sometimes	Never	Cannot say	
88	Feeling neglected	Always	Sometimes	Never	Cannot say	
89	Much worried	Always	Sometimes	Never	Cannot say	
90	Nervousness	Always	Sometimes	Never	Cannot say	
91	Stress	Always	Sometimes	Never	Cannot say	
92	Feeling of disconnect from parents	Always	Sometimes	Never	Cannot say	
93	Frequent illness	Always	Sometimes	Never	Cannot say	
94	What are the key problems you are facing?	Financial dependency on in-laws	Financial dependency on husband	No individual income	Not able to purchase clothes	Not able to access health care
		Not able to have better food	Ill treatment by community	No voice	Often comments from peer	Domestic violence
		Peer not interacting	Neighbours ill treatment	Not able to meet parents (often)	Others	

REHABILITATION

95	For how long you are in this home	
96	Have you received any support to avoid child marriage?	Yes/No
97	Are you getting any legal aid?	Yes/No
98	Have you counselled by the staff	Yes/No
99	Counselling to your parents	Yes/No
100	Counselling to your husband	Yes/No
101	Resumed education	Yes/No

102	Satisfied with amenities in this centre?	Yes/No
103	If No, what is your suggestions to improve	
104	Any information you would like to share with us?	
Thank you for your time!		
105	Investigator has to write the notes on his experience and key observations.	

Name of the Investigator

Date of Interview

Note:


A series of 20 horizontal blue dashed lines, evenly spaced, intended for writing a note.



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