

# **IMPACT OF CHILD MARRIAGE: A STUDY IN OHAT TEA GARDEN, LAKHIMPUR, ASSAM**

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## **Abstract:**

The practice of early marriage remains prevalent in developing countries around the world today. There are associated with multidimensional aspects like health risks, including infant mortality and maternal mortality as an outcome of advance pregnancy. The word marriage is a very suitable word and one of the important social institutions through which establishing a family. The age group below 18 year has high fertility. Young brides often show signs of symptomatic of sexual abuse some types of stress like feelings of hopelessness, helplessness and severe frustration. This study was conducted in a particular Tea Garden Area under Lakhimpur District, Assam. For this qualitative study, I have done Case Studies to collect necessary insight into the problem.

**Key words:** *Marriage, Health, Sex, Mortality, Pregnancy.*

## **Introduction:**

In terms of economy India has been developing stage. Due to the practice of some kinds of social problems , the nation has been facing tremendous stagnation and it prevents the rate of development in many spheres. Amongst the different types of social problems Child Marriage is one of the prominent factor which deviates the nation from the perspective of all round inclusive developments. UNICEF (United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund) defines Child Marriage as “ a formal marriage or union before 18 years of age”

According to UNICEF and ICRW (International Centre For Research On Women), India stands in the list of 'Child Marriage hot spots' at number 12 with whopping 47% of women marrying before the legal age of 18 year. Due to the presence of Child Marriage in our society, the conditions of women becoming very worst. Due to lack of proper education, the young unmarried girls are indulged with the married life and finally socially, economically they are in a position of backwardness. In many spheres, It is shown that girls from poor households are twice as likely to be married early than the girls from higher income groups.

It is noticeable that though people are becoming educate before ancient time and know the negative outcome of early marriage, yet it is prevalent still date in our society. The symptom is very negative for a well organised civilised society. Due to early marriage, a section of women are victimised very tremendously which is very destructive and negative symptoms for India such a democratic country.

## **Factors Contributing to Child Marriage:**

There are different factors which helps in occurring Child Marriage in our society. It is said that child marriage is the toxic product of extreme poverty and gender inequality. In many cases parents regard their daughter as a problem creator. They consider the girl child as burden and so give less importance on girl child education. They make an arrangement for married life forcefully. Due to the fear of the demand of dowry, a section of parents ready to arrange early marriage. They blindly believe marriage will protect their daughters from sexual violence.

## **Impact on Girl's Health, Future and Family:**

Child Marriage is an obstacle for the women's civilised life. Directly it hampers girl's health and well being. In an immature age unknowingly they are becoming pregnant whereas the girl is not physically, mentally ready. In many cases during the time of complicity of birth many women unfortunately death and in many circumstances new borns are death.

Due to early marriage, girls are exposed to sexually transmitted infections including HIV. They deviate from the availing of educational right. It is said that an illiterate Mother never make her son a good citizen. So calls “Home is the first school and Mother is the best Teacher”.

## **The Problem:**

The early marriages are becoming a great threat for our society. Young girls with low levels of education are attained in early marriage. Education is the most powerful weapon for good human beings, but due to lack of proper education and schooling the young girls are unaware about their health along with their new born .So, in

many cases young girls are at risk of being infected with sexually transmitted diseases. They are at an increased risk of chronic anaemia and obesity. Otherwise, Child brides have a higher risk of becoming a victim of domestic violence, sexual abuse and murder.

**Rationale of the Study:**

This study will provide a scope to the society, individuals, couples and all the families at large. Since no sociological investigation has been conducted to assess the problem of Child Marriage in the Ohat Tea Garden Area. Moreover, It will highlight the problems and the consequences of the society and the government as well, which will be helpful to ascertain the instruments to counter the adversities.

**Objectives of the Study:**

- \* To find out the trend and intensity of Child Marriage.
- \* To ascertain the source of the major social evil which causes Child Marriage.
- \* To study the effects and consequences of Child Marriage.

**Research Questions:**

*Principal Research Question:*

- \*Investigate the causes of early marriage.

*Corollary Research Questions:*

- \*Is there any significant impact of early marriage on socio-economic and welfare status of that particular society?
- \*Is there any deficiency of awareness and literacy?
- \*Whether the group is economically not sustainable?

**Research Methodology:**

The data required for the present study are collected from the both primary and secondary sources. Through Case Studies primary data are collected and the secondary data are collected from various published sources such as magazines, newspapers, journals, book, websites. The present study is analytical in nature.

**Case Studies:**

For the matter of confidentiality, I have not disclosed the actual names of the Clients.

- Client X : is of 18 years residing in Ohat Tea Garden Area with her husband whereas both of them are working as daily worker. They have three kids. She was married when she was 15 years old. She expressed her feelings very vividly from which able to know that she has been passed her present life in a disappointing way. She realised a lot for her early childhood age phenomenon. She said that early marriage is really a sin and we should not be preferred it for our future generations. It should be banned from our country through strict legislation.
- Client Y: is of 17 years residing in the same area along with her husband and two childrens. She severely frustrated for her early marriage which was forced by her parents for their extreme poverty conditions. She illustrated that her parents always regarded her as a problem creator. She was forced to enter the conjugal life unknowingly by her father. She argued that early marriage truly an obstacle for the girls and it should not be practiced society.

**Review of Literature:**

There has been substantial research over the last decades on some of the factors that contribute to Child Marriage. UNICEF,2005-“It defined child marriage is a violation of human rights, compromising the development of girls and often resulting in early pregnancy and social isolation. The United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA),2012-“It referred that globally, one in every five girls is married, or in union, before reaching age 18. Child Marriage threatens girls’ lives and health, and it limits their future prospects. UNFPA promotes policies, programmes and legislation designed to end child marriage”.

Conclusion: Child Marriage is a harmful practice that deprives the girls from different kinds of privileges. It negatively affects on the status of women as a whole and also leads gender inequality. The young women are unable to take part in the decision making process and unknowingly they are under the bondage of family. In many spheres due to immature pregnancy women have to face lots of obstacles. A human rights violation, child marriage directly impacts girls’ education, health, psychological well-being. It increases the risk for depression, sexually transmitted infection, cervical cancer, obstetric fistulas and maternal mortality. Thus to conclude, It can be said that the present study clearly depicts the prevailing conditions of Child Marriage and its severe impact on society. Finally we may say child marriage is a widespread violation of human rights. Through strict legislation along with social awareness and proper inclusive education it can be eliminated from the society.

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