

A real - life observation on child marriage: The hidden suffering of girls and ideology of society

Ms.Tridevi Dawshrath Ghule

Ms Trupti Satish Waghmare

CHANGU KANA THAKUR ARTS, COMMERCE,SCIENCE COLLEGE NEW PANVEL
(AUTONOMOUS)

ABSTRACT -

Child marriage , thought legally banned in india, continues to exist in many Parts of society under the cover of tradition , family pressure , and social reputation . This research is based on a real -life observation of a girl who was denied education Forced into marriage with an older man, mentally tortured and ultimately took her owe Life - all while society remained silent. The study highlights how outdated societal ideologies, Family honor ,and the fear of public opinion push many girls into painful lives . Despite existing laws , the lack of awareness , support , and the courage to speak up Allows such injustices to continue. This paper aims to raise to raise awareness about the hidden reality behind child marriage And the need for societal change.

INTRODUCTION :

Child marriage is banned in india , yet it continues to exist in hidden forms. Girls are married off at a young age due to family pressure, social stigma, and Fear of public opinion . This research is not based on data or books, but on real-life case I have personally Witnessed- of young girl whose dreams were crushed due to forced marriage.

Literature Review -

Many studies and reports have discussed the issued of child marriage in india, Focusing on its causes, consequences, and legal aspects. According to UNICEF, India has one of the Highest numbers of child brides in the world. Researchers have found that poverty , lack of Education, gender inequality , and social Customs are the major reasons behind early Marriages.

The Prohibition of Child Marriage Act, 2006 clearly states that marrying a girl below 18 or a boy below 21 is illegal. However, literature shows that in many rural and traditional societies, such laws are ignored, and

social norms are followed instead. In a study by the International Center for Research on Women (ICRW), it is stated that girls who marry early are more likely to drop out of school, face domestic violence, and suffer mental health issues.

Further literature shows that social pressures, especially from caste-based and patriarchal families, play a key role in continuing this practice. While government and NGOs are working to stop child marriage, the deep-rooted *ideology of society* often prevents real change.

This research adds to existing literature by presenting a real-life, first-hand observation — showing how even today, child marriage continues silently, and the voice of the girl remains unheard. Unlike statistical data, this study focuses on the emotional and psychological side of the issue.

Research Gap:

While several studies and reports have explored the causes and consequences of child marriage in India, most of them focus on **statistical data, legal frameworks, and policy analysis**. However, there is a noticeable lack of **first-hand, real-life observations** that highlight the **emotional, psychological, and social pain** experienced by young girls who are victims of child marriage.

Many research papers fail to capture how deeply **family pressure, societal expectations, and honor-based ideologies** affect a girl's ability to speak out or seek help. Additionally, the voice of the victim is often **missing or ignored** in academic literature, as most studies focus on broader trends rather than **individual lived experiences**.

This research attempts to fill that gap by presenting a true and personal account of a girl who was silently forced into marriage, emotionally tortured, and left unheard by both her family and society. It provides insight into the **hidden realities** that are often overlooked by formal research, highlighting the urgent need for more **human-centered and emotional perspectives** in the study of child marriage.

OBJECTIVE :

To explore how child marriage still takes place in secret.

To understand the mental and emotional impact on the girl.

To observe the role of family, society, and caste in continuing this practice.

To raise awareness about the importance of education and freedom for girls.

Observation (Real Story):

A girl wanted to study, but her family forced her into marriage.

Her husband was much older; she was uncomfortable and scared.

When she said no, she was blamed, called characterless, and forced to return.

Her own parents said, “Our honor will be ruined if you leave him.”

In their caste, second marriage is not allowed, which trapped her more.

She faced mental torture, was silenced, and finally took her own life.

No case was filed. No one spoke up. Society stayed silent.

HYPOTHESIS :

H1: parent and community satisfaction only and they feel their reputation was safe

H0: girl abuse , mental torture in laws and family also, destroy their future , dreams

And health

Secondary Data (for research on child marriage):

1. Census of india reports - child marriage rates in different states
(especially rural areas).
2. National family health survey (NFHS) - NFHS-5 (2019-21) shows
That 23% of women aged 20-24 years were married before 18 in India
3. UNICEF Reports: india has the highest number of child brides
In the world
Nearly 1.5 million girls are married under 18 each year in india.
4. International center for Research on women (ICRW):
Girls who marry early are more likely to face domestic violence ,
Poor health , and lack of education.
5. Government of india - prohibition of child marriage Act, 2006

- Legal framework banning child marriage (girls <18, boys <21)
- 6. NGO Reports (save the children , cry , etc)
 - Field surveys highlighting the persistence of child marriage
 - Rural and semi-urban areas.

Additional Secondary Data on Child Marriage in India

1. National Crime Records Bureau (NCRB) 2021 Report

A total of 1,050 cases were registered under the Prohibition of Child Marriage Act (2006) in 2021.

But experts believe the actual number is much higher because most families do not report cases.

2. UNFPA (United Nations Population Fund) Report, 2020

Around 27% of Indian girls are married before the age of 18.

India alone accounts for one-third of the world's child brides.

3. Girls Not Brides Organization (Global Partnership)

India has over 223 million child brides, the highest number globally.

Rural areas have nearly twice the rate of child marriage compared to urban areas.

4. World Bank Data (2018)

Girls who marry early are more likely to drop out of school and remain in poverty.

Child marriage reduces a girl's lifetime earnings potential by 9% on average.

5. National Family Health Survey (NFHS-5, 2019–21)

23.3% women aged 20–24 were married before 18.

States with highest child marriage rates: Bihar (40%), West Bengal (41%), Jharkhand (32%).

Lowest rates in Kerala (6%) and Himachal Pradesh (8%).

6. Save the Children NGO Report (2022)

Child marriage increased during the COVID-19 lockdown because of school closures, poverty, and migration.

Many families married off their daughters to reduce financial burden.