

A Statistical Analysis of
CHILD MARRIAGE IN INDIA
Based on Census 2011



A Statistical Analysis of Child Marriage in India Based on Census 2011

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About NCPCR

The National Commission for Protection of Child Rights (NCPCR) was set up in March 2007 under the Commissions for Protection of Child Rights (CPCR) Act, 2005, an Act of Parliament (December 2005). NCPCR is a statutory body under the CPCR Act, 2005 under the administrative control of the Ministry of Women & Child Development, Government of India. The Commission's Mandate is to ensure that all Laws, Policies, Programmes, and Administrative Mechanisms are in consonance with the Child Rights perspective as enshrined in the Constitution of India and the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child.

About Young Lives

Young Lives is an international study of childhood poverty, following the lives of 12,000 children in four countries (Ethiopia, India, Peru and Vietnam) over fifteen years.

www.younglives.org.uk

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Young Lives India is a collaboration between CESS (Hyderabad), SPMVV (Tirupati), Save the Children and University of Oxford (UK). For more details, visit www.younglives-india.org

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Cover photo caption: Traditional henna applied to a girl child during the marriage ceremony

Photo Credit: Ms. Sarika Gulati

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Foreword

India is committed to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals including Goal 5 which aims to *Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls*; and target 5.3 which focuses on *Elimination of all harmful practices such as child, early and forced marriage*. Government of India in the National Plan of Action for Children (NPAC) 2016, also aims to *reduce incidence of early marriage, especially among girls*. The NPAC, 2016 has highlighted that it will reduce prevalence of child marriage to 15% by 2021.

In India, though child marriage is showing a declining trend, but the number of child marriages still remains high. The National Family Health Survey 4 (NFHS 4: 2015-16) indicates that around 47.4% of the women in the age group 20-24 years were married before attaining 18 years, while 32.3% of men in the age group 25-29 years were married before attaining the legal age of 21 years.

The practice of child marriage curtails the child's right to protection, participation and development. Given the importance of the topic, National Commission of Protection of Child Rights (NCPCR) in collaboration with Young Lives India has brought out this report titled *A Statistical Analysis of Child Marriage in India: Based on Census 2011*. The report not only provides evidence but also covers issues related to genesis of child marriage in India, legal provisions, causes and consequences of child marriage and existing good practices initiated to preventing and reducing child marriage trend at the national, regional and global level.

I would like to thank Dr Renu Singh, Country Director Young Lives India and her team for supporting and undertaking this study.

As India gears up to prevent and reduce child marriage, I hope this report, which has identified 70 districts with the highest incidence of child marriage (by gender, age group and location) spread over 13 States, will pave the way for proactive State and District level action.

(Stuti Kacker)

STUTI KACKER
Chairperson, NCPCR

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This report would not have been possible without the leadership and encouragement provided by Ms. Stuti Kacker, Chairperson, NCPCR. Mr. Yashwant Jain, Member NCPCR and Ms. Gita Narayan, Member Secretary, NCPCR also provided us timely direction and supported us in conducting state level consultations in Telangana and Undivided Andhra Pradesh. Funding support from ClFF made this report possible and I would like to thank Mr. Steven Chapman for motivating us and providing us the financial support to undertake this study.

I would like to take this opportunity to acknowledge the contribution of Dr. Awdhesh Yadav, Dr. Adarsh Sharma and Ms. Minhazz Majumdar at different stages of the report preparation. I would also like to thank Dr. Ranjana Kesarwani for the statistical analysis, Ms. Sindhu Nambiath in supporting the writing and Ms. Sultanat Khan in publishing of this report. I am also grateful to Ms. Francis Winters for her valuable comments.

The report has analysed the Census 2011 data to identify the 'hot spots' related to child marriage by desegregating the data for girls and boys by location (rural and age groups). A list of seventy districts that account for 14 % of the population under the legal age of marriage and 21 % of child marriages in the country have been identified, with an aim to promote contextually appropriate action at the state and district level. I do hope the report is read widely and is useful for state/s and Union Territories (Uts) to develop intervention plans that reduce the incidence of child marriage.



Dr. Renu Singh
Country Director, Young Lives, India

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Chapter 1

Introduction

This chapter defines the practice of child marriage and looks at its genesis and evolution in the Indian context. The reform movement to abolish child marriage, including the various legislations drafted over the years, is also detailed here. The global scenario of child marriage in South Asia is also presented here.

1.1 Introduction

Early and child marriage has been a prevalent practice at different points in the history of almost all societies around the globe, including Europe, the United States and the Middle East. Out of the global population of 68 million women aged 20-24 who married before age 18, more than one third or 24 million live in South Asia¹. According to UNICEF (2014), almost half of all girls in South Asia (46 per cent) aged 20-24 reported marrying before the age of 18, while one in five girls (18 per cent) were married before the age of 15. The highest prevalence rate of child marriage reported by 20-24 year olds was in Bangladesh (where two out of every three girls married before age 18), followed by India, Nepal and Afghanistan.

In India, the practice has origins going back to ancient times and it persists even today². Child marriage as defined by Indian Law is a marriage in which the girl or the boy is underage, i.e., under 18 years of age for the girl and 21 years for the boy³. Child marriage from the rights approach is a violation of human rights. The right to free and full consent to a marriage is recognized in the 1948 Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) and in many subsequent human rights instruments. Consent cannot be 'free' and 'full' when at least one partner is immature. Yet many girls, and also boys, enter into marriage without any chance of exercising their right to choose. Some are forced into marriage at a very early age and others are simply too young to make an informed decision about their marriage partner or about the implications of marriage itself.

Marriage at a young age has far reaching consequences for both girls and boys in terms of their overall development and in making important life decisions and securing basic freedoms, including pursuing opportunities for education, earning a sustainable livelihood and accessing sexual health and rights. Child marriage has profound physical, intellectual, psychological and emotional impact on both boys and girls. It results in cutting off childhood, educational opportunities, attainment of employment and curtails the role the children can take as adults to productively contribute in their own

¹UNICEF (2014) Improving Children's Lives, Transforming the Future 25 years of Child Rights in South Asia

²http://www.nirantar.net/public/site/files/EM_Report_30-4-15.pdf

³<http://wcd.nic.in/sites/default/files/cma2006.pdf>

development and to the economy of the country. For girls, it enlarges their fertility span, which almost certainly results in premature pregnancy and multiple pregnancies and is likely to lead to a lifetime of domestic and sexual subservience over which they have no control⁴. Combined with malnutrition, it often results in physical wastage, birth complications and delivering 'of low birth-weight babies with reduced chances of survival, adding to both higher infant mortality and maternal mortality ratio.

1.2 Tracing the genesis of child marriage in India

The contemporary practice of child marriage in India receives social, religious and economic sanctions. It is rooted in rigid societal norms and serves to perpetuate long-standing social inequalities and power structures. More broadly, child marriage reinforces existing inequalities between men and women and among different economic classes, castes, and religious and ethnic groups⁵.

As recorded in several documents, the concept of love and courtship prevailed amongst young men and women in ancient India. They also had the freedom to choose their partner without any fear of disgrace. The marriage was performed only when both boys and girls reached maturity with mutual understanding and after obtaining the consent of the male kin of the girl. There was no concept of early marriage⁶. Though child marriage in India has early origins, the practice gained momentum in the medieval period due to the incessant wars and political instability that the country witnessed. During this period, the feeling of insecurity resulted in several changes within the social system and its fabric. This included parents transferring the burden of care of girls to husbands and in-laws as early as possible. The risk of not finding suitable groom resulted in customs like child-marriage, Sati, wearing the veil (Ghunghat) and many more which also indicated the lower status of women⁷.

A study by Bhagat⁸ reveals that child marriage began only after 600 AD under the influence of the writing such as the Dharmasutra and the Smritis. These texts warned that the parents and guardians who keep an unmarried girl after attaining menarche would go to hell. In addition, the Dharmasutra focused on the importance of virginity. Moreover, transgressing virginity also meant disgrace to the family and parents. The emergence of the patriarchal social structure further spurred marriage of girls at an early age, preferably before puberty, and most certainly on attaining menarche. As an outcome, child marriage started⁹. Under the influence of religious writings, child marriages in the Hindu community spread faster and took deeper roots in Indian society from the 7th century onwards. It was also advocated that an early transfer of a girl into

⁴UNICEF (2001) Early Marriage: Child Spouses, Innocenti Digest <https://www.unicef-irc.org/publications/pdf/digest7e.pdf>

⁵http://www.nirantar.net/public/site/files/EM_Report_30-4-15.pdf

⁶<http://www.jsr.net/archive/v4i4/SUB1536991.pdf>

⁷Ibid

⁸https://www.researchgate.net/publication/294860617_The_Practice_of_Early_Marriages_among_Females_in_India_Persistence_and_Change

⁹Ibid

her husband's household would ensure her adjustment in her marital home¹⁰.

Few others are of the opinion that finding legitimacy through religious texts, this formerly 'upper-caste' practice of child marriage became widespread across society by the 19th century¹¹. By adhering to rigid social norms about what was considered as an 'ideal match', child marriage made it easier to protect 'blood purity' and social boundaries. Its primary function was to ensure that childbearing took place within the confines of one's own caste and religion. Girls were commonly married before they were 10 years old, and the ceremony was conducted whenever a potential match was found, sometimes even in the child's infancy. In such cases, the ritual was separated from the consummation of marriage, which was permitted (and encouraged) as soon as the bride attained puberty¹². The socio-cultural logic of child marriage has been well argued by Subramaniam, who pointed out that early marriage was also supported by the ideology of excluding females from having access to the social and material resources of the family. Dowry historically emerged as a practice of giving gifts to the girl at the time of marriage instead of giving her the share out of the family wealth which was retained by sons¹³. The in-laws preferred young brides who were likely to be timid, docile and obedient and followed family norms without resistance. Accordingly, the dowry price increased as the girls grew older¹⁴.

Political mobilisation led by reformers within India and abroad resulted in the Age of Consent Act, 1891 being introduced to address child and early marriage in India. The Mysore state forbade arranging or helping to arrange the marriage of girls who had not completed 8 years of age as early as 1894¹⁵. The Baroda Early Marriage Prevention Act of 1904 declared 12 years as the minimum age of a bride, while Indore state in 1918 prescribed 14 years for boys and 12 years for girls as the minimum age of marriage¹⁶.

The movement gained further momentum with the 1921 League of Nations Conference on trafficking of women and girls. With renewed zest, reformers now started introducing Acts in the Indian legislature as a way to impact the issue, though these were shot down¹⁷. Finally, in 1927, Rai Sahib Harbilas Sarada introduced the Child Marriage Restraint Bill, setting the minimum age of marriage at 14 years for girls and 18 years for boys. In 1929, India formulated the Child Marriage Restraint Act (CMRA), 1929, popularly known as the Sarada Act, which prohibited marriage of girls below the age of 14 years and of boys below the age of 18 years¹⁸. After independence, the Child Marriage Restraint Act was modified and in 1978, an amendment resulted in the minimum age of marriage for girls being prescribed at 18 years and for boys, at 21 years. In 2006, the

¹⁰Kapadia, K. M. (1966). *Marriage and Family in India*. London: Oxford University Press

¹¹Heimsath, C. H. (1964). *Indian Nationalism and Hindu Social Reform*. Princeton University Press

¹²Ibid

¹³Bhagat, RB (2016) The practice of early marriage among females in India: Persistence and Change, IIPS, Mumbai

¹⁴<http://iipsindia.org/pdf/IIPSWorkingPaper10.pdf>

¹⁵Goode, W. J. (1965). *World Revolution and Family Patterns*. London: Colliner Macmillan Limited.

¹⁶<http://www.nirantar.net/uploads/files/EM%20Report%20-%20English.pdf>

Sarda Act was replaced by the Prohibition of Child Marriage Act 2006, because of the independent attention that it got from the women's movement¹⁷.

The ***Prohibition of Child Marriage Act 2006*** declared child marriages below the stipulated age as a cognizable offence. The most important clause in the Act was Section 16 which directed state governments to appoint Child Marriage Prohibition Officers (CMPOs) to prevent solemnization of child marriages. However, most of these legal efforts were intended to reduce the fertile years of girls within marriage, and thus to limit the country's population growth and reduce health care costs. None of these efforts were focused on empowering young girls or on challenging patriarchy¹⁸.

Despite these efforts to combat child marriage and to deal with the reasons of its origin and rationale, the practice continues to be rampant.

1.3 Geographical spread of child marriage

According to a study by the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF, 2014), about 700 million women around the world reported being married before 18 years compared to 156 million men¹⁹.

Global Scenario: Child marriage is most common in the world's poorest countries. The highest prevalence rates of women in the age group 20-49 years reporting entering marriage before 18 years are in South Asia (56 per cent), followed by West and Central Africa (46 per cent), Eastern and Southern Africa (38 per cent), Latin America and the Caribbean (30 per cent)²⁰. Child marriage is also common in the Middle East and North Africa with 24 per cent women reporting getting married before age of 18. In recent times, there has been an increase in the incidence of child marriage amongst families in situations of forced displacement. Out-of-school girls are more susceptible to child marriage, which has leapt fourfold among Syrian refugee girls in Lebanon, Turkey, and Jordan²¹.

However, though the median age at marriage is rising around the world, including in developing countries²², child marriage continues to be prevalent in some regions of the world. A number of governmental, non-governmental and community organizations are working to decrease the number of child marriages in their respective communities and regions.

¹⁷Kumar, R. (1993). *The History of Doing: An Illustrated Account of Movements for Women's Rights and Feminism in India, 1800-1990*. New Delhi: Zuban.

¹⁸<https://www.breakthrough.tv/earlymarriage/the-law-pcma/>

¹⁹United Nations Children's Fund (2014) *Ending Child Marriage: Progress and prospects*, UNICEF, New York.

https://www.unicef.org/media/files/Child_Marriage_Report_7_17_LR.pdf

²⁰United Nations Children's Fund (2014) *Ending Child Marriage: Progress and prospects*, UNICEF, New York.

https://www.unicef.org/media/files/Child_Marriage_Report_7_17_LR.pdf

²¹Human Rights Watch (2016) *World Report 2017*. https://www.hrw.org/sites/default/files/world_report_download/wr2017-web.pdf

²²The National Research Council and Institute of Medicine (NRC/IOM). (2005). *Growing Up Global: The Changing Transitions to Adulthood in Developing Countries*. Cynthia B. Lloyd, Ed. Committee on Population and Board on Children, Youth and Families. Division of Behavioral and Social Sciences and Education. Washington, D.C.: The National Academies Press.

The scenario in certain Asian countries in terms of child marriage and interventions to curb the same is presented below:

Nepal is one of the poorest countries in the world, currently ranking 157 out of 187 countries on the Human Development Index. Nepal has the third highest rate of child marriage in Asia, after Bangladesh and India. The median age that girls marry in Nepal is 17.2 years, a figure that masks the true extent of the problem in the country. In Nepal, both girls and boys are at the risk of child marriage, although girls are more likely to be married as children. According to UNICEF, 37 per cent of girls in Nepal marry before age 18. Ten per cent are married by age 15²³. A 2012 NGO study found that 34 per cent of boys marry before age 19²⁴. The age of legal marriage for both boys and girls is 20 in Nepal²⁵. The government has pledged to end child marriage by 2030, and in 2016 adopted a broad strategy on ending child marriage. A number of child protection and welfare schemes by the Government of Nepal, including a scholarship program, are attempting to encourage girls to continue on to secondary school and complete their studies²⁶. In 2008, a program Chunauti supported by USAID and implemented by CARE was initiated to decrease the harmful practices of child marriage and gender-based violence in three districts of Nepal - Dhanusha, Mahottari, and Rupandehi - and to strengthen the enabling environment at the national and district levels. The program tackles these issues through behaviour change communication and social mobilization in Nepal²⁷.

Bangladesh has one of the highest child marriage rates in the world. At present, the minimum age of marriage for women is 18 with no exceptions, but the government proposed to allow 16- and 17-year-old girls to marry with parental consent, a change that would constitute a de facto lowering of the age of marriage, as most marriages are arranged by parents. Bangladesh government data indicates that the percentage of girls marrying before age 18 declined from 65 per cent in 2014 to 52 per cent in 2016, and that 18 per cent of girls still marry before the age of 15, the highest rate in Asia and among the highest in the world. In 2014, the government pledged to end marriage of children younger than 15 by 2021, and marriage younger than 18 by 2041. In 2016, the government undermined progress toward these goals by continuing to push for weakening of the law governing the minimum age of marriage²⁸.

Recognizing the enormity of the problem, international and Bangladeshi aid agencies and institutions have been working together to reverse these dangerous child marriage

²³UNICEF (2012) UNICEF State of the World's Children Data

<http://data.unicef.org/child-protection/child-marriage.html>

²⁴Save the Children, World Vision International and Plan International (2012) Child Marriage in Nepal: Research Report

<http://resourcecentre.savethechildrenmarriage-nepal-research-report>

²⁵Human Rights Watch (2016) Our Time to Sing and Play: Child Marriage in Nepal, Human Rights Watch, USA

²⁶<http://asiapacific.unfpa.org/sites/asiapacific/files/pub-pdf/Child%20Marriage%20in%20Southern%20Asia.pdf>

²⁷<http://www.care.org/sites/default/files/documents/Chunauti-Brief.pdf>

²⁸Human Rights Watch(2016) World Report 2017.

https://www.hrw.org/sites/default/files/world_report_download/wr2017-web.pdf

trends. Since 2001, a pilot intervention Kishori Abhijan (Adolescent Girls' Adventure) led by a consortium of international and local organisations aims to lower school dropout rates, increase girls' independent economic activity and raise the age of marriage. Evaluation findings indicate that participants waited significantly longer to marry. The programme led to perceptible increases in self-employment and part-time employment opportunities for participating girls of all ages, and all participants demonstrated increased knowledge about health, family planning, nutrition and the causes of disease²⁹.

Child marriage is a contentious and complex issue in **Iran** also where it has been prevalent since pre-revolutionary times. The UN Children's Rights Committee reported that the age of marriage for girls is 13, that sexual intercourse with girls as young as nine lunar years was not criminalized, and that judges had discretion to release some perpetrators of so-called honour killings without any punishment. Child marriage—though not the norm—continues, as the law allows girls to marry at 13 and boys at age 15, as well as at younger ages if authorized by a judge³⁰. According to a 2010 report, the number of child brides under the age of 10 in Iran had actually doubled over the previous three years. The report also showed that 42,000 marriages involved girls between the ages of 10 and 14.

Child marriage is one of the most pressing developmental challenges in **Pakistan** today, with approximately 21 per cent of girls in the country married off before the age of 18. In January 2016, a proposal submitted to parliament aimed to raise the legal minimum age from 16 to 18 years for females and introduce harsher penalties for those who arrange child marriage was withdrawn following strong pressure from the Council of Islamic Ideology. The council criticized the proposal as 'anti-Islamic' and 'blasphemous'. As part of the "Girl Power Program" launched in 2010, Plan International has set up a series of non-formal education (NFE) centres in various communities across Pakistan. They aim to fast-track girls' education to grade 10 so they can get a school leaving certificate as well as receive education on basic life skills such as health, sanitation and sexual and reproductive rights. As of 2012, Plan International's NFE centres have educated over 11,000 girls and women across Pakistan. The centres play an important role in delaying child marriage as well as supporting girls who are already married³¹.

India ranks 6th among the top 10 countries with high rates of child marriage among women³². Though several studies agree on the declining trend of child marriage globally, in India, the pace of decline is slow and there is still a high proportion of child

²⁹<http://asiapacific.unfpa.org/sites/asiapacific/files/pub-pdf/Child%20Marriage%20in%20Southern%20Asia.pdf>

³⁰Human Rights Watch(2016) World Report 2017. https://www.hrw.org/sites/default/files/world_report_download/wr2017-web.pdf

³¹https://www.plan.org.au/~media/plan/documents/resources/plan_child_marriage_report_july_2014.pdf?la=en

³²United Nations Children's Fund (2014) Ending Child Marriage: Progress and prospects. UNICEF, New York.

³³https://www.unicef.org/media/files/Child_Marriage_Report_7_17_LR.pdf

marriages happening here³³. The median age of marriage for women increased from 18.2 (Census, 2001) to 19.2 years (Census, 2011) and for boys this increased from 22.6 (Census 2001) to 23.5 years (Census, 2011). It is important to remember that behind these national averages lie both inter and intra-state variations in the median age of child marriage. There are also variations across different social and ethnic groups and a few ethnic groups such as tribal communities have lower rates of child marriage compared with the majority of the population. A recent study as mentioned earlier (UNICEF, 2014) reveals that 156 million men alive today globally were married as children. The Annual Health Survey³⁴ in India has indicated that more boys than girls are getting married before the legal age³⁵. Despite this fact, little attention in terms of research and intervention programmes has been paid to the issue of child marriages.

1.4 Data availability on child marriage

In India, apart from the National Family Health Survey (NFHS), there are several other large scale data sources which provide information on marriage, including child marriage, such as District Level Household and Facility Survey (DLHS), the India Human Development Survey (IHDS) and Census. However, while most of these data sources help in examining the trends and prevalence of marriage, the Census data enables the analysis of incidence of marriage not only at the state level, but also at the district level.

Prevalence (Prevalence Rates):

It is the proportion of people in a population who have a particular characteristic at a specified point in time, or over a specified period of time. The numerator includes not only new cases, but also old cases (people who remained ill during the specified point or period in time).

However, in the context of child marriage in report, prevalence of child marriage is taken as the percentage of women and men in the age group 20-24 and 25-29 years respectively who are married before the legal age at any time point.

Incidence (Incidence rate)

Incidence is a measure of characteristics that allows us to determine a person's probability of being diagnosed with that particular characteristics on a given period of time. Here the numerator includes only the new cases.

However, the incidence of child marriage can be defined as the number of ever married persons who were married before attaining the legal age of marriage (18 years in case of girls and 21 years in case of boys) among the total population of that particular age group. Here, ever-married includes currently married, widowed, divorced and separated persons.

³³Lesthaeghe, R. (2010). The Unfolding Story of the Second Demographic Transition. *Population and Development*, 36(2), 211-251

³⁴The Annual Health Survey is conducted by the Office of Registrar General, India in all the 284 districts (as per 2001 Census) in eight Empowered Action Group States of Bihar, Jharkhand, Uttar Pradesh, Uttarakhand, Madhya Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, Orissa and Rajasthan, besides Assam for a three year period 2007 to 2009, carried out in 2010 and 2011.

The NFHS and DLHS provide prevalence rates for ever married women of age 15-49 years and men of age 15-54 years whereas the Census provides data on current marital status (currently married, widowed, divorced, separated, and never married) by current age and marital duration (in completed years). To examine the current situation of marriage, incidence rate is obviously a more powerful indicator compared to prevalence. The purpose of this study is to understand the current scenario of child marriage in India, so as to develop strategies to prevent as well as reduce child and early marriage. Given this objective, it is important to understand the incidence of child marriage rather than its prevalence, for which Census data has been drawn upon for the present study.

1.5 National Family Health Survey (NFHS)

The National Family Health Survey (NFHS) is one of the important data sources in the country. It provides information on several social and health issues at the national and state levels. Usually, the NFHS survey is conducted after every six years. However, the most recent survey (2015-16) was conducted after a gap of ten years. The other important data source on population i.e. the Census is always undertaken after a gap of ten years and conducted in the first year of each decade. The most recent Census was undertaken in 2011. So, it is worthwhile to review the latest information from NFHS IV (2015-16) data on the prevalence of child marriage with respect to men and women across states and to compare with data available from NFHS III (2005-2006). Figures 1 and 2 present this data, where the prevalence of child marriage among women (Figure 1) is taken as the percentage of women aged 20-24 years who were married before the legal age of 18 years. In case of men (Figure 2) the prevalence of child marriage is taken as the percentage of men in the age group 25-29 years who were married before the legal age of 21 years.

Figure 1.1: Percentage of Women age 20-24 years reported married before the age 18 years (%)

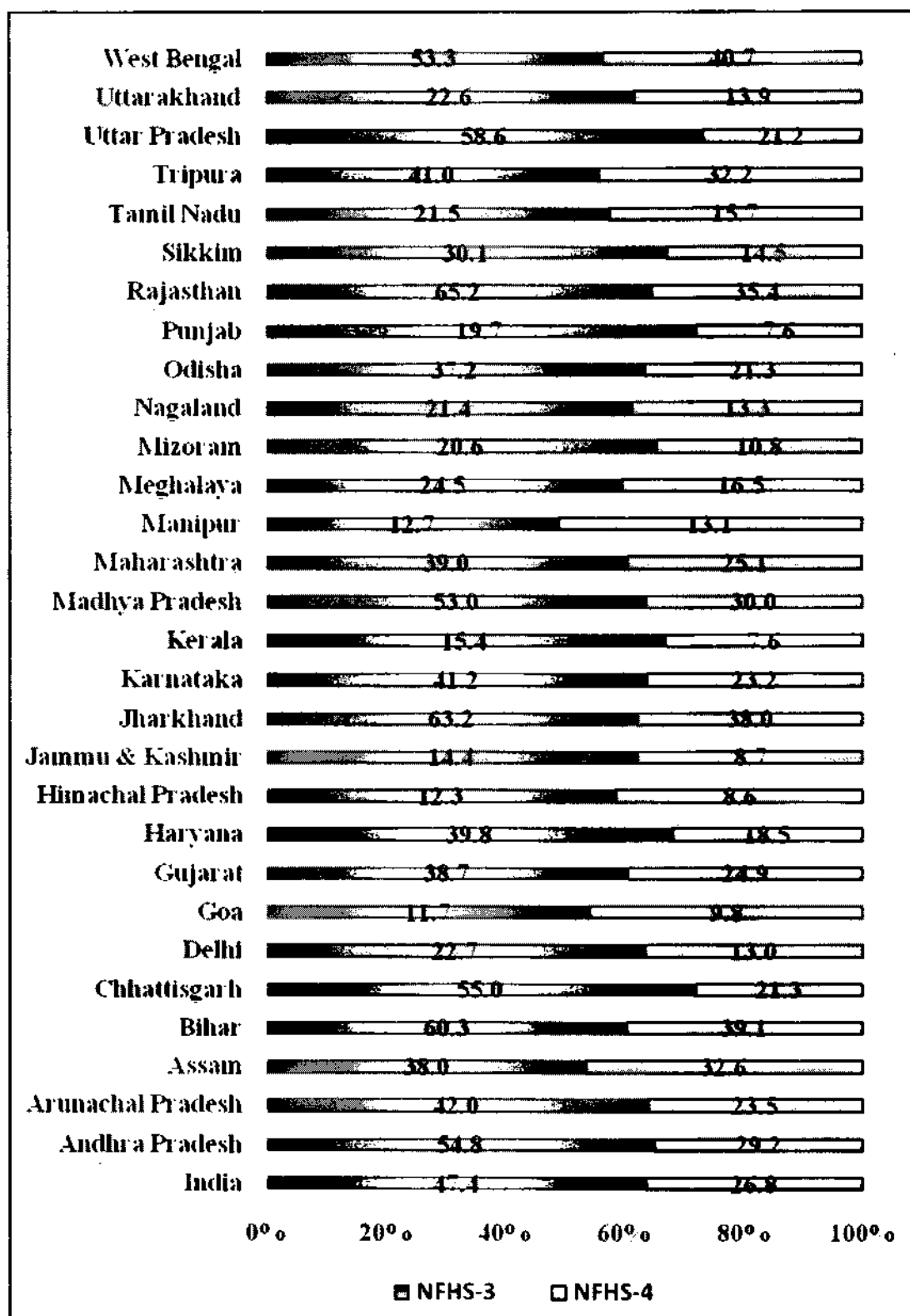
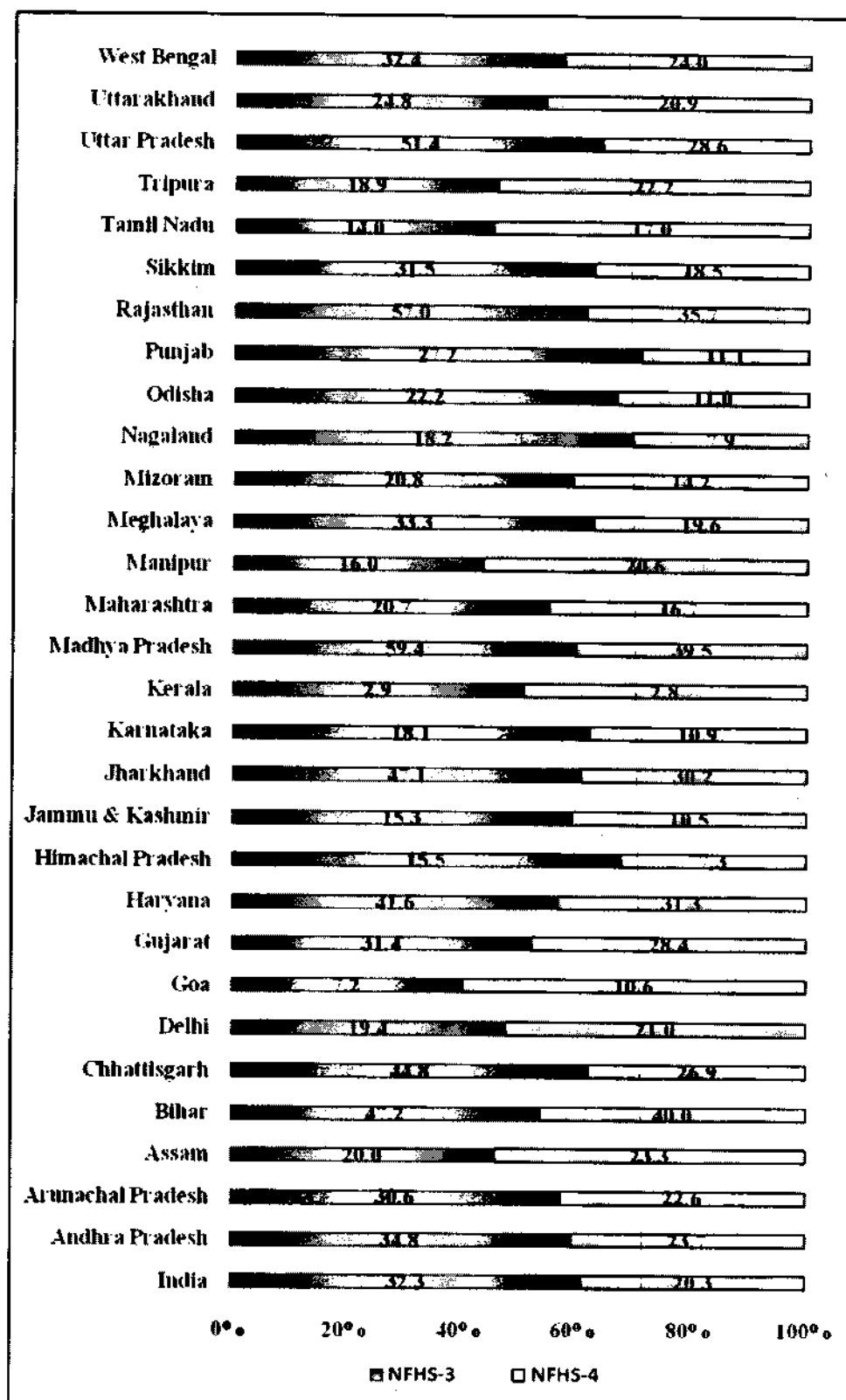


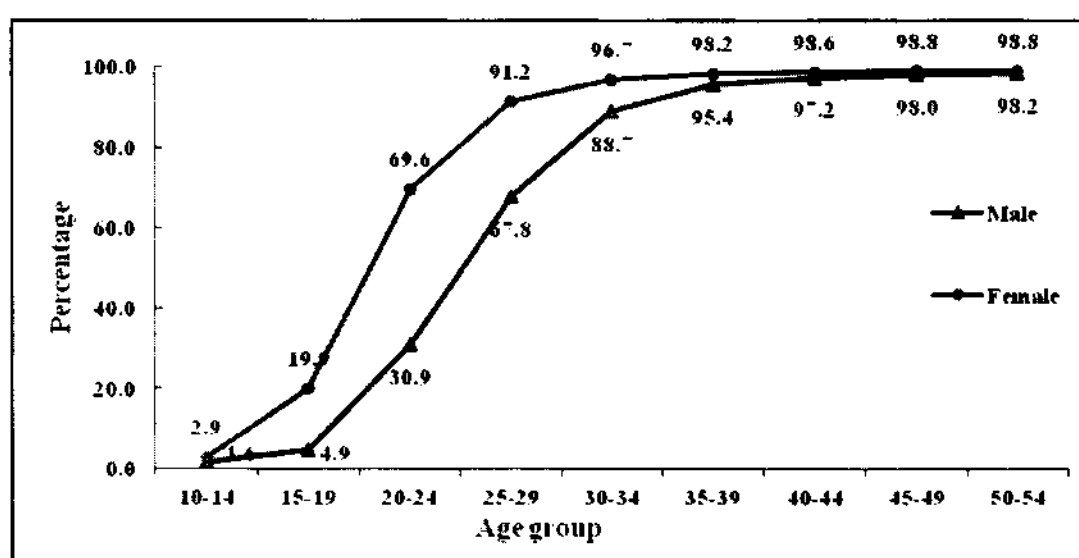
Figure 1. 2: Percentage of Men age 25-29 years married before age 21 years (%)

It is clear from the comparison of NFHS-III to NFHS-IV, that the decline in the prevalence of child marriage in India, as reported by women aged 20-24 and men aged 25-29 reduced from 47.4 to 26.8 per cent for women and reduced from 32.3 to 20.3 per cent for men. All states reported a decline in percentages across the two rounds for women married before the age of 18 years, except in Manipur. Noteworthy is the fact that several states like Chhattisgarh, Uttar Pradesh, Jharkhand, Haryana, Sikkim, Rajasthan, Punjab and Kerala reported a positive trend of decline in prevalence of around 50 per cent and above of child marriage for women (Figure 1). Interestingly, the figures for men in the ages of 25-29 years who reported marriage below the age of 21 years present a mixed picture. Four states, namely Punjab, Odisha, Himachal Pradesh and Nagaland, showed an impressive drop of around 50 per cent in the prevalence of child marriage for men. However, it is disturbing to note the increase in the prevalence of men marrying before 21 years in the states of Goa, Delhi, Assam, Manipur, Tamil Nadu and Tripura. There is obviously a need for systematic research to analyse these trends.

1.6 Census data on child marriage

Figure 1.3 shows the percentage of men and women married by age group, based on Census 2011. It is clear that about 3 per cent girls in the age group 10-14 were married, while only 1.6 per cent of boys were married in this age group. About 20 per cent of adolescent girls were married by the age of 19. When it comes to boys, only 5 per cent boys were married before attaining the age of 19 years.

Figure 1.3: Percentage of ever-married men and women by age-groups, India, Census 2011



Although the national statistics show a high rate of child marriage in the country, there are large regional variations within the country³⁶. According to a study by Desai and Andrist (2010), in general, Indian women are married before the age of 25 years, with a tight clustering of marriage between 17 and 19 years.

1.7 Rationale of the current research

There are only a few sources which provide data on incidences of child marriage. Such data is necessary to examine the changes in trends of child marriage across different age groups, for both boys and girls in India. In this context, the present report aims to present the situation of child marriage by examining the incidence of this phenomenon across states and districts based on Census 2011 data, with to the goal of identifying the high incidence districts and states. This information will enable States and UTs to develop strategies and intervention programmes to address child marriage through micro planning for high incidence districts.



Chapter 2

Laws and policies pertaining to child marriage

This chapter provides an overview of the various laws pertaining to child marriage in India as well as the different schemes that the government has launched with the aim of empowering young people, particularly the girl child.

2.1 Introduction

Ideals of human welfare and concerns have to be supported by a legislative framework and appropriate policies that can ensure the wellbeing of people. The rights approach shifts the focus from welfare to rights and entitlements. It makes it obligatory for the State/Government to grant rights to its citizens. India has ratified almost all the international conventions on human rights, especially those with relevance to child marriage and protection of young people. These include the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) as well as the Optional Protocol to CRC on Sale of Children, Child Prostitution and Child Pornography. The Sustainable Development Goals (SDG's) have also highlighted the importance of addressing child marriage and for the first-time target 5.3, 'eliminate all harmful practices, such as child, early and forced marriage and female genital mutilations'. Goal 5 'Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls', calls out to nations to work towards the same. It is important to recognise child, early and forced marriage not only as a series of human rights violations, but also as a barrier to development.

Several provisions in the Constitution of India impose on the State the primary responsibility of ensuring that all the needs of children are met and that their basic human rights are fully protected. Children enjoy equal rights as adults as per Article 14 of the Constitution. Article 15(3) empowers the State to make special provisions for children. There is an array of laws (criminal and civil), both at the national and state levels to ensure the best interests of children.

2.2 Laws prohibiting child marriage

Child marriage in India is an age-old practice that has both social and religious sanction and cuts across all sections of the society. Recognizing child marriage as a social evil as early as the 19th century, social reformers in India have tried to eradicate this practice. The Penal Code of 1860 declared consummation of marriage as rape if the wife was

below 10 years of age and prescribed severe punishment. This was followed by various Acts that penalized child marriage. The Child Marriage Act of 1872 raised the age of marriage to 14 years for girls. The Age of Consent Act prohibited consummation below 12 years of age in 1925 and raised it to 13 years in 1928. Subsequently, a Bill was introduced which later became the Child Marriage Restraint Act (CMRA) of 1929, popularly known as the Sarda Act. The Act prohibited marriage of girls below the age of 14 years and of boys below the age of 18³⁷. In 1978, this law was amended to make it more effective and raised the minimum age of marriage to 18 years for girls and 21 years for boys. However, despite the existence of this law, child marriages continued to take place due to several loopholes in the law; for example, non-compliance of age does not invalidate the marriage. Enforcement only imposed penalties and mild punishments did not serve as a deterrent. Further, the lack of a common civil law also weakened the enforcement. Inadequate and inefficient system of registration of births and deaths failed to provide age proof universally and rendered it ineffective.

The Prohibition of Child Marriage Act (PCMA), 2006 was notified in January 2007 to overcome the constraints of the former legislation in effectively dealing with the problem of child marriages in India. The provision of this law can be classified into three broad categories:

- A. Prevention
- B. Protection
- C. Prosecution of Offenders

(A) Prevention

The law seeks to prevent child marriages by making certain actions punishable and by appointing certain authorities responsible for the prevention and prohibition of child marriages. These officers are responsible for ensuring that the law is implemented effectively. It is also the responsibility of the community to make use of the law. More specifically under the law:

- I. The solemnization of child marriage is a cognizable and non-bailable offence³⁸.
- II. Child Marriage Prohibition Officers (CMPOs) are to be appointed in every state to prevent child marriages, ensure protection of the victims as well as prosecution of the offenders³⁹.
- III. The courts have the power to issue injunctions for preventing child marriage from taking place⁴⁰.

³⁷Bajpai, A. (2003). *Child Rights in India*. New Delhi: Oxford University Press

³⁸Section 15, PCMA 2006

³⁹Section 16, PCMA 2006

⁴⁰Section 13, PCMA 2006

- IV. Child marriage will be declared null and void if the injunction against a child marriage is violated, or if the child is taken away from his/her lawful guardian by enticement, force or use of deceitful means, or is sold or trafficked for the purpose of marriage⁴¹.
- V. The law lays down penal provisions for those who solemnize child marriages⁴².
- VI. The CMPO and District Collector are responsible for sensitization and awareness creation in the community⁴³.

(B) Protection

- I. The law makes child marriages voidable by giving choice to the children in the marriage to seek annulment of marriage⁴⁴.
- II. It provides for maintenance and residence of the female contracting party⁴⁵.
- III. It gives a legal status to all children born from child marriages and makes provisions for their custody and maintenance⁴⁶.
- IV. The law provides for all support and aid including medical aid, legal aid, counselling and rehabilitation support to children once they are rescued⁴⁷.
- V. The Child Marriage Prohibition Officer has been empowered:
 - to provide necessary aid to victims of child marriage⁴⁸.
 - to provide legal aid⁴⁹, and
 - to produce children in need of care and protection before the Child Welfare Committee or a First Class Judicial Magistrate where there is no Child Welfare Committee⁵⁰.

(C) Prosecution of Offenders

- I. The law provides punishment for an adult male above 18 years of age marrying a child⁵¹.
- II. It also lays down punishment for those performing/conducting/abetting a child

⁴¹Section 12 and 14, PCMA 2006

⁴²Section 10, PCMA 2006

⁴³Section 13 (4) and 16 (3) (d), PCMA 2006

⁴⁴Section 3(2) and 3(3), PCMA 2006

⁴⁵Section 4, PCMA 2006

⁴⁶Section 5 and 6, PCMA 2006

⁴⁷Section 16(3) (g), PCMA 2006

⁴⁸Section 16(3) (g), PCMA 2006

⁴⁹Section 16(3) (g), PCMA 2006

⁵⁰Section 32 of Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Act 2000, as amended in 2006

⁵¹Section 9, PCMA 2006

marriage⁵².

- III. It prescribes punishment for promoting or permitting solemnization of child marriage, including for parents, guardians or any other person/ association/ organization⁵³.
- IV. The law clearly states that women offenders in any of the above categories cannot be punished with imprisonment. However, they can be penalized by way of imposition of a fine⁵⁴.
- V. Mechanisms under the law.

The authorities identified for prohibiting child marriage under the present law are:

Child Marriage Prohibition Officer
 District Magistrate
 First Class Judicial Magistrate or Metropolitan Magistrate
 Police
 Family Courts

Any person(s) called upon by the State Government to assist the Child Marriage Prohibition Officer. These could include - a respectable member of the locality with a record of social service, officer of the Gram Panchayat or Municipality, officer of the government or public sector undertaking, office bearer of any non-governmental organization.

VI. Reporting Child Marriages

- Any person can report an incidence of child marriage before or after it has been solemnized. An immediate report needs to be made to:
- The Police
- The Child Marriage Prohibition Officer or such persons as may be appointed to assist him/her
- First Class Judicial Magistrate or Metropolitan Magistrate
- Child Welfare Committee or a member of the Child Welfare Committee
- Child Line
- District Magistrate

⁵²Section 10, PCMA 2006

⁵³Section 11, PCMA 2006

⁵⁴Provision to section 11 (1), PCMA 2006

VII. Complaint

A complaint can be filed by any person, including those who report an incidence of child marriage. Such persons may include:

A person who has reason to believe that a child marriage is likely to take place

A person who has personal information

School teachers, doctors, ANMs, anganwadi workers, village level workers, SHG members, village elders, neighbors etc.

A parent or guardian of the child.

The Child Marriage Prohibition Officer or persons appointed to assist her/him

A non-governmental organization having reasonable information

The PCMA has limitations because it fails to declare all child marriages as illegal⁵⁵. The law makes child marriages voidable only when children or guardians seek annulment of the marriage. In this sense, it presumes that the child is able to exercise her agency to say no to child marriage and that there are appropriate support systems and institutions to enable a child to defy marriage and also to rehabilitate her. In reality, it is unlikely that the guardian will take the initiative and risk terminating a marriage. Also, the provisions of the PCMA are diluted by the personal laws in the country. For example, the Muslim personal law lays down the age of puberty as the age of marriage.

The section below highlights the contradiction that persists in India's plural legal system on the legal age of child marriage.⁵⁶

- **Hindu Marriage Act (HMA):** Under the HMA, marriage of girls and boys below the age of 18 years is punishable. However, the punishment provisions only apply to the couple; even where a child marriage occurs without the agreement of the parties themselves, there is no penalty for the parents or guardians who arranged the marriage or for the officials who solemnized it. Marriages below the age of 18 are voidable only if a girl was married before the age of 15 and challenges the marriage before she turns 18.
- **Muslim Personal Law:** Though un-codified in India, Muslim personal

⁵⁵NCPCR http://ncpcr.gov.in/view_file.php?fid=466

⁵⁶http://www.ohchr.org/Documents/Issues/Women/WRGS/Earlyforcedmarriage/NGOs_Individuals/CRR1.pdf

laws establish puberty — which is presumed to be at 15 years of age—as the minimum age of marriage (Sagade). Since marriage is considered a contract under Muslim law, the marriage of a girl above this age without her consent is legally void (Sagade). Parents or guardians are permitted to arrange marriages on behalf of girls below the age of 15, but girls can utilize the 'option of puberty' to render such marriages void.—However, this option is only available if a girl challenges the marriage before turning 18 and if the marriage has not yet been consummated (Dissolution of Muslim Marriages).

- **Indian Christian Marriage Act (ICMA):** The ICMA requires that a preliminary notice for all marriages involving girls below the age of 18 years and boys below the age of 21 years be published at least 14 days prior to the marriage.
- **Parsi Marriage and Divorce Act (PMDA):** Under the PMDA, the marriage of a girl under the age of 18 years is invalid. However, in the provision of grounds under which a marriage can be declared void, age is not included.
- **Jewish Personal Law:** Under the Jewish Personal laws, which are uncoded, the minimum age of marriage for girl is puberty which is presumed to occur at the age of 12.

Registration of Marriages: At present, there is no such law to provide for compulsory registration of marriages in the country. The Registration of Births and Deaths (Amendment) Bill, 2012 was introduced in the Rajya Sabha on May 7, 2012⁵⁷ to include the registration of marriages within its purview. Different states continue to formulate their own rules regarding registration of child marriages, in the absence of a national law.

Other laws that may have relevance to child marriage include the Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Act, 2000, the Domestic Violence Act, 2005, and the Protection of Children from Sexual Offences (POCSO) Act, 2012.⁵⁸

The **Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Act, 2015** is the main legal framework for juvenile justice in India. It ensures proper care, development, treatment and social re-integration of children in different circumstances by adopting child friendly approach in the best interest of the child. This Act was preceded by Juvenile Justice

⁵⁷The Registration of Births And Deaths (Amendment) Bill, 2012. Bill No. XXII Of 2012, As Introduced in the Rajya Sabha. Available at: <http://www.prsindia.org/uploads/media/Registration%20of%20births%20and%20deaths/REegistration%20of%20Births%20and%20Deaths%20%28Amendment%29%20bill,%202012.pdf>

⁵⁸<http://unicef.in/Whatwedo/30/Child-Marriage>

(Care and Protection of Children), Act 2000 which was further amended in 2006 and 2010. It lays down a uniform legal frame work to deal with social maladjustment. The JJ Act, 2015 has replaced all corresponding laws relating to **juveniles** in conflict with law and children in need of care and protection.⁵⁹ This law, brought in compliance with the 1989 UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC), repealed the earlier Juvenile Justice Act of 1986 after India signed and ratified the UNCRC in 1992. This Act has been further amended in 2006 and 2010⁶⁰. Under the Juvenile Justice (JJ) Act 2015, Juvenile Justice Boards have to be constituted in every district under a Metropolitan / Judicial Magistrate of First Class. The JJ Act 2015 added the definition of those at imminent risk of marriage before attaining the age of marriage and whose parents, family members, guardian and any other persons are likely to be responsible for solemnization of such marriage⁶¹. Special Juvenile Police Units shall be provided special training and will coordinate with the regular police to make sure that children rescued from child marriages are taken to the Child Welfare Committee/Judicial Magistrate of First Class as the case may be.

The **Constitution** of India recognizes the vulnerable position of children and their rights. Therefore, following the doctrine of protective discrimination, it guarantees in Article 15 special attention to children through necessary and special laws and policies that safeguard their rights. The right to equality, protection of life and personal liberty and the right against exploitation enshrined in Articles 14, 15, 16, 17, 21, 23 and 24 further reiterate India's commitment to the protection, safety, security and well-being of all its people, including the girl child. The Indian Penal Code (IPC) contains certain provisions that can be used to book a case of child marriage or forced marriage. Under section 366 of the IPC, kidnapping/abduction of a woman to compel her for marriage or for illicit intercourse and use of criminal intimidation or any other method of compulsion is a punishable offence. Section 496 makes going through a marriage ceremony with fraudulent intention a punishable offence. With an amendment to the criminal law in April 2013, Section 370 of the IPC now contains specific provisions to deal with human trafficking for purposes of sexual exploitation, slavery and servitude. This provision can be used to book a case of trafficking for marriage also, though marriage is not mentioned in it explicitly.

2.3 National policies, plans and strategies

The Government of India has undertaken both policy initiatives and implementation of programmes aimed at changing social norms and mind-sets of people to ensure delaying the age of marriage and pregnancies of young girls. Some of the national level policies formulated since 2000 are presented here. These policies either directly aim at

⁵⁹www.indiacode.nic.in/acts-in-pdf/2016/201602.pdf

⁶⁰http://zeenews.india.com/news/india/juvenile-justice-bill-approved-in-lok-sabha_1591474.html

⁶¹http://www.trackthemiissingchild.gov.in/trackchild/readwrite/JJAct_2015.pdf

or include delaying age at marriage as an important component⁶².

- (1) **National Population Policy, 2000** with a goal of achieving 100 per cent registration of births, deaths, marriage and pregnancy by 2010.
- (2) **National Policy for Empowerment of Women, 2001** was conceived to introduce interventions and special programmes to impact delaying the age of marriage so that by 2010, child marriage is eliminated.
- (3) **National AIDS Prevention and Control Policy, 2002** aims to promote better understanding of HIV and safe sex practices among the population, including the youth and adolescent.
- (4) **The National Youth Policy, 2003** and the more recent **National Youth Policy, 2014** emphasize 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.
- (5) **National Plan of Action for Children, 2005** aimed at achieving 100 per cent registration of births, deaths, marriages and pregnancies by 2010, elimination of child marriages by 2010, and stopping sale of children and all forms of child trafficking, including for marriage⁶³.
- (6) **National Policy for Children, 2013** recognizes every person below the age of eighteen years as a child and covers all children within the territory and jurisdiction of the country. It adheres to the Constitutional mandate and guiding principles of UN CRC and reflects a paradigm shift from a 'need-based' to a rights-based" approach⁶⁴. It recognizes that a multi-sectoral and multi-dimensional approach is necessary to secure the rights of children. The Policy has identified four priority areas: survival; health and nutrition; education and development; and protection and participation. As children's needs are multi-sectoral, interconnected and require collective action, the Policy calls for purposeful convergence and coordination across different sectors and levels of governance.
- (7) **National Plan of Action for Children (NPAC) 2016⁶⁵**, succeeds the Plan of Action adopted in 2005. The previous plan had identified 12 key areas including 'complete abolition of child marriage'. The NPAC, 2016 aims to reduce incidence of early marriage, especially among girls. The NPAC, 2016 has highlighted that it will reduce prevalence of child marriage to 15 per cent by 2021.

⁶²<http://ncrb.gov.in/c112014/chapter/chapter6.pdf>

⁶³<http://childlineindia.org.in/pdf/NationalPlanAction-2005.pdf>

⁶⁴<http://www.childlineindia.org.in/pdf/The-National-Policy-for-Children-2013.pdf>

⁶⁵http://wcd.nic.in/sites/default/files/National%20Plan%20of%20Action_0.pdf

Although there have been concerted efforts towards actualizing the intent of these policy instruments, most of the goals set out in these policy documents have not been achieved so far. To add further impetus, the government has also undertaken other initiatives to create an enabling environment for improving the status of the girl child and to discourage child marriages. These include declaring January 24th as 'National Girl Child Day' to sensitize people and create awareness about the girl child, organizing awareness generation workshops, seminars and campaigns, and encouraging State Governments to take special initiatives to discourage child marriages on Akha Teej — the traditional day for such marriages.

Another important initiative taken by the Ministry of Women and Child Development, which still remains in draft form, is the **National Strategy Document on Prevention of Child Marriage (2013)** which aims to present the Government of India's strategic vision to eliminate the practice of child marriage⁶⁶. It provides broad guidance to state and district governments to help them shape their interventions to end child marriage. It adopts a holistic and ecological model and envisions a comprehensive approach to child marriage involving partnerships within and between the Centre, State, voluntary organizations, families and children/adolescents themselves. This document outlines strategic directions to prevent child marriage under each thematic area including law enforcement, access to quality education and other opportunities, changing mind-sets and social norms, empowerment of adolescents, knowledge and data management and development of indicators that can be monitored. These need to be implemented by various stake holders including the central government, state governments, local self-governments, civil society and non-governmental organizations using convergent and multi-dimensional approaches (Ministry of Women and Child Development, 2013)⁶⁷. This strategy was also accompanied by a draft National Plan of Action on Prevention of Child Marriage⁶⁸ which proposed strategic interventions using convergent and multi-dimensional approaches.

Some of the goals proposed in the plan of action are as follows:

To enforce PCMA 2006 and related laws and policies that can discourage child marriage.

To improve access to quality education and other vocational opportunities.

To initiate programs that enable community mobilization and outreach to change social norms and attitudes.

⁶⁶Ministry of Women and Child Development (2013) National Strategy Document on Prevention of Child Marriage Ministry of Women and Child Development, Government of India (2013) <http://www.icds-wcd.nic.in/childwelfare/Strategychildmarriage.pdf>

⁶⁷Ibid

⁶⁸ <http://vikaspedia.in/social-welfare/women-and-child-development/draft-marriage>

To build skills and capacities of adolescent girls and boys.

To collect data, initiate research to inform programming and interventions.

To develop monitoring and evaluation systems for measuring outcomes.

To improve co-ordination, communication and monitoring among those involved in the implementation

However, the strategy and plan of action has not been approved as on date.

The recent **Policy for Skill Development and Entrepreneurship, 2015**, superseding the National Skill Development Policy, 2009 acknowledges that “women constitute almost half of the demographic dividend. Thus the key challenge here is to increase their participation in the labour force, which is directly linked to economic growth of the country. Mainstreaming gender roles by skilling women in non-traditional roles and increasing gender sensitivity in the workplace will have a catalytic effect on productivity and will be a smart economic decision.” It also highlights the need to meet the rising aspirations of the youth through focusing on advancement of skills that are relevant to the emerging economic environment. Various provisions made in this policy document include quality vocational education, building a pro-skilling environment amongst youth, special programmes for skill training to provide sustainable livelihood options and establishment of Kaushal Vardhan Kendras at panchayat level for mobilizing and imparting skills pertaining to local employment/livelihood opportunities to school drop-outs, adolescent girls, housewives and rural youth⁶⁹. This is an opportunity that can be utilised to engage both adolescent boys and girls, specifically school drop-outs to enhance their skills and prevent them from entering into marriage or unskilled labour markets. Such training will equip the young boys and girls with skills and earnings which will help them make better informed choices about their lives.

2.4 Laws and policies on child marriage: A synthesis

Needless to say, that mere enacting of laws and making policy provisions have not been sufficient to combat the practice of child marriage, which continues to exist even today, seven decades after independence. It is felt that these laws and policies have not considered the socio cultural determinants of child marriage adequately. Amendments made to the laws and policies have also been inadequate, and display a piecemeal approach without taking an integrated view of the practice. For example, the **Prohibition of Child Marriage Act, 2006**, which has been strengthened considerably, has a focus on prohibiting rather than restraining child marriage. The provisions for

enforcement have also been well defined, yet it has not made much impact in changing the incidences of marriage of girls aged 16-17 years. Obviously, its enforcement and implementation has not been to the desired level. Clearly, laws and policies need to be supported by effective actions and interventions to create a social consciousness in favour of delaying marriage of both boys and girls so as to enable optimal development of the youth populace.

Laws require to be reviewed periodically and be aligned with international standards of human rights and child rights given in CRC. Advocacy related to entitlement cannot be under scored. Laws also need to be demystified for raising awareness and legal literacy amongst masses. The ultimate aim is to bridge the gap between law in theory and law in practice; law has to be what law does.

2.5 Interventions to support policies

In order to translate policies into action, the Government of India and NGOs have attempted effective interventions that are likely to delay the age at marriage for girls in particular. These interventions are designed to provide opportunities for girls to continue their education, learn skills to be able to earn money, and develop and grow to be healthy and confident young women.

1. **The Rajiv Gandhi Scheme for Empowerment of Adolescent Girls:** The scheme aims at covering all out-of-school and school going adolescent girls in the age group of 11 to 18 years. They assemble at the Anganwadi Centre on a fixed day at regular intervals, (at least twice a month), and more frequently (once a week) during vacations/holidays. The learning package comprises life skills education, nutrition and health education, awareness about socio-legal issues, etc. It also provides an opportunity for social and leisure interaction. In addition, it may motivate out-of-school girls to join school once again. This scheme mainly aims at reducing the dropout rate of adolescent girls by increasing their literacy rate and work participation.
2. **Kishori Shakti Yojana (Adolescent Girls Scheme):** Kishori Shakti Yojana is another scheme under the ambit of ICDS that aims at empowerment and holistic development of adolescent girls by improving their self-perception and creating opportunities for realizing their full potential through Balika Mandals. The scheme primarily aims at breaking the intergenerational life cycle of nutritional and gender disadvantages by providing a supportive environment for self-development.

3. **Nutrition Programme for Adolescent Girls (NPAG):** The Nutrition Programme for Adolescent Girls was launched in 2002-03 as a pilot project in 51 districts to address the nutritional needs of adolescent girls, pregnant women and lactating mothers. Initially, under this scheme, 6 kg of food-grains were given to undernourished adolescent girls, pregnant women and lactating mothers. The programme continued until 2003-04. After a break of one year, it was rolled out as a full-scale project in 2005-06 by the Ministry of Women and Child Development. The scheme was restricted to only undernourished adolescent girls (11-19 years) weighing less than 35 kg. The funds are provided by the Central Government to the State Government in the form of 100 per cent grants. Grains are provided through public distribution system at no additional cost to the families of girls identified in this scheme.
4. **Dhanalakshmi:** This is a conditional cash transfer scheme for the girl child with insurance cover which would go a long way towards ensuring the survival of the girl child and assuring a better life for her. The direct and tangible objective of the scheme is to provide a set of financial incentives for families to encourage them to value a girl child, educate her and prevent child marriage. The scheme provides for cash transfers to the family of the girl child (preferably to the mother) on fulfilling certain specific conditions for eligibility:
 - All girls born after 19 November 2008 who have a registration of birth
 - Girls who are on the Immunization Register
 - On enrolment in school and retention in school till Standard 8
 - An insurance maturity cover will be taken for the girl child born after 19 November 2008 and if the girl child remains unmarried till the age of 18 years, she will get Rs. 1 lakh
 - Each condition like registration of birth, immunization, school enrolment and retention, insurance (maturity) cover are independent of each other and cannot be applied for retrospective fulfilment of conditionality. For example, if a girl is in Standard 2, she will be eligible for cash transfer from Standard 2 onwards and will not be eligible for cash transfers related to her birth and registration of birth, immunization, enrolment and retention in Standard 1.
 - The scheme will apply to all girl children, irrespective of their socio-economic status and the number of girl children in the family.

- The scheme will apply only to those girls who have domicile status in the selected blocks
5. **Poorna Shakti Kendra (PSK):** The Poorna Shakti Kendras are established at village level. The PSK is the focal point at the grassroots level through which the services to women would be facilitated by the Village Coordinators with the motto Hum Sunenge Naari ki Baat. The PSK is an extension of the urban model of Gender Resource Centres pioneered in Delhi, under Mission Convergence program. The first PSK model was operationalized in Pali district, Rajasthan on 16th Sep, 2011. The second such pilot was operationalized in the same year in Kamrup Metropolitan district, Assam. With gradual expansion, the districts covered now include Medak (Undivided Andhra Pradesh), Aurangabad (Maharashtra), Nalanda (Bihar), Gulbarga (Karnataka), Dhar (Madhya Pradesh), Daman and Diu, Salem (Tamil Nadu), Jaintia Hills (Meghalaya), Champai (Mizoram), Haridwar (Uttarakhand), West Singhbhum (Jharkhand), Solan (Himachal Pradesh), Kohima (Nagaland), Mewat, Kalnaur Block in Rohtak District and Panipat (Haryana), West Tripura (Tripura), Kannauj and Banda (Uttar Pradesh), Malda (West Bengal), Pali and Bundi (Rajasthan), Chandigarh (Chandigarh), Kamrup (Assam), Bilaspur (Chhattisgarh), Kulgam District (Jammu & Kashmir), Sabarkantha (Gujarat), Nayagarh (Odisha), Pune (Maharashtra), East Sikkim (Sikkim) and Puducherry (Puducherry)⁷⁰. The key strategies of PSK are:
- Monitoring and review of the program on a regular basis by facilitating inter-sectoral convergence of schemes/services/budget meant for women through gender audit
 - Strengthening institutional framework offering support service for women.
 - Conducting the outcome assessment to build the evidence for policy and program reform and scale up implementation of the initiatives
 - Having better convergence and support of Panchayat Raj Institutions, CBOs, Media, and community representatives to educate the public on gender issues and behaviour change
6. **Integrated Child Protection Scheme (ICPS):** The Integrated Child Protection Scheme (ICPS) is a comprehensive scheme introduced with improved norms in 2009-10 by the Government of India to bring several existing child protection

⁷⁰<http://grcgujarat.org/pdf/home1-Brochure.pdf>

programmes under one umbrella. This scheme incorporates other essential interventions which address issues hitherto not covered by earlier schemes. It is based on the cardinal principles of protection of child rights and the 'best interest of the child'⁷¹. ICPS aims to institutionalize services for emergency outreach and promotes family and community based care through counselling and support. ICPS functionaries are sensitized towards child protection, along with raising public awareness. This scheme seeks to put in place both preventive and curative mechanisms to protect children from exploitation, harassment, health hazards, etc. The model adopts government-civil society partnership to ensure child protection and create a safe and healthy environment for the children of India.

7. **Bal Vivah Virodh Abhiyan (Campaign against Child Marriage):** A nationwide awareness-raising programme against child marriage was started by the National Commission for Women in 2005. It is focused particularly on the states of Rajasthan, Bihar, Chhattisgarh, Madhya Pradesh, Jharkhand and Uttar Pradesh⁷² with high incidences of child marriage.
8. **The National Bravery Award:** The National Bravery Award is a mechanism established by the Central Government since 1957 for public recognition of positive role models. These awards go to children who perform outstanding deeds of bravery and selfless sacrifice. In 2003, HAQ: Centre for Child Rights recommended 5 girls from Karnal district (Haryana) who had stopped two child marriages despite opposition from their community leaders for this award. Since then, the definition of 'bravery' was broadened to include such courageous acts. Since then, several children have received the award for stopping child marriage in their local areas⁷³.
9. **Scheme of Strengthening Education among Scheduled Tribe (ST) Girls in Low Literacy Districts:** This program was initiated by the Ministry of Tribal Affairs, Government of India and launched on April 1, 2008. It aims at bridging the gap in literacy levels between the general female population and tribal women, through facilitating 100 per cent enrolment of tribal girls in the identified districts or blocks. This scheme particularly focuses on Naxal affected regions and areas inhabited by Primitive Tribal Groups (PTGs) and attempts to reduce drop-outs at the elementary level by creating the required ambience for education. Needless to say, improvement of the literacy rate of tribal girls is required to enable them to participate and benefit effectively from socio-economic development.

⁷¹http://icds-wcd.nic.in/icpsmon/st_abouticps.aspx

⁷² National Commission for Women, Annual Report, 2005-06, Chapter 10

⁷³ http://www.unicef.org/india/Child_Marriage_Fact_Sheet_Nov2011_final.pdf

10. **The Sukanya Samriddhi Account Yojana:** The programme was launched in 2015 by the Ministry of Finance. The Sukanya Samriddhi account is meant to ensure a bright future for girl children in India and is also known as the Girl Child Prosperity scheme. This programme's goal is to facilitate proper education of the girl children and take care of marriage expenses. It offers a small deposit investment for the girl children as an initiative under the 'Beti Bachao Beti Padhao' campaign.
11. **Mukhya Mantri Kanya Vivah Yojana (National):** The Department of Social Welfare, Government of India launched this scheme in March 2014. It provides financial assistance to the family of a girl child at the time of her marriage, to encourage registration of marriage, continuance of her education and to inhibit child marriage. Under this scheme, girls from below poverty line (BPL) families and those families whose income is below Rs. 60,000/- per annum are provided Rs. 5000/- at the time of marriage. This one-time cash transfer scheme supports the marriage of girl at the right legal age. It also aims to prevent the practice of dowry.
12. **Mukhyamantri Kanya Suraksha Yojana:** The Department of Social Welfare, Government of India launched this scheme on 4th February 2014 with the intention of promoting registrations of birth, preventing female feticides and encouraging the birth of girl children, and ultimately improved sex ratio. Under this scheme, benefits are given to two girls per family living below the poverty line.
13. **Rashtriya Kishor Swasthya Karyakram (RKSK)** launched on January 7, 2014 is a new initiative by the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare. The programme comprehensively addresses the health needs of nearly 250 million adolescents of the country and is targeted towards 10-14 years and 15-19 years with universal coverage, i.e. males and females; urban and rural; in school and out of school; married and unmarried; and vulnerable and under-served. The programme envisions enabling all adolescents in India to realize their full potential by making informed and responsible decisions related to their health and well-being and by accessing the services and support they need to do so.
14. **Conditional Cash Transfers (CCTs)** In India, there are about twenty CCT programmes being implemented in different states aimed at the welfare of girls, mainly for promoting their school education and for enhancing the age at marriage⁷⁴. The on-going CCT programmes in general are complicated with

⁷⁴Sekher, TV & Ram, F (2015) Conditional Cash Transfer for girls in India: Assessment of Girl Child Promotion Scheme from beneficiary perspective, UNFPA

multiple objectives and targeted to specific groups - for poor households, families having girls and families with only girls. These CCT schemes, popularly known as **ladli-lakshmi** schemes, provide instant financial incentives and support long term benefits to girl's family starting from the birth of the girl till her marriage. CCTs are a marked departure from the traditional approaches towards social service measures. By providing money to poor families under certain conditions, the conditional cash transfers seek to address traditional short term income support objectives. The **Dhan Lakshmi Scheme: Conditional Cash Transfer Scheme (CCT)** was launched on 3rd March 2008 by the Ministry of Women and Child Development, Government of India in eleven selected backward blocks of seven states. States have also formulated and implemented various CCTs to ensure that girls' complete secondary education. Some examples are given below:

- i. **Ladli Yojna** – The program was initiated by the Haryana state government in 2005 and Delhi Government in 2008. Under this scheme, financial assistance is provided to families with income less than 1,00,000/- per annum and was initially only aimed at two daughters. On maturity, one lakh rupees amount at current rate of interest would be paid after the girls attains the age of 18 years.
- ii. **Apni Beti Apni Dhan** - This scheme was launched by the government in Chandigarh in 1997 and aims to improve the status of the girl child from families living below the poverty line. A sum of Rs.5000/- is deposited in the bank in the name of the girl child at birth. Once the girl reaches the age of 18 and finishes her matriculation examination, the amount is paid to the girl. This is also implemented in Haryana and an amount of Rs. 2500/- was to be invested in an "Indira Vikas Patra" in the name of the new born baby. This certificate was to be handed over to the family within 3 months of the birth, to be encashed for Rs. 25,000 when the girl turned 18, provided she had remained unmarried. An indirect benefit of the scheme was delayed marriage for girls. The scheme was open to all families belonging to SC/BC categories (except Gazetted Officers); and to families of 'general castes' who had BPL status (income below the poverty line).
- iii. **Bhagyalakshmi**: This scheme was started by the state government of Karnataka in 2006. Under this scheme, the government deposits Rs. 10,000/- in the name of the new born girl child, irrespective of caste and

creed, and the interest accrued is to be utilized for her education. The deposit matures when the child attains the age of 18 years and the money could then be utilized for her higher studies or marriage.

- iv. **Beti Hai Anmol:** Taking a cue from the Balika Samriddhi Yojana, the government of Himachal Pradesh initiated the 'Beti Hai Anmol' programme in 2010. A sum of Rs. 10,000/- is deposited at the time of birth of a girl child in poor families (upto two girls) , with the amount multiplying substantially by the time she grows up, providing financial aid in meeting her higher education and marriage expenses.
- v. **Ladli Laxmi Yojana:** For girls born after January 1st, 2006, the state government of Madhya Pradesh launched this scheme in 2007. Under this scheme, the state government initiates National Savings Certificate amounting to Rs.6,000 which will be renewed from time to time. At the time of the girl's admission to the sixth standard, Rs. 2000, in the ninth standard, Rs. 4,000 and in the eleventh standard, Rs. 7500/- would be paid. During higher secondary education, she would get Rs. 200/- per month. The remaining amount will be paid as lump sum on completion of 21 years of age and on appearing in the examination of 12th class, with the condition that the girl is married only after 18 years of age.
- vi. **Kanyashree:** The Department of Women Development and Social Welfare, Government of West Bengal (DWD&SW) has designed the Kanyashree Prakalpa - a conditional cash transfer scheme with the aim of improving the status and well-being of the girl child in West Bengal. It is an incentive to teenage girls to continue schooling and delay their marriages until the age of 18. The scheme will be granted to girls who belong to families with annual family income not more than Rs. 1, 20,000/- (Rupees One Lakh and twenty thousand only). The bar for family income is not applicable if the girl has lost both parents, is physically challenged (40% disability) or is inmate of J.J. Home.
- vii. **Kishori Shakti Yojna:** In 2000, Ministry of Women and Child Development launched the Kishori Shakti Yojna in 507 ICDS blocks throughout the country. The adolescent girls scheme has been designed to include 2 sub-schemes viz. Scheme- I (Girl to Girl Approach) and Scheme II (Balika Mandal). Scheme-I has been designed for adolescent

girls in the age group of 11- 15 years belonging to poor families. The Scheme II is intended to reach to all adolescent girls in the age group of 11-18 years irrespective of income levels of the family. In each block, ten per cent of the anganwadi centres are selected to serve as Balika Mandals". The existing anganwadi centres are used for the activities of the Balika Mandal. The Balika Mandal programme is drawn up in a participative manner keeping the interests and skills of girls in mind with a view to ensure that the enrolled girls actively participate and get maximum benefit. On an average, an adolescent girl participates in the activities of Balika Mandal for a period of six months. Each Balika Mandal caters to about 40 adolescent girls in a year and the activity component include learning through sharing experiences, training of vocational and agro-based skills and household related appropriate technology. In addition to provide appropriate environment to learn, supplementary nutrition is also provided to the adolescent girls enrolled in Balika Mandals. The state government of Undivided Andhra Pradesh, Tamil Nadu and Rajasthan have initiated special interventions under the Balika Mandals.

- viii. **Mukhya Mantri Kanya Vivah Yojana:** In Bihar, the state government assists in conducting mass marriages of girls from poor economic backgrounds provided they attain the legal age of marriage. This scheme initiated in 2014 makes a onetime payment of Rs. 10,000 for meeting marriage expenses. In Madhya Pradesh, under this scheme, a sum of Rs 17,000/- is handed to the girl child at a mass marriage program. In Haryana, the scheme entitled Mukhya Mantri Vivah Shagun Yojna is being implemented to honour the girl child and to ensure that the girls from poor families and daughters of widows/destitute women, sports women and orphan girl child, are married gracefully. For this purpose, (i) a grant of Rs. 51000/- is provided to widows (Income criteria less than one lac p.a.). Out of this, an amount of Rs. 46,000/- is to be paid on or before celebration of marriage and amount of Rs. 5,000/- is to be paid within 6 months on submission of marriage registration certificate. (ii) A grant of Rs. 41000/- is provided to the SC families living below poverty line and widows/divorced/destitute women/ orphan and destitute children (Income criteria less than one lac p.a.). Out of this an amount of Rs. 36,000/- is to be paid on or before celebration of marriage and

amount of Rs. 5,000/- is to be paid within 6 months on submission of marriage registration certificate. (iii) A grant of Rs. 11000/- is provided to the persons all sections of society living below poverty line (other than SC's) and all section's families (including SC/BC) having land holding of less than 2.5 acres or whose family annual income is less than Rs. 1,00,000 p.a. Out of this an amount of Rs. 10,000/- is to be paid on or before celebration of marriage and amount of Rs. 1,000/- is to be paid within 6 months on submission of marriage registration certificate.

- ix. **Beti Bachao Beti Padhao** : Education of girls, including adolescent girls has also been emphasized in the Beti Bachao, Beti Padhao scheme (2015) of the Ministry of Women and Child Development. This scheme is an attempt to address issues impacting girl children and to reverse the trend of an adverse and declining Child Sex Ratio. The scheme proposes multi-sectoral interventions in 100 selected districts covering all States/UTs by initiating contextualized and state-specific Plans of Action, through convergence between MWCD, MoHFW and MHRD. The scheme also emphasises the value of the girl child and has brought out strategies for retaining girl children in schools, specifically at the secondary and senior secondary stages.

2.6 PCMA Rules implemented by the States

The Rules for implementation of the Prohibition of Child Marriage Act (PCMA) cover various aspects such as translation of the Act into local languages, PCMA Rules being institutionalized, Child Marriage Prohibition Officer (CMPO) and their staff in place, trainings organized by the State Government, use of diligence with regard to following the procedures for implementation of the Act, reporting mechanism in place, challenges in implementation, and development of IEC materials for awareness building and capacity building.

Different states and UTs have responded in varied ways to the PCMA. In Punjab, Bihar and Chandigarh, the translation of this legislation has been made in local languages for wider dissemination⁷⁵. The PCMA Rules have been institutionalized in the states of Karnataka, Punjab, Puducherry, and Haryana. The post of the CMPO has been created in states which have responded to PCMA and full time CMPO's have been appointed in the state of Haryana, which appointed 21 Child Marriage Prohibition Officers (CMPOs) on a contractual basis, at a salary of Rs. 20,000 for a tenure of 3 years⁷⁶. A few states have also developed IEC materials for awareness generation and building capacities.

⁷⁵Ministry of Women and Child Development (2014) Report on Status of Implementation of Child Marriage Act collected from the states

⁷⁶Ibid

Trainings have been organized in the states of Karnataka, Bihar, Meghalaya and Haryana. Reporting mechanisms and review meetings have been organized in Karnataka, Punjab, Meghalaya, Bihar, Haryana, and Chandigarh.

However, the primary challenge in implementing the PCMA Rules is that most states have not responded to the call for filling up the information on the status of implementation of the PCMA. Other identified challenges are:

- No full time CMPO in the states of Punjab, Meghalaya, Puducherry, Bihar and Himachal Pradesh. In these States, other officers have been given the additional charge of CMPOs.
- No convergence of information regarding child marriage prohibition by various stakeholders such as Police, Child Welfare Committees, Child Line Coordinators and District Magistrates.
- In some States, Rules have been drafted but not yet formalized.
- Sometimes, the duration between the information and action to be taken is very short for any effective action⁷⁷.

Pro-active steps and initiatives undertaken by certain states to implement CMPO are presented below:

- The State Government in Karnataka has made rules for effective administration of the PCMA on 06.02.2008. It has also released a notification for information dissemination regarding the functions and duties of the CMPO. The Officers of the Gram Panchayat were appointed as CMPOs to prevent child marriage and to create awareness amongst the public. Message about prohibition of child marriage was included in the school syllabus in 5th and 8th standard books. Convergence to tackle the issue of prohibition of child marriage has been achieved in Karnataka where there have been inter-linkages and sharing of documents such as High Court Orders, Revenue Circulars, Municipal Administration Circulars, Advertisements and Letters by the Child Protection Unit.
- Panchayat members and Child Helpline Centres are working together on the issue of prohibition of child marriage in the states of Punjab, Puducherry and Bihar.

⁷⁷ <http://nmew.gov.in/WriteReadData/1892s/PCMA%20FINAL-19112720.pdf>

- In Puducherry, Aanganwadi workers and Self Help Groups (SHGs) create awareness for the community on implications of child marriage.
- In Meghalaya, Shelter Homes have been created for children affected by child marriage.
- In Bihar, the CMPOs and other implementing stakeholders provide medical aid, counselling and rehabilitation services, Shelter Home facilities, discharge legal duties and take responsibilities for producing the child before the Child Welfare Committee for support and protection.
- In Bihar, folk media performances, motivational events and college campaigns concerning the PCMA have been initiated.
- In Bihar, a committee under the chair of the Secretary, Department of Social Welfare, was formed to finalize the State Plan of Action on Prevention of Child Marriage and Dowry Atrocities. The Committee comprised representatives of the Department of Education, Art, Culture & Youth Affairs, Health, Panchayati Raj, Law and NGOs and officials from UNICEF and ADRI. Also in Bihar, various schemes have been initiated to empower the girl child.
- In Haryana, the WCD has established special cells for women and children at the district Police HQ in all the districts. The Protection cum Prohibition officers are located there along with their support staff. The Home Department has also provided one male and one female constable for the implementation of PCMA and Protection of Women from Domestic Violence Act 2005 (PWDVA) in the Cell.
- In Himachal Pradesh, meetings are held under the Chairpersonship of DCs to review the implementation of all social legislations⁷⁸.
- The government of West Bengal initiated the Kanyashree programme aimed at retaining girls in school to continue their education and prevent them from getting married at a young age. Almost 31 lakh girls have benefitted from this scheme since its launch in October 2013⁷⁹. Kanyashree has been appreciated both nationally and internationally. The scheme was shortlisted among the best projects for final evaluation by the United Nations Committee of Experts in Public Administration (2014- 2015). It was represented as one of the “best practices” at the “Girl Summit 2014” organised by the Department for International Development, UK and UNICEF in London.

⁷⁸<http://nmew.gov.in/WriteReadData/18925/PCMA%20FINAL-19112720.pdf>

⁷⁹<http://www.thestatesman.com/india/bjp-run-states-assess-kanyashree-128445.html>, dated March 2016



Chapter 3

Census Data on Child Marriage

This chapter analyses the incidence of child marriage in India at the national, state and district level, by utilizing India Census data 2011. In addition, comparisons have been made with Census 2001 data at the district level. Census is the only source of data that enables calculations of the incidence of child marriage at the sub-state level, location-wise and age-wise. This explains the reason for using Census data as compared to other available sources of data on child marriage.

3.1 Introduction to Census

In general, "population census is the total process of collecting, compiling, analysing or otherwise disseminating demographic, economic and social data pertaining, at a specific time, of all persons in a country or a well-defined part of a country. As such, the Census provides a snapshot of the country's population and housing at a given point of time."⁸⁰

Since 1872, the Indian Census has been the most credible source of information on demography (population characteristics), economic activity, literacy and education, housing and household amenities, urbanisation, fertility and mortality, Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes, languages, religions, migration, disability and many other socio-cultural and demographic data. It is the only source of primary data at the village, town and ward level and provides valuable information to Central and State Governments for planning and formulating policies. It is widely used by national and international agencies, scholars, business people, industrialists, and many more⁸¹. The Census in India is conducted after every decade by the Office of the Registrar General of India, Ministry of Home Affairs.⁸² Census 2011 is the 15th National Census of the country.

The Census data is divided into several series, e.g., A, B, C, D, F etc., based on themes such as socio-cultural aspects, migration, fertility etc. Census schedule collects data on marriage in terms of current marital status as 'never married', 'currently married', 'widowed', 'divorced' and 'separated', age at marriage and completed years and

⁸⁰<http://www.languageinindia.com/feb2014/censusofindia2011data.pdf>

⁸¹http://censusindia.gov.in/2011-Common/why_imp.html

⁸²<http://www.censusindia.gov.in/2011-common/aboutus.html>

duration of marriage, as part of C series.

3.2 Methodology

3.2.1 Methodology for Analysis

This report examines the incidence of child marriage at the national, state and district level, based on Census 2011 instead of prevalence of child marriage as stated earlier. Incidence of child marriage is arrived at based on the Census respondent's answer to the question on age of marriage, with those getting married before legal age defined as child marriage. For this purpose, we have analysed the Census data on marital status by age, sex (girls/boys) and location (rural/urban) from the C series (socio-cultural tables) of Census 2011 and Census 2001. The different age groups that we have analysed to determine child marriage incidence were 10-14, 15-17 for girls and 10-14 and 15-20 for boys. Incidence of child marriage includes the ever-married category of currently married, widowed, divorced and separated children and youth.

The incidence of marriage at particular age point has been calculated as shown below.

$$\% \text{ Ever Married in age } (x-x+n) = \left\{ \frac{\text{Number of Ever married in age } (x-x+n)}{\text{Persons in age } (x-x+n)} \right\} * 100$$

Where Ever married = Currently married + Widowed + Divorced + Separated

3.2.2 Method for standardization

This chapter further compares the percentage of ever married persons over two consecutive census rounds. However, the collected data in both the rounds have been gathered at different levels of scales and therefore, are not comparable. To overcome this difficulty, a typical standardization procedure has been used to equalize the range and/or data variability, so that all variables have the same weight during analysis.

Two well-known methods are usually used for rescaling data⁸³. One is Normalization, which scales all numeric variables in the range [0, 1] with the

⁸³<http://www.dataminingblog.com/standardization-vs-normalization/>

formula given below:

$$x_{new} = \frac{x - x_{min}}{x_{max} - x_{min}} \quad (1)$$

Another way is standardization of data by transforming the data to have a zero mean and unit variance, as given in the equation below:

$$x_{new} = \frac{x - \mu}{\sigma} \quad (2)$$

If we have outliers in data set, normalizing data will certainly scale the “normal” data to a very small interval. Generally, most of the data sets have outliers. When using standardization, the new data are not bounded (unlike normalization). Therefore, the method of normalization was opted for the present study. This method has credibility in the calculation of human development indices⁸⁴.

3.3 Incidence of Child Marriage – National Level

In India, a marriage is considered illegal if a girl gets married before 18 years of age and if a boy gets married before reaching the age of 21 years. The graphs and tables given below present the incidence of child marriage of girls and boys at the national level as per the Censuses 2001 and 2011.

Figure 3.1: Percentage of ever married girls below legal age, Census 2001 & 2011

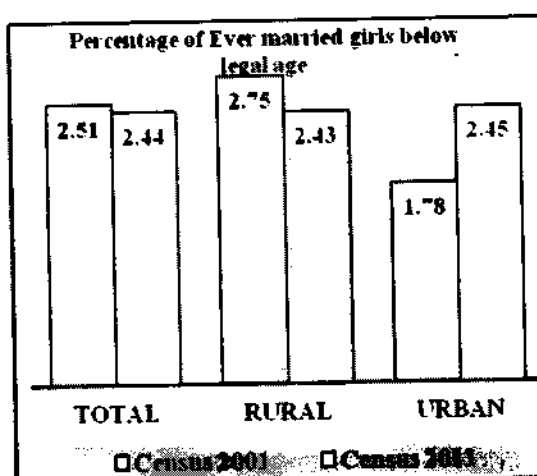
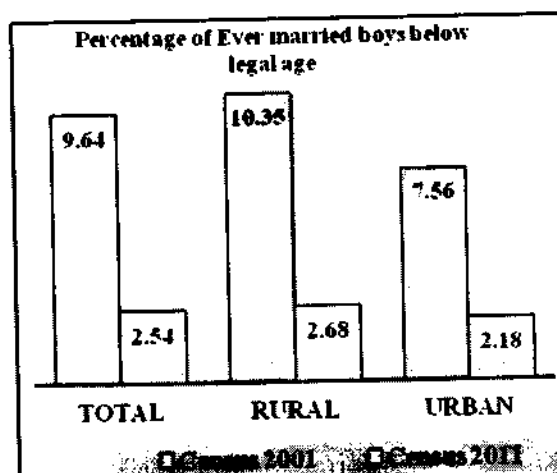


Figure 3.2: Percentage of ever married boys below legal age: Census 2001 & 2011



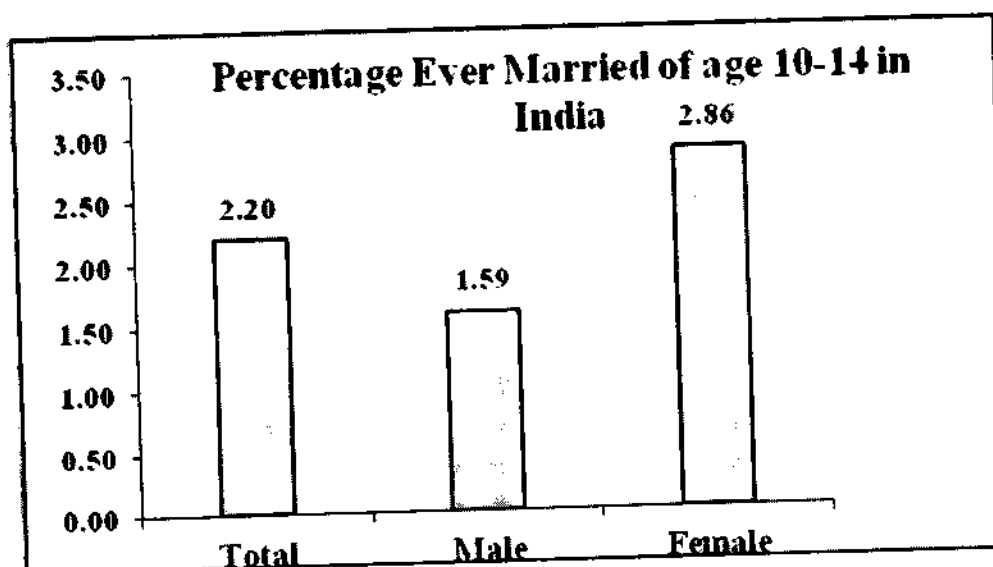
⁸⁴http://hdr.undp.org/sites/default/files/hdr_2013_en_technotes.pdf

Figure 3.1 shows a comparison of the incidence of child marriage among girls (below legal age) by location. The graph depicts a negligible decline in incidence of child marriage among girls (from 2.5 per cent in Census 2001 to 2.4 per cent in Census 2011). The decline in number of girls married below the legal age in rural India between the two Censuses was marginally higher than in the whole of the country. However, the incidence of child marriage among girls increased substantially in urban India from 1.78 per cent in 2001 to 2.45 per cent in 2011. While these percentage figures seem very low, it is important to highlight that the absolute number of girls married below legal age was 5.1 million (refer Table 3.1).

Figure 3.2 presents a comparative picture of the incidence of child marriage among boys below the legal age (<21 years). A decreasing trend in the incidence of child marriage amongst boys is noticed as well. At the national level, the incidence of child marriage among boys below the legal age has plummeted from 9.6 per cent to 2.5 per cent between 2001 and 2011. There is also a substantial drop in child marriages among boys in rural as well as urban areas.

As can be seen from Figure 3.3, in the age group 10-14 years, a total of 2.2 per cent children in India were already married. A higher percentage of girls (2.9 per cent) got married as against boys (1.6 per cent).

Figure 3.3: Persons (boys and girls) in age group 10-14 years ever married, Census 2011



In the age group of 15-17 years, the incidence of child marriage among girls increased almost four times as compared to the 10-14 age group (Figure 3.4). In the age group 15-17 years, while 10.5 per cent girls got married in rural areas, the incidence was lower in urban areas (8.9 per cent).

For boys, the incidence of child marriage in the age group 15-20 (7.5 per cent) is four times higher as compared to age group 10-14 years (1.59 per cent) (Figure 3.5). There continues to be a rural disadvantage for boys as well, with 8.2 per cent of rural boys married, as against 5.5 per cent of urban boys.

Figure 3.4: Girls in age group 15-17 years ever married, Census 2011

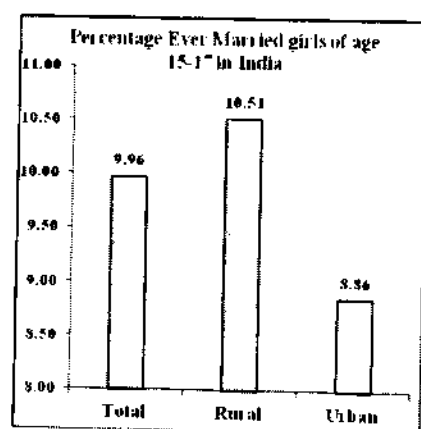
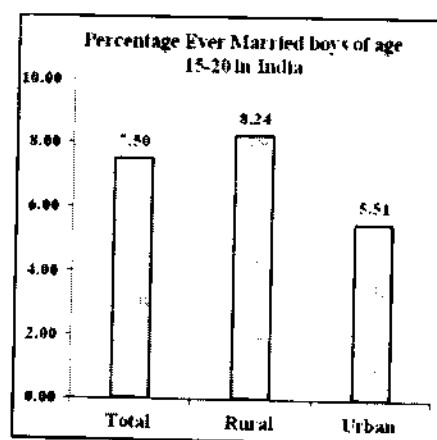


Figure 3.5: Boys/Men in age group 15-20 years ever married, Census 2011



3.3.1 Absolute Numbers of Child Marriages in India

To provide a comprehensive picture, disaggregated figures of married girls as well as boys across the age groups of 0-9, 10-14, 15-17, 18-20, below 18 (0-17) and below 21 (0-20) years are shown in Table 3.1. As mentioned in the methodology, the incidence of ever married population is estimated by examining the number of ever married population (numerator) among the total population (denominator). Since incidence of marriage reported among both girls and boys in the age group of 0-9 years was nil, we do not consider this age group while estimating the incidence of child marriage and consider only 10-17 years for girls and 10-20 years for boys. This helped us to eliminate expansion of the denominator (the population in the particular age) used to arrive at the percentage of child marriage.

Table 3.1: Population and percentage ever married across different age group in India, Census

Age group	Population (in lakhs)			Number of Ever married (in lakhs)			% Ever married		
	Persons	Males	Females	Persons	Males	Females	Persons	Males	Females
<10	2,397.3	1,249.3	1,148.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
10-14	1,327.1	694.2	632.9	29.2	11.1	18.1	2.2	1.6	2.9
15-17	717.1	381.2	335.9	46.1	12.7	33.5	6.4	3.3	10.0
18-20	777.0	407.6	369.4	206.9	45.7	161.2	26.6	11.2	43.6
Below 18	4,441.5	2,324.7	2,116.8	75.3	23.8	51.6	1.7	1.0	2.4
Below 21	5,218.5	2,732.3	2,486.3	282.3	69.5	212.8	5.4	2.5	8.6

This table reveals that while 12.9 per cent of the girls have got married in the age of 10-17 years, 43.6 per cent of girls got married between ages 18 to 20 years. However, at the same time, while only 4.9 per cent of the boys got married in the age range of 10-17 years, a much larger percentage i.e. 11.2 per cent got married in the 18-below 21 age group, which constitutes child marriage amongst boys. In terms of numbers we find that 69.5 lakh boys and 51.6 lakh girls have been married before their respective legal age according to Census 2011. Given that our country follows the social norm of boys getting married to younger brides, it is clear that keeping the legal age of boys at 21 is absolutely necessary to ensure that girls are not married off before the age of 18.

3.4 Incidence of Child Marriage – State Level

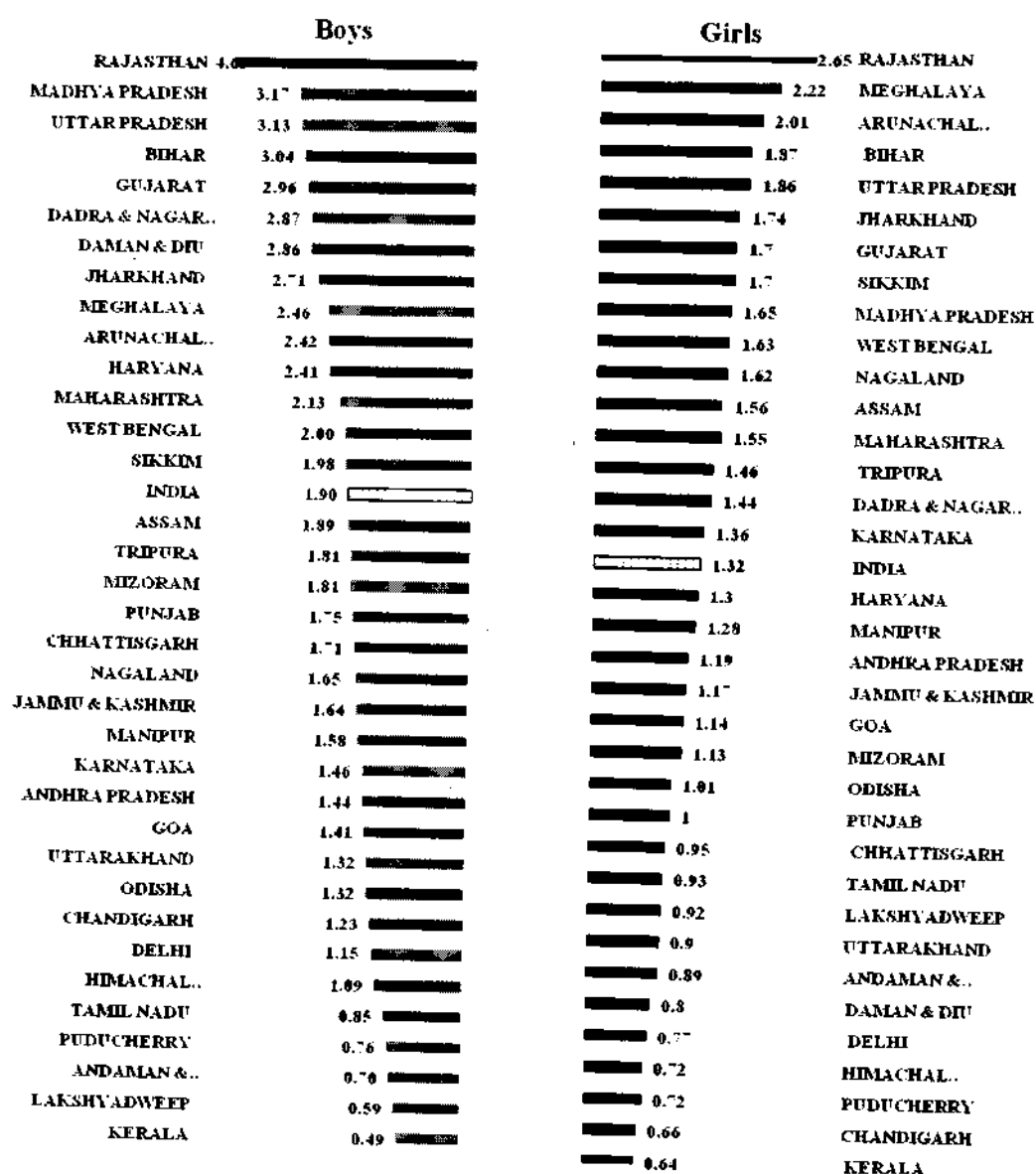
3.4.1 State variations by gender

Further analysis of data from Census 2011 reveals interesting trends. Figure 3.6 depicts percentage of child marriage in different states by gender. Rajasthan reported the highest percentage in child marriages among girls (2.5 per cent), followed by 15 states, namely Meghalaya, Arunachal Pradesh, Bihar, Uttar Pradesh, Gujarat, Sikkim, Madhya Pradesh, West Bengal, Nagaland, Assam, Maharashtra, Tripura, Dadra & Nagar Haveli and Karnataka where the percentage of girls marrying below the legal age were higher than the national average of 1.32 per cent. Rajasthan also topped in the percentage (4.69 per cent) of boys marrying below the legal age of 21 years. 13 other states reported higher percentage of child marriages among boys than the national average of

1.90 per cent. These 13 States are: Madhya Pradesh, Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, Gujarat, Dadra & Nagar Haveli, Jharkhand, Meghalaya, Arunachal Pradesh, Haryana, Maharashtra, West Bengal and Sikkim with percentages ranging between 4.60 per cent to 1.98 per cent (Figure 3.5).

Rajasthan, Arunachal Pradesh, Bihar, Uttar Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh, Gujarat, West Bengal, Bihar, Jharkhand and Meghalaya are among the top 10 states reporting the highest percentage of child marriages among both boys and girls.

Figure 3.6 : Percentage of ever married girls (Below 18 years) and boys (Below 21 years) by states of India, Census 2011



3.4.2 Gender variations in different age groups across States

An analysis of child marriage by gender and age groups across the states is presented in Table 3.2. This provides an overview of the incidence of child marriage among girls within the age groups of 10-14, 15-17 and 18-20 years and among boys within the age groups of 10-14, 15-17, 18-20 and 20-24 years. At national level, about 4.5 per cent of girls aged 10-17 years and 3.8 per cent of boys of age 10-20 years were found married. Here it is important to note that percentage given in Table 3.1 for girls below 18 years and boys below 21 years are different as in the present table we have excluded the 0-9 population from child marriage estimation to present the more robust measure. In the case of girls, Chandigarh presents the best picture with only 2.7 per cent of girls in the age group of 10-17 reporting child marriage. In the case of boys, Kerala emerges as the best state with the lowest percentage of child marriage (1.3 per cent) among the age group 10-20 years.

Looking at the disaggregated figures for girls in the age group of 15-17 years, the percentage of child marriages is 10 per cent at the all-India level. There are eleven states reporting higher percentages (ranging between 10.8 to 16.1 per cent) than this national average. The consequences of girls marrying before the legal age have already been elaborated in this report. It is important to note that in Maharashtra and Rajasthan, nearly 4.2 per cent of girls in the age group of 10-14 years were married. It seems that the perception that girls are ready for marriage after attaining menarche persists even today. A similar trend is noticeable for boys too. Among the different age groups for boys, the 18-20 years age group, which is below the legal age, registered the highest percentage of child marriages at the all-India level. Rajasthan again is identified as the state where child marriage among boys in the age group of 18-20 years is at the highest with about one-fifth of boys in this age group reported as married, followed by Gujarat, Madhya Pradesh and Bihar with only slightly lower percentage of incidences.

Table 3.2: Percentage of ever married girls and boys across different age group state-wise, Census 2011

State	Girls			Boys			
	10-14	15-17	10-17	10-14	15-17	18-20	10-20
INDIA	2.9	10.0	4.5	1.6	7.4	11.2	3.8
ANDAMAN & NICOBAR ISLANDS	1.6	7.3	3.7	0.8	2.8	3.9	1.9
ANDHRA PRADESH	2.6	9.7	5.1	1.3	5.1	7.6	3.4
ARUNACHAL PRADESH	2.6	8.4	4.6	1.3	6.4	9.9	3.9
ASSAM	2.1	10.8	5.0	0.9	6.1	9.5	3.6
BIHAR	2.9	11.6	5.3	1.6	9.3	14.6	5.2
CHANDIGARH	1.5	4.8	2.7	0.7	4.3	6.3	2.8
CHHATTISGARH	1.7	5.6	3.1	1.1	5.6	9.0	3.5
DADRA & NAGAR HAVELI	2.0	11.3	4.9	0.9	9.5	13.3	6.0
DAMAN & DIU	1.7	6.8	3.5	1.3	7.6	9.6	5.9
GOA	3.9	9.8	6.1	2.3	5.3	6.6	4.0
GUJARAT	3.7	11.7	6.6	2.1	10.6	15.8	6.7
HARYANA	2.8	8.2	4.8	1.7	7.3	11.2	4.8
HIMACHAL PRADESH	2.2	4.6	3.1	1.3	3.6	5.3	2.6
JAMMU & KASHMIR	2.1	5.3	3.2	1.3	4.7	6.9	3.0
JHARKHAND	2.4	11.2	5.2	1.5	8.5	13.7	5.0
KARNATAKA	3.0	10.8	5.8	1.4	4.9	6.8	3.3
KERALA	1.7	6.4	3.4	0.6	2.0	2.6	1.3
LAKSHADWEEP	2.1	5.8	3.4	0.6	2.3	2.4	1.5
MADHYA PRADESH	2.9	9.8	5.2	1.8	9.9	15.7	6.1
MAHARASHTRA	4.2	10.7	6.6	2.9	6.7	9.0	5.0
MANIPUR	2.1	6.6	3.7	1.0	4.6	6.8	2.9
MEGHALAYA	2.2	10.4	5.1	0.9	6.1	10.0	3.5
MIZORAM	1.5	6.5	3.3	0.7	5.7	9.7	3.4
NAGALAND	1.6	6.7	3.5	0.7	3.8	5.9	2.3
NCT OF DELHI	1.5	5.2	2.9	0.7	3.8	5.9	2.5
ODISHA	1.9	6.9	3.7	1.1	4.7	7.0	3.0
PUDUCHERRY	2.0	6.2	3.5	1.2	2.8	3.9	2.1
PUNJAB	3.1	6.1	4.2	1.9	5.3	7.5	3.8
RAJASTHAN	4.2	16.1	8.3	2.1	14.5	22.4	8.6
SIKKIM	1.8	9.9	4.8	1.0	6.7	10.5	4.1
TAMIL NADU	2.2	8.5	4.5	0.8	3.5	5.0	2.3
TRIPURA	1.9	12.3	5.7	1.0	6.9	11.0	4.2
UTTAR PRADESH	2.9	8.6	4.9	1.5	8.0	12.4	4.9
UTTARAKHAND	1.7	4.8	2.8	0.8	3.6	5.5	2.3
WEST BENGAL	2.6	13.3	6.4	1.5	7.0	10.6	4.6

It is noteworthy that Rajasthan emerges as the state with the highest incidence of child marriage both amongst boys (10-20 years) and girls (10-17 years) (Figure 3.7 and Figure 3.8). While 8.3 per cent of the girls were reported married before the legal age, the incidence rate for boys was higher (8.6 per cent) in Rajasthan. Distribution of the highest incidence of child marriage is not concentrated in any particular region.

Figure 3.7 : State-wise variation in incidence of child marriage, among girls of 10-17 age group, Census 2011

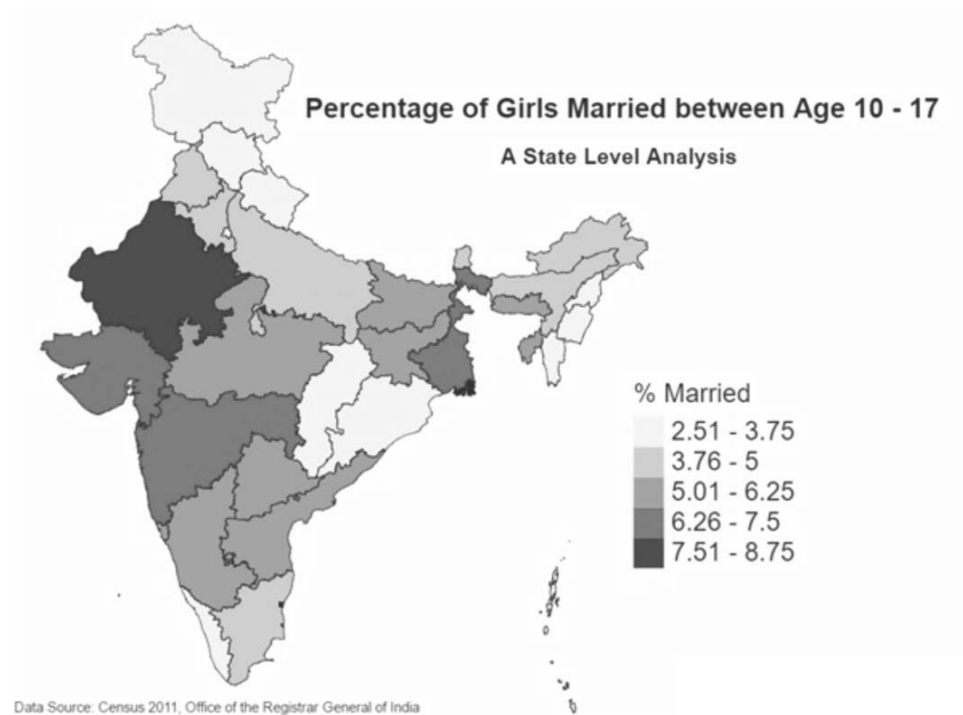
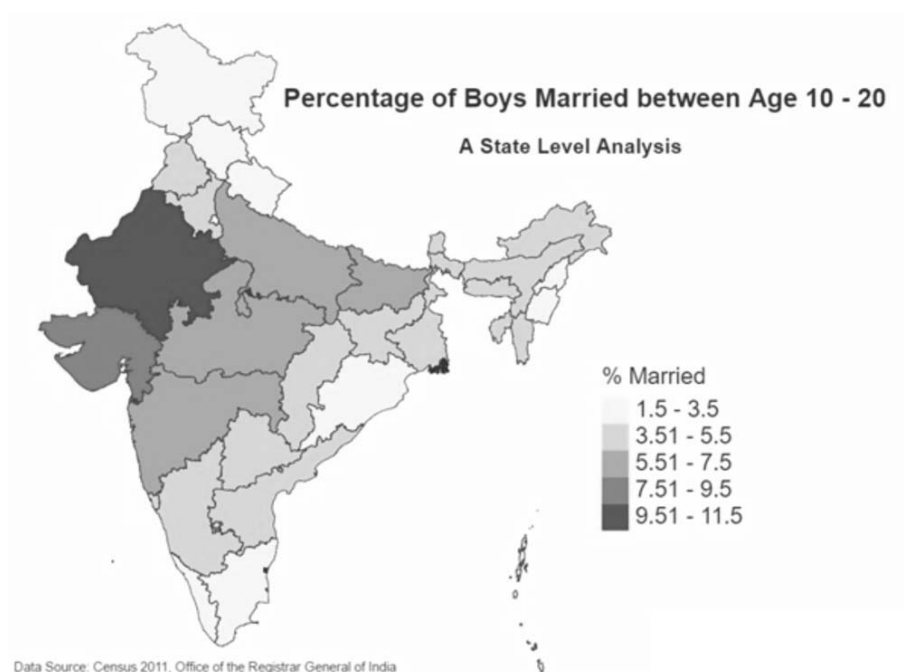


Figure 3.8: The map gives the state-wise variation in incidence of child marriage across the country, among boys who belong to 10-20 age group, Census 2011



3.5 Incidence of Child Marriage – District Level

Since high variance has been noted across the states, an attempt was made to disaggregate child marriage data from Census 2011 at the district level to capture intra state and inter-district variations. Efforts have been made to identify high incidence districts across various age groups, viz., 10-14 and 15-17 with respect to girls and 10-14 and 15-20 with respect to boys, based on their place of residence (rural and urban).

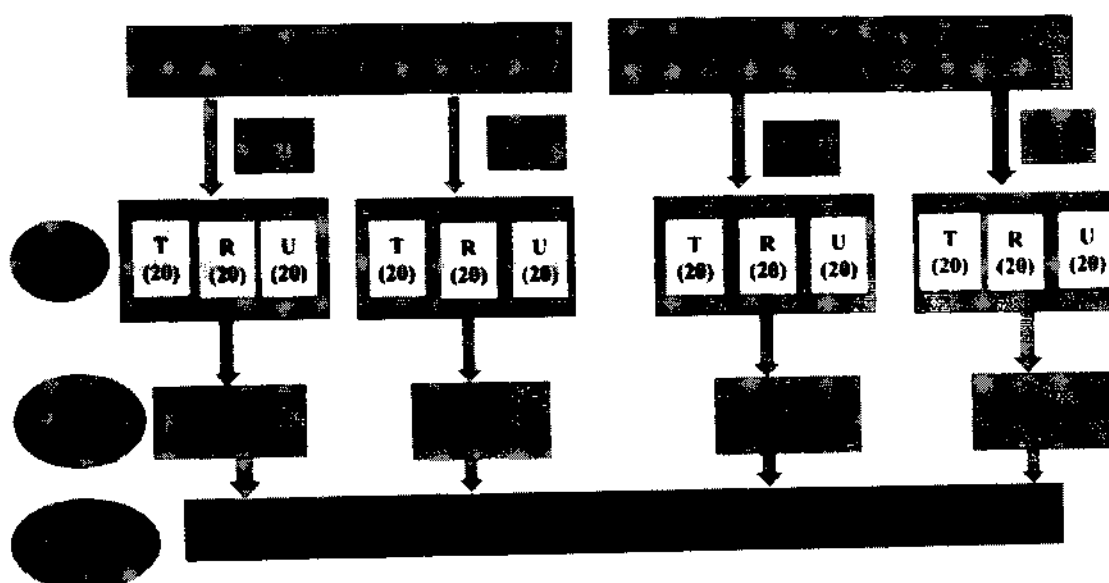
Incidence of child marriage for boys (10-20) and girls (10-17) across 640 districts in the country as captured from the Census 2011 data are presented in Annexure A-1. It was found that 293 districts located in 20 states (Undivided Andhra Pradesh, Assam, Bihar, Chhattisgarh, Dadra & Nagar Haveli, Daman & Diu, Gujarat, Haryana, Jharkhand, Karnataka, Kerala, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Meghalaya, Odisha, Rajasthan, Tamil Nadu, Uttar Pradesh and West Bengal) report incidence of girl child marriage higher than the national average. In the case of child marriage for boys, 249 districts spread across 24 states (Undivided Andhra Pradesh, Arunachal Pradesh, Assam, Bihar, Chhattisgarh, Dadra & Nagar Haveli, Daman & Diu, Gujarat, Haryana, Himachal Pradesh, Jammu & Kashmir, Jharkhand, Karnataka, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Meghalaya, Mizoram, Odisha, Punjab, Rajasthan, Sikkim, Tripura, Uttar Pradesh and West Bengal) have higher incidence than the national average. It is also found that even within these districts, there exists variations across locations in terms of the incidence of child marriage.

Highest Incidence Districts: Selection Process

Our analysis aimed to identify the top 20 districts with highest incidence of child marriage in each of the categories related to gender, age and location.

Figure 3.9 : Selection of high incidence district with child marriage

Selection of 70 high incidence districts



As a first step, the top 20 districts out of the 640 districts of India were identified based on districts with the highest incidence of child marriage across the age groups of 10-14 and 15-17 for girls and 10-14 and 15-20 for boys (as shown in Figure 3.9 above). The data was further disaggregated by analysing incidence of child marriage by place of residence, i.e., rural and urban. Subsequently, by combining all the districts (67 for girls and 62 for boys) and removing duplication of districts, wherever applicable, 70 districts with high incidence of child marriage, spread across 13 states (Undivided Andhra Pradesh, Arunachal Pradesh, Assam, Bihar, Gujarat, Haryana, Jharkhand, Karnataka, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Rajasthan, Uttar Pradesh and West Bengal) were identified. The main aim of this exercise was to generate a feasible number of districts which would allow timely, focused intervention for prevention and reduction of child marriage.

It is important to note that this analysis has been done only with respect to Census 2011. The reason for adopting this methodology was to analyse age specific incidence of child marriage by age range, gender and location at district level, to facilitate interventions and planning at the district level as a unit. It may be noted that the top 70 districts identified by the above methodology using desegregated data, does not represent the top 70 districts with highest incidence of child marriage in the country based on averages of boys and girls married below the legal age.

3.5.1 Child Marriage among Girls in 10-17 year age group, by District

The districts with the highest incidence of child marriage among girls specifically in the age group of 10-17 years are given in Table 3.3. The situation in Rajasthan needs urgent attention as 7 of the total of 20 districts identified are in Rajasthan. Bhilwara reports the highest incidence with 37 per cent of the girls between 10-17 years married, followed by Chittaurgarh with 35 per cent, Rajasmand (30 per cent), Jhalawar (29.7 per cent), Tonk (28.6 per cent), Ajmer (28.2 per cent), Bundi (26.4 per cent) and Dhubri district from Assam (26.8 per cent). The remaining districts are in the states of Jharkhand, Madhya Pradesh, Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, West Bengal, Gujarat and Maharashtra.

Analysis of rural areas reveals that Rajasthan once again has the largest number of districts (7) featuring in the top 20. In Bhilwara district, 40 per cent of girls between 10-17 years in rural areas were married, Chittaurgarh reported 38 per cent, followed by Ajmer (35 per cent), Tonk (33 per cent), Jhalawar and Rajasmand (32 per cent) and Bundi (29 per cent). 13 districts from other states also reported more than 25 per cent of girls in the 10-17 age group in rural areas as already married. These districts are in Madhya Pradesh (5), Gujarat (2) and one each in Assam, Bihar, Jharkhand, Uttar Pradesh, West Bengal and Karnataka.

In case of girls from urban areas, the situation alters a bit. Although the two highest incidence districts namely Banswara and Bhilwara are from Rajasthan, with 24.6 and 24.4 per cent respectively, the other three districts of Rajasthan that appear in the top 20 districts show lower incidence of child marriage-Karauli (19.8 per cent), Chittaurgarh (19.7 per cent) and Rajasmand (19.2 per cent). Table 3.3 also shows six districts from West Bengal i.e. Birbhum, 24 South Paraganas, Maldah, Purbi Mednipur reported 20-22 per cent, while between 19-20 per cent were married in Murshidabad and Nadia. In Maharashtra, the districts of Sangli, Jalna and Aurangabad reported that 20-22 per cent of urban girls were already married. Bagalkot (20.3 per cent) and Bellary (19 per cent) in Karnataka also figured in the top 20 high incidence districts. The following states had one district featuring among the top 20; Daman & Diu (Daman 22.3 per cent), Tripura (South Tripura 21 per cent), Assam (Goalpara 21 per cent) and Gujarat (Gandhi Nagar 20.4 per cent).

Almost all 20 districts had one out every four girls in rural areas and one out of five in urban areas married between the ages of 10-17.

Table 3.3: Top 20 districts based on proportion of married Girls (10-17), Census 2011

Rank	Total			Rural			Urban		
	State	Districts	% Ever married	State	Districts	% Ever married	State	Districts	% Ever married
1	RAJASTHAN	Bhilwara	36.9	RAJASTHAN	Bhilwara	40.0	RAJASTHAN	Banswara	24.6
2	RAJASTHAN	Chittaurgarh	35.1	RAJASTHAN	Chittaurgarh	38.4	RAJASTHAN	Bhilwara	24.4
3	RAJASTHAN	Rajsamand	29.9	RAJASTHAN	Ajmer	34.7	DAMAN & DIU	Daman	22.3
4	RAJASTHAN	Jhalawar	29.7	RAJASTHAN	Tonk	32.8	WEST BENGAL	Birbhum	21.8
5	RAJASTHAN	Tonk	28.6	RAJASTHAN	Jhalawar	32.0	WEST BENGAL	South Twenty Four Parganas	21.2
6	RAJASTHAN	Ajmer	28.2	RAJASTHAN	Rajsamand	31.8	MAHARASHTRA	Sangli	21.2
7	ASSAM	Dhubri	26.8	RAJASTHAN	Bundi	28.9	MAHARASHTRA	Jalna	21.1
8	RAJASTHAN	Bundi	26.4	MADHYA PRADESH	Ujjain	28.0	TRIPURA	South Tripura	21.1
9	UTTAR PRADESH	Lalitpur	25.5	ASSAM	Dhubri	27.8	WEST BENGAL	Maldah	21.1
10	JHARKHAND	Deoghar	25.5	JHARKHAND	Deoghar	27.5	ASSAM	Goalpara	21.0
11	UTTAR PRADESH	Shrawasti	25.5	GUJARAT	Gandhinagar	27.4	WEST BENGAL	Purba Medinipur	20.9
12	BIHAR	Jamui	25.3	UTTAR PRADESH	Lalitpur	27.2	MAHARASHTRA	Aurangabad	20.5
13	WEST BENGAL	Murshidabad	25.1	MADHYA PRADESH	Shajapur	27.0	GUJARAT	Gandhinagar	20.4
14	JHARKHAND	Giridih	24.9	MADHYA PRADESH	Neemuch	27.0	KARNATAKA	Bagalkot	20.3
15	JHARKHAND	Dumka	24.9	MADHYA PRADESH	Mandsaur	26.7	WEST BENGAL	Murshidabad	19.8
16	MADHYA PRADESH	Shajapur	24.9	MADHYA PRADESH	Rajgarh	26.6	RAJASTHAN	Karauli	19.8
17	WEST BENGAL	Birbhum	24.6	WEST BENGAL	Murshidabad	26.4	WEST BENGAL	Nadia	19.7
18	MADHYA PRADESH	Rajgarh	24.6	GUJARAT	Kheda	26.3	RAJASTHAN	Chittaurgarh	19.7
18	GUJARAT	Gandhinagar	24.6	KARNATAKA	Bagalkot	26.3	RAJASTHAN	Rajsamand	19.2
20	MAHARASHTRA	Jalna	24.4	BIHAR	Jamui	26.0	KARNATAKA	Bellary	19.1

3.5.2 Child Marriage among boys in 10-20 age group by District

Child marriage among boys in the age group of 10-20 years is illustrated in Table 3.4. The situation continues to be appalling in Rajasthan (9 out of 20 districts), which also had the highest incidence of child marriage among girls in the 10-17 years age group. Bhilwara reports the highest incidence with 20.2 per cent of boys between 10-20 years married; Chittaurgarh 17.5 per cent, followed by Ajmer, Tonk, Rajasmand and Jhalawar with 11-14 per cent of boys from this age group reported married. Bundi, Dausa and Alwar (districts of Rajasthan) also had nearly 10 per cent of their boys from this age group married. Six districts in Madhya Pradesh with high incidence of child marriage among boys (10-11 per cent) are Jhabua, Neemuch, Barwani, Shajapur, Mandsaur and Rajgarh. Gujarat has two districts, Kheda and Gandhinagar with 10-11 per cent child marriage incidence, while Uttar Pradesh has two districts Shravasti and Lalitpur, with 11 per cent of the male children married and Haryana one district i.e. Mewat (10 per cent).

The incidence of child marriage in rural area for boys belonging to the age group of 10-20 years is shown in Table 3.4. The trends seen are very similar to that in the case of rural girls between 10-17 years. Rajasthan reports the maximum high incidence districts (8 out of 20). Bhilwara reported 23 per cent of boys between 10-20 years in rural areas as married, Chittaurgarh (20 per cent), followed by Ajmer (17.8 per cent), Tonk (15.5 per cent), Jhalawar and Rajasmand (14 per cent), Bundi (12 per cent) and Jaipur (11 per cent). Seven districts in the top 20 are in Madhya Pradesh, namely, Neemuch, Jhabua, Barwani, Shajapur, Mandsaur and Ratlam and Ujjain, with 11-13 per cent of boys in rural areas in the age group of 10-20 years already married. Gujarat with three districts i.e. Kheda (13 per cent), Gandhinagar (12 per cent) and Ahmedabad (11 per cent) and Uttar Pradesh with two districts Lalitpur (12 per cent) and Shravasti (11.4 per cent) comprise the rest of the top 20 districts.

Bhilwara (10.5 per cent) in Rajasthan has the highest incidence of child marriage among urban boys in the age group of 10-20 years, followed by Ahmedabad in Gujarat with 7.8 per cent (Table 3.4). Mewat in Haryana is third with 7.6 per cent of urban boys between 10-20 reported married. Banswara, Karauli, Chittaurgarh and Rajasmand are the other districts from Rajasthan with 6.5-7.6 per cent boys in urban areas reported married. Gujarat reports the maximum number of districts (7 out of 20) with the highest incidence of child marriage among urban

boys. In addition to Ahmedabad, this includes Gandhinagar (7.4 per cent), Surat (6.8 per cent), Kheda (6.7 per cent), Anand (6.4 per cent), Valsad (6.3 per cent) and Dohad (6 per cent). Five urban districts in Maharashtra also appear in the top 20 high incidence districts of the country. These include Jalna, Sangli, Thane, Latur and Parbhani with 6.3 per cent to 7.2 per cent of urban boys married. Urban districts of Daman from Daman & Diu and Pakur from Jharkhand also figure in the top 20 child marriage high incidence districts.

Table 3.4: Top 20 districts based on proportion of married boys (10-20)

Rank	Total			Rural			Urban		
	State	Districts	% Ever Married	State	Districts	% Ever Married	State	Districts	% Ever Married
1	RAJASTHAN	Bhilwara	20.2	RAJASTHAN	Bhilwara	22.8	RAJASTHAN	Bhilwara	10.5
2	RAJASTHAN	Chittaurgarh	17.5	RAJASTHAN	Chittaurgarh	20.0	GUJARAT	Ahmadabad	7.8
3	RAJASTHAN	Ajmer	13.5	RAJASTHAN	Ajmer	17.8	HARYANA	Mewat	7.6
4	RAJASTHAN	Tonk	13.4	RAJASTHAN	Tonk	15.5	RAJASTHAN	Banswara	7.6
5	RAJASTHAN	Rajsamand	12.7	RAJASTHAN	Jhalawar	13.9	DAMAN & DIU	Daman	7.5
6	RAJASTHAN	Jhalawar	12.4	RAJASTHAN	Rajsamand	13.9	RAJASTHAN	Karauli	7.5
7	GUJARAT	Kheda	11.5	MADHYA PRADESH	Neemuch	13.0	GUJARAT	Gandhinagar	7.4
8	UTTAR PRADESH	Shrawasti	11.2	GUJARAT	Kheda	12.9	MAHARASHTRA	Jalna	7.2
9	MADHYA PRADESH	Jhabua	11.0	RAJASTHAN	Bundi	12.1	MAHARASHTRA	Sangli	7.1
10	UTTAR PRADESH	Lalitpur	10.9	UTTAR PRADESH	Lalitpur	11.9	MAHARASHTRA	Thane	6.8
11	MADHYA PRADESH	Neemuch	10.9	GUJARAT	Gandhinagar	11.9	RAJASTHAN	Chittaurgarh	6.8
12	RAJASTHAN	Bundi	10.7	MADHYA PRADESH	Jhabua	11.7	GUJARAT	Surat	6.8
13	MADHYA PRADESH	Barwani	10.3	MADHYA PRADESH	Barwani	11.5	RAJASTHAN	Rajsamand	6.7
14	MADHYA PRADESH	Shajapur	10.2	MADHYA PRADESH	Shajapur	11.4	GUJARAT	Kheda	6.7
15	HARYANA	Mewat	10.2	UTTAR PRADESH	Shrawasti	11.4	MAHARASHTRA	Latur	6.5
16	MADHYA PRADESH	Mandsaur	10.2	MADHYA PRADESH	Mandsaur	11.4	GUJARAT	Anand	6.4
17	RAJASTHAN	Dausa	10.1	RAJASTHAN	Jaipur	11.3	GUJARAT	Valsad	6.3
18	MADHYA PRADESH	Rajgarh	10.0	MADHYA PRADESH	Ratlam	11.2	MAHARASHTRA	Parbhani	6.3
19	GUJARAT	Gandhinagar	10.0	MADHYA PRADESH	Ujjain	11.2	JHARKHAND	Pakur	6.2
20	RAJASTHAN	Alwar	9.9	GUJARAT	Ahmadabad	11.1	GUJARAT	Dohad	6.1

3.5.3 Child Marriage among Girls in 10-14 age group, by District⁸⁵

While the earlier section presented the incidence of child marriage in the age group of 10-17 years for girls and 10-20 years for boys, further disaggregation of data was done to identify the top 20 districts in incidence of child marriage specifically for the age group 10-14 years among boys and girls.

Table 3.5 examines child marriage among girls specifically in the age group of 10-14 years by place of residence. The situation again appears grim in Rajasthan with 7 of the top 20 districts, which also had highest incidence of child marriage among girls under 18. Bhilwara reports the highest incidence (13.6 per cent) of marriages among 10-14 year girls, and also has the highest child marriage incidence among rural districts. Out of the total top 20 districts (urban and rural), the first five are in Rajasthan, while in case of rural areas, the top 7 among 20 districts are also in Rajasthan. The trend changes for urban districts with Ahmedabad (6.93 per cent) in Gujarat and Sangli (6.93 per cent) in Maharashtra reporting the highest incidence followed by Banswara (6.75 per cent) in Rajasthan. 11 urban districts from Maharashtra also appear in the urban list, along with 2 districts each from Rajasthan, Undivided Andhra Pradesh, Arunachal Pradesh and Uttar Pradesh.

Table 3.5: Top 20 districts based on proportion of married Girls (10-14)

Rank	Total			Rural			Urban		
	State	Districts	% Ever Married	State	Districts	% Ever Married	State	Districts	% Ever Married
1	Rajasthan	Bhilwara	13.57	Rajasthan	Bhilwara	13.17	Gujarat	Ahmadabad	6.93
2	Rajasthan	Chittlaurgarh	10.03	Rajasthan	Ajmer	12.52	Maharashtra	Sangli	6.93
3	Rajasthan	Ajmer	9.51	Rajasthan	Chittlaurgarh	11.33	Rajasthan	Banswara	6.75
4	Rajasthan	Tonk	7.39	Rajasthan	Tonk	8.71	Rajasthan	Bhilwara	6.74
5	Rajasthan	Rajsamand	6.75	Rajasthan	Rajsamand	7.21	Maharashtra	Jalna	6.43
6	Gujarat	Ahmadabad	6.71	Rajasthan	Bundi	6.20	Andhra Pradesh	Hyderabad **	5.90
7	Andhra Pradesh	Hyderabad **	5.90	Rajasthan	Jhalawar	5.09	Maharashtra	Jalgaon	5.87
8	Maharashtra	Jalna	5.88	Gujarat	Gandhinagar	6.00	Maharashtra	Thane	5.77
9	Maharashtra	Dhule	5.79	Maharashtra	Dhule	5.93	Maharashtra	Latur	5.74
10	Maharashtra	Satara	5.72	Maharashtra	Kolhapur	5.85	Arunachal Pradesh	Kurung Kumey	5.63
11	Maharashtra	Latur	5.66	Maharashtra	Satara	5.82	Maharashtra	Parbhani	5.51
12	Maharashtra	Kolhapur	5.65	Gujarat	Ahmadabad	5.77	Arunachal Pradesh	Changlang	5.49
13	Rajasthan	Jhalawar	5.49	Maharashtra	Jalna	5.75	Maharashtra	Dhule	5.40
14	Gujarat	Gandhinagar	5.42	Madhya Pradesh	Neemuch	5.67	Maharashtra	Satara	5.32
15	Gujarat	Kheda	5.40	Maharashtra	Latur	5.63	Maharashtra	Pune	5.29
16	Rajasthan	Bundi	5.39	Gujarat	Kheda	5.59	Maharashtra	Kolhapur	5.19
17	Maharashtra	Sangli	5.35	Rajasthan	Jolpur	5.49	Uttar Pradesh	Pratapgarh	5.18
18	Maharashtra	Jalgaon	5.21	Madhya Pradesh	Shajapur	5.05	Maharashtra	Chandrapur	5.17
19	Maharashtra	Thane	5.15	Maharashtra	Jalgaon	4.93	Uttar Pradesh	Ghaziabad	5.09
20	Madhya Pradesh	Neemuch	5.01	Maharashtra	Sangli	4.84	Andhra Pradesh	Rangareddy **	5.05

** Now in Telangana

⁸⁵This includes children from the first month of the 10th year and till the 11th month of 14th years

3.5.4 Child Marriage among Boys in 10-14 age group, by District

The incidence of child marriage among boys within the 10-14 age group was found to be highest in districts of Rajasthan, Gujarat, Maharashtra and Madhya Pradesh (Table 3.6). One can see high concentration of marriages at this very early age in the districts of Maharashtra (with an alarming 14 districts), followed by Rajasthan (4) along with Gujarat and Madhya Pradesh (1 each).

Bhilwara records the highest incidence of child marriage amongst boys in the 10-14 age group with 7.3 per cent of the boys getting married; followed by Chittaurgarh and Ajmer with 4.9 per cent and 4.8 per cent respectively. These are closely followed by four districts in Maharashtra - Jalna and Latur with 4.5 per cent and 4.3 per cent and Dhule and Kolhapur, both with 4.2 per cent of boys already married by the tender age of 14 years.

A comparative analysis of child marriage amongst boys and girls in the age group of 10-14 years living in rural districts reveals marked difference in terms of location from the earlier section— 12 districts in rural Maharashtra, 5 in Rajasthan, 2 in Gujarat and 1 in Madhya Pradesh comprise the top twenty rural districts featuring boys getting married before 14. This is different from rural districts identified for girls in 10-14 age groups with 7 districts in Maharashtra, 8 in Rajasthan, 2 in Madhya Pradesh and 3 districts in Gujarat.

When urban districts are examined (Table 3.6) for incidence of marriage amongst boys within the age group of 10-14, the picture alters in terms of location, and the incidence is lower than in rural areas. Maharashtra tops the chart with 14 districts, Gujarat with 2, while new districts of Uttar Pradesh (Pratapgarh and Ghaziabad) and Arunachal Pradesh (Lower Subansiri) come to light.

Table 3.6: Top 20 districts based on proportion of married boys (10-14)

Rank	Total			Rural			Urban		
	State	Districts	% Ever Married	State	Districts	% Ever Married	State	Districts	% Ever Married
1	Rajasthan	Bhilwara	7.29	Rajasthan	Bhilwara	8.28	Maharashtra	Sangli	5.01
2	Rajasthan	Chittaurgarh	4.90	Rajasthan	Ajmer	6.36	Maharashtra	Jalna	4.73
3	Rajasthan	Ajmer	4.75	Rajasthan	Chittaurgarh	5.64	Gujarat	Ahmadabad	4.37
4	Maharashtra	Jalna	4.45	Maharashtra	Kolhapur	4.40	Maharashtra	Jalgaon	4.27
5	Maharashtra	Latur	4.26	Maharashtra	Jalna	4.39	Maharashtra	Thane	4.14
6	Maharashtra	Dhule	4.19	Maharashtra	Dhule	4.31	Maharashtra	Latur	4.14
7	Maharashtra	Kolhapur	4.17	Maharashtra	Latur	4.31	Maharashtra	Parbhani	3.98
8	Maharashtra	Satara	4.14	Maharashtra	Satara	4.29	Maharashtra	Chandrapur	3.93
9	Gujarat	Ahmadabad	4.12	Maharashtra	Bhandara	3.95	Maharashtra	Dhule	3.86
10	Maharashtra	Bhandara	3.90	Rajasthan	Tonk	3.79	Maharashtra	Pune	3.85
11	Maharashtra	Sangli	3.79	Madhya Pradesh	Neemuch	3.42	Maharashtra	Bhandara	3.67
12	Maharashtra	Jalgaon	3.67	Maharashtra	Jalgaon	3.41	Maharashtra	Kolhapur	3.66
13	Maharashtra	Thane	3.67	Maharashtra	Parbhani	3.41	Maharashtra	Satara	3.58
14	Maharashtra	Parbhani	3.58	Maharashtra	Sangli	3.40	Maharashtra	Mumbai	3.43
15	Maharashtra	Mumbai	3.43	Rajasthan	Rajsmamand	3.24	Rajasthan	Bhilwara	3.34
16	Maharashtra	Chandrapur	3.35	Maharashtra	Chandrapur	3.05	Uttar Pradesh	Pratapgarh	3.19
17	Maharashtra	Pune	3.35	Gujarat	Ahmadabad	3.01	Maharashtra	Mumbai Suburban	3.17
18	Rajasthan	Tonk	3.23	Gujarat	Kheda	3.00	Gujarat	Valsad	3.13
19	Maharashtra	Mumbai Suburban	3.17	Maharashtra	Ahmadnagar	2.99	Arunachal Pradesh	Lower Subansiri	3.08
20	Madhya Pradesh	Neemuch	3.11	Maharashtra	Sindhudurg	2.95	Uttar Pradesh	Ghaziabad	3.04

3.5.5 Child Marriage among Girls in 15-17 age group⁶⁶, by District

In this section, efforts are made to understand the incidence of marriage among girls specifically in the age group of 15-17 years. The table below (Table 3.7) highlights the top 20 districts. These districts are spread across seven states i.e. Rajasthan (9 districts), Uttar Pradesh (2), Gujarat (2), Bihar (3), Assam (1), Madhya Pradesh (1) and Jharkhand (2).

The scenario compels immediate attention, with almost 2 out of every 5 girls married in Bhilwara (38 %) followed by Chittaurgarh where 35 per cent of the girls in the 15-17 age group are married, Rajasmamand and Tonk with 27.6 per cent and 27.3 per cent and Jhalawar and Ajmer with 26.7 per cent and 26 per cent. In the top 15 districts in this list, one out of five girls within the age group of 15-17 years is married.

⁶⁶This includes girls from the first month of the 15th year and till the 11th month on 17th year

The top 20 rural districts are spread over the same seven states as mentioned above, though the districts may be different - Rajasthan (8), Assam (1), Madhya Pradesh (4), Jharkhand (1), Uttar Pradesh (2), Gujarat (2) and Bihar (2). In the six districts of Rajasthan where the situation is at its worst, more than 30 per cent of the total rural girls within the age group of 15-17 are married. Bhilwara (42.6 per cent) is the district with highest incidence followed by rural Chittaurgarh (39 per cent) Ajmer (33.7 per cent), Tonk (32.6 per cent), Rajasmand (29.86 per cent) and Jhalawar (29.84 per cent).

The scenario is different if one examines child marriages in urban districts of our country. The only common districts across both rural and urban locations belong to the two states of Rajasthan (Bhilwara, Chittaurgarh, Ajmer and Rajasmand) and Gujarat (Gandhinagar and Kheda). Table 3.7 reveals that the two urban districts of Banswara and Bhilwara rank number one and two with 25.8 per cent and 22.1 per cent of girls married respectively. Urban Gandhinagar district in Gujarat ranks number three with 17 per cent girls reported married between the ages of 15-17 years. Karauli, Chittaurgarh and Rajasmand are the other 3 districts from Rajasthan with 17 per cent, 15.6 per cent and 15.5 per cent girls in this age group already married in addition to Ajmer (13.3 per cent). The urban district of Anand (Gujarat) and Sangli (Maharashtra) rank 7 and 8 with 15.6 per cent and 15.5 per cent of the total girls already married; while Ahmedabad and Kheda districts follow with 14 per cent and 13.8 per cent of the girls married in this age group. Davanagere (Karnataka) and South Tripura districts follow with 14.9 per cent and 14.8 per cent girls married respectively. Maldah, Dakshin Dinajpur and Bhirbhum districts in West Bengal and one district each in Assam (Goalpara) and Bihar (Sheohar) also feature in this list.

Table 3.7: Top 20 districts based on proportion of married girls (15-17), Census 2011

Rank	Total			Rural			Urban		
	State	Districts	% Ever married	State	Districts	% Ever married	State	Districts	% Ever married
1	RAJASTHAN	Bhilwara	38.49	RAJASTHAN	Bhilwara	42.60	RAJASTHAN	Banswara	25.77
2	RAJASTHAN	Chittaurgarh	34.99	RAJASTHAN	Chittaurgarh	39.27	RAJASTHAN	Bhilwara	22.10
3	RAJASTHAN	Rajsamand	27.58	RAJASTHAN	Ajmer	33.68	GUJARAT	Gandhinagar	16.96
4	RAJASTHAN	Tonk	27.33	RAJASTHAN	Tonk	32.62	RAJASTHAN	Karauli	16.88
5	RAJASTHAN	Jhalawar	26.67	RAJASTHAN	Rajsamand	29.86	RAJASTHAN	Chittaurgarh	15.59
6	RAJASTHAN	Ajmer	26.05	RAJASTHAN	Jhalawar	29.84	RAJASTHAN	Rajsamand	15.47
7	RAJASTHAN	Bundi	22.29	RAJASTHAN	Bundi	25.67	GUJARAT	Anand	15.38
8	UTTAR PRADESH	Shrawasti	22.26	GUJARAT	Gandhinagar	25.19	MAHARASHTRA	Sangli	15.28
9	UTTAR PRADESH	Lalitpur	21.98	UTTAR PRADESH	Lalitpur	24.48	KARNATAKA	Davanagere	14.86
10	GUJARAT	Gandhinagar	21.84	GUJARAT	Kheda	23.98	TRIPURA	South Tripura	14.77
11	GUJARAT	Kheda	21.71	MADHYA PRADESH	Shajapur	23.32	ASSAM	Goalpara	14.42
12	ASSAM	Dhubri	21.35	UTTAR PRADESH	Shrawasti	22.86	MAHARASHTRA	Jalna	14.21
13	BIHAR	Nawada	20.73	MADHYA PRADESH	Ujjain	22.78	WEST BENGAL	Maldah	14.11
14	MADHYA PRADESH	Shajapur	20.42	ASSAM	Dhubri	22.50	GUJARAT	Ahmadabad	14.06
15	BIHAR	Jamui	20.04	JHARKHAND	Deoghar	22.24	GUJARAT	Kheda	13.76
16	RAJASTHAN	Sawai Madhopur	19.81	BIHAR	Nawada	21.87	KARNATAKA	Bagalkot	13.62
17	JHARKHAND	Deoghar	19.66	MADHYA PRADESH	Neemuch	21.83	WEST BENGAL	Dakshin Dinajpur	13.55
18	RAJASTHAN	Karauli	19.59	RAJASTHAN	Sawai Madhopur	21.54	RAJASTHAN	Ajmer	13.34
19	BIHAR	Gaya	19.48	MADHYA PRADESH	Mandsaur	21.23	WEST BENGAL	Birbhum	13.26
20	JHARKHAND	Giridih	19.27	BIHAR	Jamui	20.99	BIHAR	Sheohar	13.18

3.5.6 Child Marriage among Boys in 15-20 age group⁸⁷, by District

In this section, efforts are made to understand the incidence of marriage among boys specifically in the age group of 15-20 years. The top twenty districts are spread across six states as seen in Table 3.8. Once again, the two highest ranking districts are located in Rajasthan with Bhilwara ranking number one (36.4 per cent), followed by Chittaurgarh (32.7 per cent) and then Jhabua in Madhya Pradesh (22.5 per cent). Four other districts in Rajasthan follow, Tonk (22.4 per cent), Rajsamand (22.3 per cent), Jhalawar (22 per cent) and Ajmer (21.2 per cent). Five districts in Madhya Pradesh (Jhabua, Barwani, Rajgarh, Neemuch and Shajapur), two districts each in Uttar Pradesh (Shrawasti and Lalitpur), Bihar (Nawada and Gaya) and Gujarat (Kheda and Dohad) and one in Haryana (Mewat) fall in the top 20 districts.

Bhilwara tops in terms of rural boys married in the 15-20 years age group with 36.4 per cent of such boys married, followed by Chittaurgarh (32.7 per cent), Ajmer (28.4 per cent), Tonk (26.2 per cent) Jhalawar (24.9 per cent) and

⁸⁷This includes boys from the first month of the 15th year and till the 11th month on 20th year

Rajasamand (24.6 per cent). Jhabua in Madhya Pradesh and Lalitpur in Uttar Pradesh also report high incidence with 24.3 per cent and 23.2 per cent respectively. There are six districts in Madhya Pradesh (Barwani, Neemuch, Ratlam, Rajgarh, Shajapur and Mandsaur), three in Gujarat (Kheda, Gandhinagar and Dohad), two in Uttar Pradesh (Lalitpur and Shravasti) and one in Haryana (Mewat) in the top 20 rural districts.

In terms of the top 20 urban districts with the highest number of boys married in the age group of 15-20 years, once again, the highest incidence is reported in Bhilwara (16.46 per cent), followed by urban Mewat (13 per cent), Karauli (12.7 per cent), Banswara (12.3 per cent), Gandhinagar (11.9 per cent) Rajasamand (11.3 per cent) and Chittaurgarh (11.2 per cent). Ten districts in this list are in Rajasthan, four in Gujarat, three in Bihar, and one each in Haryana, Jharkhand and Madhya Pradesh.

Five districts in Rajasthan (Bhilwara, Chittaurgarh, Ajmer, Tonk and Rajasamand), one in Gujarat (Kheda) and one in Haryana (Mewat) figure in both the urban and rural highest incidence districts for boys in the 15-20 age group.

Table 3.8: Top 20 districts based on proportion of married boys (15-20), Census 2011

Rank	Total			Rural			Urban		
	State	Districts	% Ever Married	State	Districts	% Ever Married	State	Districts	% Ever Married
1	Rajasthan	Bhilwara	32.06	Rajasthan	Bhilwara	36.40	Rajasthan	Bhilwara	16.46
2	Rajasthan	Chittaurgarh	28.56	Rajasthan	Chittaurgarh	32.67	Haryana	Mewat	13.00
3	Madhya Pradesh	Jhabua	22.52	Rajasthan	Ajmer	28.35	Rajasthan	Karauli	12.73
4	Rajasthan	Tonk	22.44	Rajasthan	Tonk	26.22	Rajasthan	Banswara	12.28
5	Rajasthan	Rajsamand	22.33	Rajasthan	Jhalawar	24.86	Gujarat	Gandhinagar	11.85
6	Rajasthan	Jhalawar	22.05	Rajasthan	Rajsamand	24.60	Rajasthan	Rajsamand	11.28
7	Rajasthan	Ajmer	21.24	Madhya Pradesh	Jhabua	24.29	Rajasthan	Chittaurgarh	11.22
8	Uttar Pradesh	Shrawasti	20.74	Uttar Pradesh	Lalitpur	23.19	Gujarat	Ahmadabad	10.51
9	Uttar Pradesh	Lalitpur	20.74	Madhya Pradesh	Barwani	22.41	Gujarat	Kheda	10.24
10	Madhya Pradesh	Barwani	19.67	Gujarat	Kheda	22.14	Bihar	Arwal	10.10
11	Gujarat	Kheda	19.45	Madhya Pradesh	Neemuch	21.42	Rajasthan	Nagaur	10.10
12	Haryana	Mewat	19.31	Uttar Pradesh	Shrawasti	21.25	Bihar	Sheohar	9.99
13	Gujarat	Dohad	18.56	Rajasthan	Bundi	20.51	Rajasthan	Sawai	9.74
14	Rajasthan	Bundi	17.90	Haryana	Mewat	20.14	Gujarat	Madhopur	9.74
15	Bihar	Nawada	17.78	Madhya Pradesh	Ratlam	19.93	Bihar	Anand	9.72
16	Madhya Pradesh	Rajgarh	17.71	Madhya Pradesh	Rajgarh	19.88	Jharkhand	Jehanabad	9.70
17	Rajasthan	Dausa	17.67	Gujarat	Gandhinagar	19.84	Rajasthan	Tonk	9.65
18	Bihar	Gaya	17.63	Madhya Pradesh	Shajapur	19.64	Rajasthan	Dausa	9.62
19	Madhya Pradesh	Neemuch	17.54	Madhya Pradesh	Mandsaur	19.61	Madhya Pradesh	Tikamgarh	9.60
20	Madhya Pradesh	Shajapur	17.34	Gujarat	Dohad	19.56	Rajasthan	Ajmer	9.55

3.6 Standardisation of Child Marriage High Incidence Districts identified across Various Age Groups

Using the standardisation procedure explained in the beginning of this chapter, the top 20 districts amongst the 70 districts reporting highest incidence of child marriage as per Census 2011 have been identified in each category age groups of 10-14 for both boys and girls, urban and rural as well as 15-17 for girls and 15-20 for boys across urban and rural settings.

Table 3.9 shows the top 20 districts among the identified 70 district with high incidence of child marriage in case of girls below the age of 18 and boys below the age of 21.

Rajasthan takes the lead – the first six districts with the highest incidence for child marriage both amongst girls and boys are in this state. In total, there are seven high incidence districts in Rajasthan for child marriage amongst girls and nine such districts for boys. Dhubri (Assam) features 7th in the list of high incidence districts for girls, along with three districts in Jharkhand (position 10th, 14th and 15th), two districts in Uttar Pradesh (position 9th and 11th), Madhya Pradesh (16th and 18th) and West Bengal (13th and 17th) and one district each in Bihar (12th), Gujarat (19th) and Maharashtra (20th). In the list of top 20 districts for boys apart from the 6 districts falling in Rajasthan, are six districts in undivided Madhya Pradesh (Raigarh, now being a part of Chhattisgarh) as well as two districts in Uttar Pradesh and Gujarat and one in Haryana. Clearly while there are a few districts common to both girls and boys in terms of the high incidence of child marriage, there are also immense variations with new and different districts from across the country for both categories.

Table 3.9: Top 20 among 70 high incidence districts based on weighted percentage ever married girls and boys, Census 2011

Rank	Girls (10-17)			Boys (10-20)		
	State	Districts	Weighted % Ever Married	State	Districts	Weighted % Ever Married
1	Rajasthan	Bhilwara	1.00	Rajasthan	Bhilwara	1.00
2	Rajasthan	Chittaurgarh	0.85	Rajasthan	Chittaurgarh	0.73
3	Rajasthan	Rajsamand	0.44	Rajasthan	Ajmer	0.34
4	Rajasthan	Jhalawar	0.42	Rajasthan	Tonk	0.33
5	Rajasthan	Tonk	0.33	Rajasthan	Rajsamand	0.27
6	Rajasthan	Ajmer	0.30	Rajasthan	Jhalawar	0.24
7	Assam	Dhubri	0.19	Gujarat	Kheda	0.16
8	Rajasthan	Bundi	0.16	Uttar Pradesh	Shrawasti	0.12
9	Uttar Pradesh	Lalitpur	0.09	Madhya Pradesh	Jhabua	0.10
10	Jharkhand	Deoghar	0.09	Uttar Pradesh	Lalitpur	0.10
11	Uttar Pradesh	Shrawasti	0.08	Madhya Pradesh	Neemuch	0.09
12	Bihar	Jamui	0.07	Rajasthan	Bundi	0.07
13	West Bengal	Murshidabad	0.06	Madhya Pradesh	Barwani	0.04
14	Jharkhand	Giridih	0.04	Madhya Pradesh	Shajapur	0.03
15	Jharkhand	Dumka	0.04	Haryana	Mewat	0.03
16	Madhya Pradesh	Shajapur	0.04	Madhya Pradesh	Mandsaur	0.03
17	West Bengal	Birbhum	0.02	Rajasthan	Dausa	0.02
18	Madhya Pradesh	Rajgarh	0.02	Madhya Pradesh	Rajgarh	0.01
19	Gujarat	Gandhinagar	0.02	Gujarat	Gandhinagar	0.01
20	Maharashtra	Jalna	0.00	Rajasthan	Alwar	0.00

3.7 Selection of 70 high incidence districts

On merging all the top 20 districts with high incidence of child marriage across various age categories and locations, a total of 70 districts were identified across the country (after removing duplication/repetition and given in alphabetic order). Interestingly, though these 70 districts (Table 3.10) together have nearly 14 per cent of India's child (girls of below age 18 years and boys of below 21 years) population, they account approximately 21 per cent of the incidence of child marriage as reported by Census 2011. The urban districts among these 70 high incidence districts contribute to 25.8 per cent of child marriage in urban areas while contribution of rural districts towards incidence of child marriage is lower at 20.6 per cent. Additionally, while 21.1 per cent of child marriage among girls in the country can be attributed to these 70 districts, a slightly higher percentage (22.5) can be noted for child marriage among boys in these 70 districts.

Table 3.10: Percentage of ever married girls (10-17) and boys (10-20) for 70 high incidence district, Census 2011

State	District	Girls (10-17)			Boys (10-20)		
		Total	Rural	Urban	Total	Rural	Urban
Andhra Pradesh	Hyderabad **	15.5	0.0	15.5	4.8	0.0	4.8
Andhra Pradesh	Rangareddy **	18.7	19.2	18.5	4.3	3.7	4.6
Arunachal Pradesh	Lower Subansiri	9.8	9.6	11.0	3.6	3.6	3.6
Arunachal Pradesh	Kurung Kumey	10.3	10.2	16.6	2.9	2.9	4.5
Arunachal Pradesh	Changlang	14.0	14.3	12.5	4.6	4.7	4.3
Assam	Dhubri	26.8	27.8	17.8	5.0	5.2	3.0
Assam	Goalpara	22.4	22.6	21.0	4.4	4.5	4.1
Bihar	Nawada	23.0	23.9	14.8	9.4	9.9	5.2
Bihar	Jamui	25.3	26.0	17.5	7.5	7.8	4.7
Bihar	Gaya	22.3	23.4	15.2	9.6	10.2	5.9
Bihar	Arwal	19.2	19.4	17.0	7.2	7.3	5.8
Bihar	Sheohar	19.2	19.3	18.1	5.9	5.9	5.8
Bihar	Jehanabad	20.8	21.4	16.1	8.4	8.8	5.8
Gujarat	Ahmadabad	19.5	24.4	18.4	8.4	11.1	7.8
Gujarat	Anand	21.3	22.8	17.8	8.3	9.1	6.4
Gujarat	Dohad	16.9	16.9	16.0	9.9	10.2	6.1
Gujarat	Kheda	24.4	26.3	17.3	11.5	12.9	6.7
Gujarat	Valsad	17.7	18.4	16.4	6.7	6.9	6.3
Gujarat	Gandhinagar	24.6	27.4	20.4	10.0	11.9	7.4
Haryana	Mewat	21.5	22.0	17.0	10.2	10.5	7.6
Jharkhand	Pakur	22.8	23.2	17.6	7.7	7.9	6.2
Jharkhand	Deoghar	25.5	27.5	15.9	7.2	7.9	4.2
Jharkhand	Giridih	24.9	25.9	15.1	6.7	7.0	3.5
Karnataka	Davanagere	17.3	17.0	17.9	3.8	3.6	4.3
Karnataka	Bagalkot	24.4	26.3	20.3	4.2	4.4	3.7
Madhya Pradesh	Barwani	20.0	21.1	13.0	10.3	11.5	3.7
Madhya Pradesh	Jhabua	19.6	20.1	13.9	11.0	11.7	4.4
Madhya Pradesh	Mandsaur	24.3	26.7	14.6	10.2	11.4	5.2
Madhya Pradesh	Neemuch	23.7	27.0	15.3	10.9	13.0	5.8
Madhya Pradesh	Rajgarh	24.6	26.6	15.6	10.0	11.1	5.2
Madhya Pradesh	Ratlam	21.2	24.2	13.4	9.2	11.2	4.1
Madhya Pradesh	Shajapur	24.9	27.0	15.8	10.2	11.4	5.0
Madhya Pradesh	Tikamgarh	21.1	22.4	15.1	9.3	10.0	5.8
Madhya Pradesh	Ujjain	22.9	28.0	14.2	8.5	11.2	4.0
Maharashtra	Ahmadnagar	21.8	22.5	18.8	5.4	5.6	4.6
Maharashtra	Bhandara	10.6	10.8	9.4	4.8	4.9	4.4
Maharashtra	Chandrapur	12.2	12.3	12.2	4.4	4.1	5.0
Maharashtra	Dhule	19.4	20.9	15.6	7.0	7.7	5.3
Maharashtra	Jalgaon	20.1	21.0	18.2	5.7	5.6	6.0
Maharashtra	Jalna	24.4	25.3	21.1	7.5	7.6	7.2
Maharashtra	Kolhapur	19.6	19.9	19.0	5.8	5.9	5.6
Maharashtra	Latur	19.7	20.2	18.6	6.6	6.6	6.5
Maharashtra	Mumbai	12.0	0.0	12.0	5.9	0.0	5.9
Maharashtra	Mumbai Suburban	12.6	0.0	12.6	5.3	0.0	5.3
Maharashtra	Parbhani	20.9	21.8	19.0	6.2	6.1	6.3
Maharashtra	Pune	19.4	20.8	18.4	5.4	4.9	5.8
Maharashtra	Sangli	20.9	20.8	21.2	5.5	5.0	7.1
Maharashtra	Satara	18.2	18.7	16.2	6.0	6.1	5.3
Maharashtra	Sindhudurg	9.0	8.7	10.7	4.1	4.2	3.9
Maharashtra	Thane	16.7	18.2	16.2	6.6	5.9	6.8
Rajasthan	Ajmer	28.2	34.7	16.7	13.5	17.8	6.0

** Now in Telangana

Rajasthan	Banswara	19.3	18.9	24.6	8.1	8.1	7.6
Rajasthan	Bhilwara	36.9	40.0	24.4	20.2	22.8	10.5
Rajasthan	Bundi	26.4	28.9	15.5	10.7	12.1	4.5
Rajasthan	Chittaurgarh	35.1	38.4	19.7	17.5	20.0	6.8
Rajasthan	Dausa	22.5	23.4	15.6	10.1	10.7	5.9
Rajasthan	Jaipur	19.3	24.5	13.6	8.1	11.3	4.7
Rajasthan	Jhalawar	29.7	32.0	16.8	12.4	13.9	4.5
Rajasthan	Karauli	24.0	24.7	19.8	9.8	10.1	7.5
Rajasthan	Nagaur	22.1	23.2	17.5	9.1	9.9	6.1
Rajasthan	Rajsamand	29.9	31.8	19.2	12.7	13.9	6.7
Rajasthan	Sawai Madhopur	24.0	25.7	17.0	9.6	10.4	5.9
Rajasthan	Tonk	28.6	32.8	15.4	13.4	15.5	5.8
Uttar Pradesh	Pratapgarh	13.1	13.1	12.5	5.7	5.7	5.6
Uttar Pradesh	Ghaziabad	13.2	13.3	13.2	5.1	4.9	5.2
Uttar Pradesh	Lalitpur	25.5	27.2	15.1	10.9	11.9	4.6
Uttar Pradesh	Shrawasti	25.5	25.9	14.7	11.2	11.4	5.5
West Bengal	Maldah	22.7	22.9	21.1	4.9	5.0	4.3
West Bengal	Dakshin Dinajpur	23.1	23.7	18.5	4.5	4.6	3.9
West Bengal	Birbhum	24.6	25.0	21.8	5.1	5.1	4.5

3.8 A Comparison of Incidence of Child Marriage in 70 High Incidence Districts according to Census 2001 and 2011

This section presents a comparative analysis of data from Census 2001 and Census 2011 regarding incidence of child marriage for both boys and girls in the above mentioned 70 high incidence districts. The rationale for undertaking this exercise is to ascertain whether there have been any changes in incidences of child marriage in the decade over the two consecutive Censuses.

In order to compare the incidence of child marriage between Census 2001 and 2011, the age group of 0-17 years for girls and 0-20 years for boys were considered. Although, as pointed out in the previous section also, the age group 0-9 was excluded from the analysis of Census 2011 data, such segregation of data was not possible with respect to Census 2001⁸⁸.

The formulae used for capturing the changes in population, number of ever married below the legal age and percentage of ever married below the legal age are as below:-

1. Change in Population = $\frac{\text{Population in Census 2011}}{\text{Population in Census 2001}}$
2. Change in Number of Ever married below legal age = $\frac{\text{Number Ever married below legal age in Census 2011}}{\text{Number ever married below legal age in Census 2001}}$

⁸⁸ Census 2011 provides marital data in grouped age (like 0-9, 10-14, 15-19 ... 75-79 and 80+) as well as in single group (e.g. 15, 16, 17...29) for age 15 to 29. Whereas Census 2001 gives the marital information in terms of age groups (e.g. 0-9, 10-14, 15-19...75-79, & 80+) and below 18 years

3. Change in % Ever married below legal age = $\frac{\% \text{ Ever married below legal age in Census 2011}}{\% \text{ Ever married below legal age in Census 2001}}$

3.8.1 Variations across Districts for Girls

Table 3.11 compares the population and incidence of child marriage among girls between the two rounds of Census. 16 districts show a declining trend in population in 2011, 32 districts show a declining trend in number of ever married and 30 districts show a declining trend in percentage ever married. Clearly, comparisons between Census 2001 and Census 2011 show the declining trend even in the 70 districts with high incidence of girl child marriage.

The maximum number of districts with an increasing trend in child marriage seems to be concentrated in Maharashtra. All 16 districts of Maharashtra in the 70 identified high incidence districts show an increasing trend related to child marriage between Census 2001 and 2011. The district of Bhandara in Maharashtra leads with more than a 5-fold increase in child marriage among girls. It is disturbing to note that districts such as Mumbai (2.2 fold), Mumbai sub-urban (2.3 fold), Pune (2.4 fold) and Thane (2.8 fold) are also reporting increasing trend. Kolhapur, Sindhudurg and Satara are reporting more than 3 times increase in child marriage among girls.

Out of the 13 districts from Rajasthan, which figure in the 70 high incidence districts, only Banswara shows an increase in the magnitude of child marriage. The other 12 districts which earlier showed very high incidences of child marriage reveal a declining trend over the decade.

The same declining trend is visible in 7 out of 9 districts from Madhya Pradesh. However, two districts Barwani (1.1 times) and Jhabua (1.8 times) show an increasing trend in child marriage. All six districts from Gujarat featuring in the 70 high incidence districts including urban area such as Ahmadabad (2 times), Gandhinagar (1.2 times) and Anand (1.3 times) show an increase. Two districts* in Undivided Andhra Pradesh and two districts in Assam also show an increasing trend. Bihar, Arunachal Pradesh, Jharkhand, Uttar Pradesh and West Bengal are showing mixed trends.

**Now in Telangana

Table 3.11: Percentage change in Population and Married below legal age Among females over two consecutive Censuses (2001-2011)

State	Districts	Population			Number ever married			% Ever Married girls (<18)		
		2001	2011	Ratio	2001	2011	Ratio	2001 (%)	2011 (%)	Ratio
ANDHRA PRADESH	Hyderabad**	701631	613897	0.9	19534	24003	1.2	2.78	3.91	1.4
ANDHRA PRADESH	Rangareddy**	665450	808215	1.2	17999	26407	1.5	2.70	3.27	1.2
ARUNACHAL PRADESH	Lower Subansiri	23088	16911	0.7	552	443	0.8	2.39	2.62	1.1
ARUNACHAL PRADESH	Kurung Kumey *		22914			429			1.87	0.0
ARUNACHAL PRADESH	Changlang	28785	31221	1.1	335	597	1.8	1.16	1.91	1.6
ASSAM	Dhubri	377853	415836	1.1	11384	12783	1.1	3.02	3.08	1.0
ASSAM	Goalpara	185732	204327	1.1	3910	4498	1.4	2.11	2.68	1.3
BIHAR	Nawada	410508	487048	1.2	2877	1625	0.7	6.79	3.75	0.6
BIHAR	Jamui	309428	375748	1.2	19720	11853	0.6	6.37	3.15	0.5
BIHAR	Gaya	782418	948823	1.2	45059	9889	0.2	5.76	1.65	0.6
BIHAR	Arwal*		151635			3939			2.60	0.0
BIHAR	Supa*	109428	143208	1.3	908	200	0.2		2.99	0.0
BIHAR	Ghanabad	328731	228719	0.7	15125	200	0.0	4.80	0.05	0.0
GUJARAT	Ahmadabad	965115	1037222	1.1	21913	47398	2.2	2.27	4.57	2.0
GUJARAT	Anand	311566	316290	1.0	9813	13125	1.3	3.15	4.15	1.3
GUJARAT	Dahad	383668	483932	1.3	4650	11463	2.5	1.21	2.37	2.0

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State	Districts	Population			Number Ever married			% Ever Married girls (<18)		
		2001	2011	Ratio	2001	2011	Ratio	2001 (%)	2011 (%)	Ratio
Maharashtra	Dhule	326114	344787	1.1	4619	12996	2.8	1.42	3.77	2.7
Maharashtra	Jalgaon	674924	655593	1.0	10693	23420	2.2	1.58	3.57	2.3
Maharashtra	Jalna	326513	337844	1.0	4856	13177	2.7	1.49	3.90	2.6
Maharashtra	Kolhapur	570025	522715	0.9	6078	20002	3.3	1.06	3.83	3.6
Maharashtra	Latur	414876	411307	1.0	6878	15950	2.3	1.66	3.88	2.3
Maharashtra	Mumbai	452302	363823	0.8	6129	10977	1.8	1.38	3.02	2.2
Maharashtra	Mumbai Suburban	1336799	1216466	0.9	16546	34618	2.1	1.24	2.85	2.3
Maharashtra	Parbhani	313838	319818	1.0	4009	10826	2.7	1.28	3.32	2.6
Maharashtra	Pune	1223665	1310289	1.1	16680	43544	2.6	1.36	3.32	2.4
Maharashtra	Sangli	428745	393741	0.9	6867	15337	2.2	1.80	3.90	2.4
Maharashtra	Setara	479635	418245	0.9	5449	16056	2.9	1.14	3.84	3.4
Maharashtra	Sindhudurg	340836	310419	0.8	1045	3126	3.0	0.74	2.83	3.8
Maharashtra	Thane	1405632	1643179	1.2	16871	58181	3.3	1.20	3.42	2.8
RAJASTHAN	Ajmer	368417	473748	1.1	8000	12740	1.6	1.17	6.61	0.7
RAJASTHAN	Banswara	342742	386536	1.1	8191	9810	1.2	2.39	2.54	1.1
RAJASTHAN	Bhilwara	412748	453135	1.1	5400	8000	1.5	1.10	2.00	1.8
RAJASTHAN	Bundi	238500	214536	1.0	15000	15000	1.0	1.17	1.17	1.0
RAJASTHAN	Chittorgarh	368417	268417	0.7	15000	15000	1.0	1.17	1.17	1.0
RAJASTHAN	Dausi	286777	327364	1.1	15000	15000	1.0	1.17	1.17	1.0
RAJASTHAN	Jalpur	1094721	1094721	1.0	15000	15000	1.0	1.17	1.17	1.0
RAJASTHAN	Jhalawar	241752	241752	1.0	15000	15000	1.0	1.17	1.17	1.0

State	Districts	Population			Number Ever married			% Ever Married girls (<18)		
		2001	2011	Ratio	2001	2011	Ratio	2001 (%)	2011 (%)	Ratio
ANDHRA PRADESH	Chittoor	111111	121111	1.1	11111	12111	1.1	5.75	4.25	0.7
	East Godavari	111111	121111	1.1	11111	12111	1.1	5.27	3.47	0.6
	Hyderabad	111111	121111	1.1	11111	12111	1.1	9.41	4.25	0.4
	West Godavari	111111	121111	1.1	11111	12111	1.1	5.80	4.44	0.6
UTTAR PRADESH	Pratapgarh	622911	649961	1.1	16265	18937	1.2	2.69	2.85	1.1
	Ghazipur	682993	833931	1.2	10279	23419	2.3	1.58	2.81	1.9
UTTAR PRADESH	Pratapgarh	622911	649961	1.1	16265	18937	1.2	6.85	4.22	0.6
	Ghazipur	682993	833931	1.2	10279	23419	2.3	6.51	2.67	0.4
WEST BENGAL	Bachchan	788349	799817	1.1	21414	25776	1.1	2.90	2.97	1.0
WEST BENGAL	Dakshin Dinajpur	285957	278113	0.9	8723	9999	1.1	2.95	3.60	1.2
							0.9	3.23	4.44	1.4

** Now in Telangana

*Districts formed after 2001 census

Coding for above table based on % ratio change in ever married

	District not in census 2001
	Declining trend (0.01-0.99)
	Increasing trend (1-4.99)
	Increasing trend (5.00-9.99)
	Increasing trend (>=10.00)

3.8.2 Variations across Districts for Boys

Table 3.12 shows the change in population and number of child marriage among boys below the age of 21 years. While 63 districts out of 70 districts are showing increase in population between the two Censuses, increase in number of ever married below the legal age and percentage of ever married below the legal age are seen in 40 and 38 districts respectively.

In Maharashtra, all 16 districts show an increase in child marriage for boys, with Bhandara faring the worst with a 21.7 times increase in percentage of ever married below the legal age. It is important to note that this district also registered the highest increase in relation to girls married before the legal age. A substantive study needs to be initiated to understand the alarming increase in child marriage incidence in this district. 13 districts are showing more than 9 fold increase in magnitude of child marriage which is a cause for extreme concern. Urban area such as Pune, Mumbai, Mumbai suburb, Ahmednagar and Thane are also showing more than 6 times increase in child marriage among boys.

Similarly, all six districts in Gujarat, two districts in Assam and two districts in Madhya Pradesh are also showing an increasing trend. In Madhya Pradesh, the two district with higher figures for child marriage among girls, namely Barwani (1.0 times) and Jhabua (1.3 times) reveal an increasing trend for child marriage for boys too. All 13 districts of Rajasthan show a declining trend including Banswara. Decreasing trend is also seen across the two districts of Jharkhand and five districts of Bihar. Districts in Uttar Pradesh, Karnataka and West Bengal show mixed results.

Population and Number of Ever Married Boys Below 21 Years of Age over Two Administrative Censuses (2001 & 2011)										
State	Districts	Population			Number Ever Married			% Ever Married boys (<21)		
		2001	2011	Ratio	2001	2011	Ratio	2001 (%)	2011 (%)	Ratio
ANDHRA PRADESH	Hyderabad**	736603	790818	1.1	5846	20963	3.6	0.79	2.65	3.3
ANDHRA PRADESH	Rangareddy**	703288	1024342	1.5	3723	23869	6.4	0.53	2.33	4.4
ANDHRA PRADESH	Lower Subanon*	27322	30936	1.1	889	449	0.7	2.51	2.17	0.9
ARUNACHAL PRADESH	Kurung Kumey *		26793			405			1.51	0.0
ARUNACHAL PRADESH	Changlang	34664	37261	1.1	510	864	1.7	1.47	2.32	1.6
ASSAM	Dhubri	463823	508330	1.1	7971	12139	1.5	1.72	2.39	1.4
ASSAM	Goalpara	226835	251475	1.1	3014	5595	1.9	1.33	2.22	1.7
		394057	467531	1.2	23000	17049	0.7	5.81	3.63	0.6
BIHAR	Arwal*		186425			6542			3.51	0.0
				1.2	6038	5109	0.8	4.20	2.79	0.7
					20000	20000	1.0	6.27	4.12	0.7
GUJARAT	Ahmedabad	1363967	1482622	1.1	37224	69047	1.9	4.89	4.66	1.0
GUJARAT	Anand	437427	434869	1.0	17776	19794	1.1	2.73	4.55	1.7

State	Districts	Population			Number Ever married			% Ever Married boys (<21)		
		2001	2011	Ratio	2001	2011	Ratio	2001 (%)	2011 (%)	Ratio
GUJARAT	Dohad	445851	561013	1.3	17738	25864	1.5	3.98	4.61	1.2
GUJARAT	Kheda	477296	488084	1.0	28326	30460	1.1	5.93	6.24	1.1
GUJARAT	Valsad	319368	352224	1.1	6327	12630	2.0	1.98	3.59	1.8
GUJARAT	Gandhinagar	321644	293733	0.9	15717	16136	1.0	4.89	5.49	1.1
HARYANA	Mewat *		346972			16640			4.80	0.0
JHARKHAND	Pakur	194192	236279	1.2	5887	8429	1.4	3.03	3.57	1.2
JHARKHAND	Dumkai	321941	383016	1.2	2284	13531	1.0	4.32	3.57	0.8
JHARKHAND	Godda	532056	688061	1.3	2284	22372	0.9	4.28	3.25	0.8
KARNATAKA	Davanagere	426427	382518	0.9	4522	8452	1.9	1.06	2.21	2.1
KARNATAKA	Bellary	421303	406521	0.9	2284	9698	0.7	3.17	2.38	0.7
Madhya Pradesh	Barwani	304191	373010	1.2	14437	18387	1.3	4.75	4.93	1.0
Madhya Pradesh	Jhabua	405565	284509	0.7	15917	14046	0.9	3.92	4.94	1.3
Madhya Pradesh	Mandsaur	286444	299754	1.0	22489	16620	0.7	7.59	5.54	0.7
Madhya Pradesh	Neemuch	678415	181448	0.3	14379	10774	0.7	8.01	5.94	0.7
Madhya Pradesh	Rajgarh	333773	370425	1.1	2284	19296	0.8	3.42	5.21	1.5
Madhya Pradesh	Ratlam	312865	370425	1.2	14379	16581	0.9	4.60	4.55	0.9
Madhya Pradesh	Shajapur	304191	221378	0.7	14379	19724	1.4	4.75	8.92	1.9
Madhya Pradesh	Talwar	304191	370425	1.2	2284	17724	0.8	5.94	4.75	0.8
Madhya Pradesh	Ujjain	430855	538109	1.2	2284	20693	0.7	5.94	4.80	0.8

State	Districts	Population			Number ever married			% Ever Married boys (<21)		
		2001	2011	Ratio	2001	2011	Ratio	2001 (%)	2011 (%)	Ratio
Andhra Pradesh	Adilabad	1,00,000	1,00,000	1.00	1,00,000	1,00,000	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00
	Chittoor	1,00,000	1,00,000	1.00	1,00,000	1,00,000	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00
	East Godavari	1,00,000	1,00,000	1.00	1,00,000	1,00,000	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00
	Eluru	1,00,000	1,00,000	1.00	1,00,000	1,00,000	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00
	Guntur	1,00,000	1,00,000	1.00	1,00,000	1,00,000	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00
	Krishna	1,00,000	1,00,000	1.00	1,00,000	1,00,000	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00
	Nellore	1,00,000	1,00,000	1.00	1,00,000	1,00,000	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00
	Prakasam	1,00,000	1,00,000	1.00	1,00,000	1,00,000	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00
	Srisailem	1,00,000	1,00,000	1.00	1,00,000	1,00,000	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00
	Tirumala	1,00,000	1,00,000	1.00	1,00,000	1,00,000	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00
Karnataka	Bellary	1,00,000	1,00,000	1.00	1,00,000	1,00,000	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00
	Bidar	1,00,000	1,00,000	1.00	1,00,000	1,00,000	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00
	Bijapur	1,00,000	1,00,000	1.00	1,00,000	1,00,000	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00
	Dakshin Kannada	1,00,000	1,00,000	1.00	1,00,000	1,00,000	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00
	Dharwad	1,00,000	1,00,000	1.00	1,00,000	1,00,000	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00
	Haveri	1,00,000	1,00,000	1.00	1,00,000	1,00,000	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00
	Kodagu	1,00,000	1,00,000	1.00	1,00,000	1,00,000	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00
	Koppal	1,00,000	1,00,000	1.00	1,00,000	1,00,000	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00
	Shimoga	1,00,000	1,00,000	1.00	1,00,000	1,00,000	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00
	Tumkur	1,00,000	1,00,000	1.00	1,00,000	1,00,000	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00
Kerala	Alappuzha	1,00,000	1,00,000	1.00	1,00,000	1,00,000	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00
	Ernakulam	1,00,000	1,00,000	1.00	1,00,000	1,00,000	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00
	Idukki	1,00,000	1,00,000	1.00	1,00,000	1,00,000	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00
	Kannur	1,00,000	1,00,000	1.00	1,00,000	1,00,000	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00
	Kasaragod	1,00,000	1,00,000	1.00	1,00,000	1,00,000	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00
	Kollam	1,00,000	1,00,000	1.00	1,00,000	1,00,000	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00
	Kottayam	1,00,000	1,00,000	1.00	1,00,000	1,00,000	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00
	Malappuram	1,00,000	1,00,000	1.00	1,00,000	1,00,000	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00
	Palakkad	1,00,000	1,00,000	1.00	1,00,000	1,00,000	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00
	Thiruvananthapuram	1,00,000	1,00,000	1.00	1,00,000	1,00,000	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00
Madhya Pradesh	Bhopal	1,00,000	1,00,000	1.00	1,00,000	1,00,000	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00
	Gwalior	1,00,000	1,00,000	1.00	1,00,000	1,00,000	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00
	Indore	1,00,000	1,00,000	1.00	1,00,000	1,00,000	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00
	Jabalpur	1,00,000	1,00,000	1.00	1,00,000	1,00,000	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00
	Khandwa	1,00,000	1,00,000	1.00	1,00,000	1,00,000	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00
	Mandla	1,00,000	1,00,000	1.00	1,00,000	1,00,000	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00
	Morena	1,00,000	1,00,000	1.00	1,00,000	1,00,000	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00
	Rajindrapuram	1,00,000	1,00,000	1.00	1,00,000	1,00,000	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00
	Sagar	1,00,000	1,00,000	1.00	1,00,000	1,00,000	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00
	Sehore	1,00,000	1,00,000	1.00	1,00,000	1,00,000	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00

*Districts formed after 2001 census

Coding for above table based on % ratio change in ever married

	District not in census 2001
	Declining trend (0.01-0.99)
	Increasing trend (1-4.99)
	Increasing trend (5.00-9.99)
	Increasing trend (≥ 10.00)

3.8.3 Categorisation of Districts

In order to identify the districts with specific trends across the 70 high-incidence districts, the trends from the two tables (Table 3.11 and Table 3.12) were analysed further in terms of calculating percentage change in population as well as number of ever married girls below legal age and number of ever married boys below legal age between Census 2001 and Census 2011. Four categories of districts were identified:

Category	% change in Population	% change in Number Ever married
Category 1	Increased	Increased
Category 2	Decreased	Increased
Category 3	Decreased	Decreased
Category 4	Increased	Decreased

This analysis allows a comparison of the current scenario with respect to the situation of child marriage that prevailed a decade ago in these 70 high incidence districts, spread over 13 states across the country. This analysis greatly helps in identifying districts where the situation is showing an improving trend and where the situation is worsening.

The following diagrams - Diagram 3.1 and Diagram 3.2 – illustrate the change in population as well as number of ever married below legal age between the two Census, 2001 and 2011, in such a way similar to that of *Johari Window*⁸⁹.

⁸⁹The Johari Window is a communication model, in the form of a four-quadrant grid, that is used to improve understanding between individuals. The word "Johari" is taken from the names of Joseph Luft and Harry Ingham, who developed the model in 1955.

Diagram 3.1: % Changes in Population and Number Ever Married below legal age for girls between Census 2001 and 2011

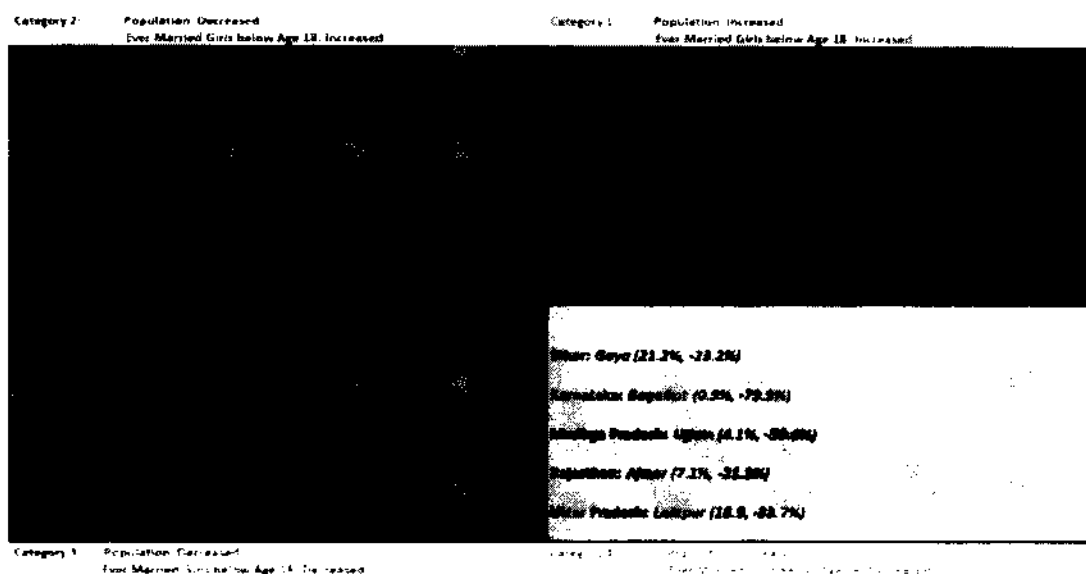


Diagram 3.1 depicts the variations in number of ever married below the legal age with respect to girls (18 years), vis-à-vis variation in population between Census 2001 and 2011. The key findings that emerge are:

Hyderabad* in undivided Andhra Pradesh, Gandhinagar in Gujarat, Ahmad Nagar in Maharashtra and Dakshin Dinajpur in West Bengal are the districts where despite a decrease in population from 2001 to 2011 (as per the census data), incidence of child marriage among girls increased.

Gaya in Bihar, Bagalkot in Karnataka, Ujjain in Madhya Pradesh, Ajmer in Rajasthan and Lalitpur in Uttar Pradesh registered an increase in population from 2001 to 2011. Despite this fact, the incidence of child marriage among girls registered a decrease for the same period.

Pakur in Jharkhand, Kheda in Gujarat, Barwani in Madhya Pradesh, Ghaziabad in Uttar Pradesh and Banswara in Rajasthan are the districts where both population as well as child marriage among girls increased over the decade from 2001 to 2011.

Jehanabad in Bihar, Davengere in Karnataka, Manndasaur in Madhya Pradesh, Chittaurgarh in Rajasthan and Bhirbhum in West Bengal are districts that registered a decrease in population between the two census, 2001 and 2011 and in the incidence of child marriage among girls.

Diagram 3.2 portrays the variations in numbers of ever married below the legal

age with respect to boys, vis-à-vis variation in population, between Census 2001 and 2011. Key findings here include

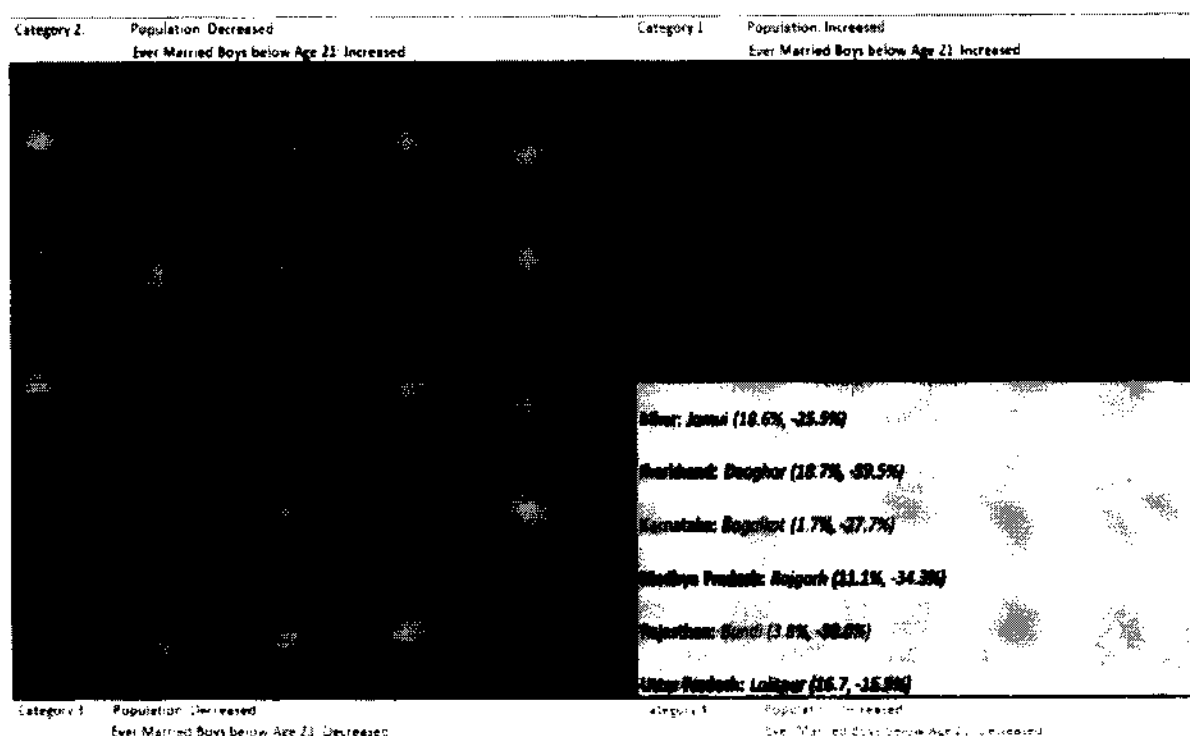
Anand in Gujarat, Davangere in Karnataka and Dakshin Dinajpur in West Bengal are the districts where in spite of a decrease in population from 2001 to 2011 (as per the census data), incidence of child marriage among boys increased.

Jamui in Bihar, Deoghar in Jharkhand, Bagalkot in Karnataka, Rajgarh in Madhya Pradesh, Bundi in Rajasthan and Lalitpur in Uttar Pradesh registered an increase in population from 2001 to 2011. Despite this fact, the incidence of child marriage among boys registered a decrease for the same period.

Goalpara in Assam, Dohad in Gujarat, Pakur in Jharkhand, Barwani in Madhya Pradesh and Maldah in West Bengal are the districts where both population as well as child marriage among boys increased over the decade (2001 to 2011).

Jehanabad in Bihar, Jhabua in Madhya Pradesh, Chittaurgarh in Rajasthan and Shravasti in Uttar Pradesh registered a decrease in population between 2001 and 2011 and in the incidence of child marriage amongst boys.

Diagram 3.2: % Changes in Population and Number Ever Married below legal age for boys between Census 2001 and 2011



The comparative analysis helps to assess the changes in population and number of ever married over two Census rounds. Diagram 3.1 and 3.2 highlight some districts where the population has declined but the number of ever married before legal age has increased. These districts urgently require interventions to reduce and prevent child marriage. In contrast, there are some districts where the population has increased in the last decade, but the number of young people who married before the legal age has declined. These districts need to be studied so that socio-cultural factors, programmes and interventions that might have supported this phenomenon are identified. Similarly, we need to analyse factors at the family, community and policy level in those districts where both population as well as number of child marriages is on the decline over the two census rounds, so that other districts and states can learn lessons from the same.

3.9 Summary and conclusions

Detailed analysis of the incidence of child marriage among both boys and girls below their respective legal age, in rural as well as urban districts, across different age groups, based on the 2011 Census provides interesting conclusions. These include:

- There is a declining trend in terms of child marriage incidence at the national level.
- It is important to analyse both intra-state and intra-district variance in incidence of child marriage, particularly based on urban and rural locations. Similarly, it is crucial to analyse trends in incidence of child marriage not only for girls, but also for boys across age groups.
- Focusing efforts, time and resources on reducing child marriage in the identified top 70 high incidence districts, identified from across the country based on Census 2011, may help in improving the child marriage situation in our country. Adopting bottom up approaches in developing strategies and developing context-specific programmes will help to target local populations to reduce child marriage.
- While districts in Rajasthan continue to figure prominently amongst the highest incidence districts with respect to child marriage, it is important to note that other than Banswara, all other districts in Rajasthan are showing a positive declining trend in child marriage over the decade.

- We need to identify the socio-cultural and political factors that enabled the declining trend in the incidence of child marriage, so that they can be replicated in other communities.
- Districts from certain states such as Maharashtra and Gujarat where there is a sudden surge in incidence of child marriage since the 2001 Census needs further investigation. Urban districts of Maharashtra in particular reveal a disturbing trend of increased incidence of child marriage among boys below the age of 21, and this requires urgent attention.
- Focussed fact-finding and exploratory studies are required to bring forth the reasons behind the resurfacing trends and the causative factors and persuading forces.
- Focused interventions based on well-studied and thought-out strategies may help in reversing these new found trends.

It is important to highlight that the 70 districts identified through this analysis are critical districts to work in, both to prevent and reduce child marriage. The information and analysis with regard to different age groups for boys and girls in both urban and rural areas can be used to design effective intervention strategies by the states concerned.

Though this analysis gives a detailed account of the prevailing situation of child marriages with respect to high incidence districts spread across different states, it is unable to provide any explanation for such trends or phenomenon. In order to understand these trends, we need to gather evidence from the ground, to see what is happening in a particular district/locality. In-depth and focused research studies are required to understand what worked and brought about a positive trend in a place as well as why something did not help and what indirectly contributed to any particular situation. Such research studies will enable governments (state as well as national) to design better interventions and also learn good practices.



Chapter 4

Causes of Child Marriage

This chapter examines the various determinants of child marriage in India for both boys and girls across rural and urban areas. These include social, community and gender norms, access to education, poverty, patriarchy and cultural festivals, all of which play a major role in the perpetuation of child marriage in our society.

4.1 Triggers which lead to child marriage

Child marriage has existed in India for a long time as a traditional cultural and religious practice, despite global recognition that it is perhaps, one of the worst forms of violations of human rights. It cuts off childhood, snatches freedom to play and learn and eclipses a promising future by denying opportunities of optimal growth and development, both for boys and girls. In the previous chapters, various aspects related to child marriage in the Indian context, specially its incidence in the country and consequences as ascertained from the Census data have been presented.

The situational analysis reveals that there has been only a slow and negligible change over time in the incidence of child marriage for boys and girls and new urban sites in certain states are reporting high incidence of child marriage. Despite policy and legal provisions, it has not been possible to accelerate the pace of eliminating child marriage from the country. It is perhaps worthwhile at this juncture to identify and explore the various determinants of child marriage in India. The task becomes challenging due to the wide variations found in the situational analysis across states and for rural and urban settings, both for boys and girls.

Understanding and knowing the reasons for the perpetuation of child marriage is necessary to facilitate the development of strategies to tackle this problem effectively. There has been inadequate research into the causes as to why children are pushed into marriage early across various contexts. The variations in the practice across religion, ethnicity and social class have not been addressed in the existing evidence.

Various reasons reported in the literature of child marriage may be grouped into familial characteristics: poverty, lack of education, caste, birth-order, and family size etc.⁹⁰ The other contributory reasons emanate from the socio-political system, such as patriarchy and practices associated with gender discrimination. The practice of child marriage is strongly rooted in gender inequality of our culture in particular, the discrimination against girls in matters of education, employment, sexuality and sexual behavior.

⁹⁰ <http://www.unicef/it-starts-with-me/childmarriage.pdf>

Additionally, the discriminatory legal age of marriage for boys and girls does not conform with cultural perceptions wherein attaining biological maturation is considered a ripe moment to marry boys and girls.

It is noteworthy that these determinants operate in a complex manner. Several factors are inter-linked and shape trajectories leading to child marriage in varied ways, such as social norms and structural factors and ecology of experiences comprising opportunities, risks, aspirations and expectations which have a long lasting impact on outcomes of life. Child marriage is a result of various socio-cultural, economic and political factors which need to be reckoned with.

Some of the critical determinants of child marriage and how these drivers impact boys and girls, who are pushed into marriage at an early age, are presented in this chapter.

4.1.1 Social, community and gender norms

Customs and traditions are an integral part of many societies including that of India. In many communities, once girls start their menstruation, they are considered as grown-ups and ready for marriage. One of the leading causes of early marriage is the over-emphasis on virginity and chastity of girls and the consequent control of the sexuality of women and girls. Sexuality of girl children is linked to the honor and reputation not only of the family but also of the clan, caste, race and ethnic group.

In many societies, the importance of preserving family 'honour' and girls' virginity is such that parents push their daughters into marriage well before they are physically and emotionally ready⁹¹ for it. Daughters are married off early out of fear for their safety. Anxiety associated with fear of sexual assault or of girls indulging in premarital sex, often pressurizes families to marry girls at an early age. Minimizing the risk of dishonor associated with improper female sexual conduct is a serious concern for parents and families⁹². Early and forced marriage is therefore perceived as a strategy for preserving family honour and also for controlling girls who rebel against their family's or community's expectations. Girls are also married early to older men in the belief that a husband will provide a safeguard against 'immoral' or 'inappropriate' behavior⁹³.

A study by the Nirantar Trust interestingly points out that the gender norms with respect to men (masculinity) also work against women. The perceived

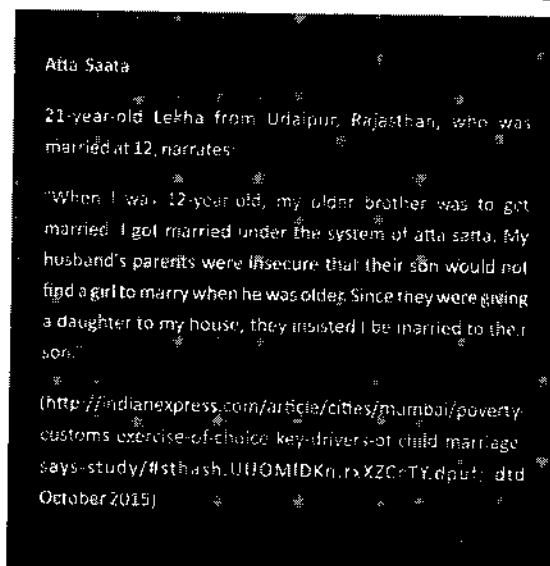
⁹¹<https://www.thercs.org/assets/Research-/Empowering-Girls-What-the-Commonwealth-can-do-to-end-Early-and-Forced-Marriage-2013.pdf>
⁹²Raj, A. (2010) when the mother is a child: The impact of child marriage on the health and humanrights of Girls; Archives of Disease in childhood 95:931-5

⁹³Senderowitz, J. (1995). Adolescent Health: Reassessing the Passage to Adulthood. Washington: World Bank

masculinity of a girl's father lies in his ability to control her sexuality. The father loses credibility within the community if a girl experiences premarital sex or gets married without his consent. As a result, he will probably be ousted from community forums, since participation in such community forums is linked to honour. This fear of shame and loss of masculinity pushes many fathers to control their daughters⁹⁴. From puberty onwards, a girl's behavior is under a scanner and watched closely by the family and members of the community for any transgression from the norms of modesty prescribed in the existing stereotypes, related even to how to talk, how to walk and what to wear.

In India, there are many customary forms of marriage practices that encourage and legitimise child marriage despite legal sanctions against this practice. *Atta Satta* is one such practice, where a brother and a sister are married off into the same family. Two families exchange their daughters and sons through marriage and thus settle four lives through two simultaneous marriages.

It is noted that, at times, economic reasons are the drivers of early marriage and are merely given cultural justification based on religion and tradition. It has also been observed that family income and location (rural as opposed to urban) can cause significant variation in early marriage practice amongst families with the same cultural traditions and religious background⁹⁵.



4.1.2 Education and early marriage

Clearly, child marriage violates the rights of girl children, limits their educational attainment, learning, and future earnings and has negative impacts on their health. Limited educational attainment or dropping out of schools is both cause and consequence of child marriage. Educating girls is perceived by parents or family as a poor economic investment, while educating sons is viewed as a wise investment, as a son's earnings will support the parents in their old age⁹⁶. This is

⁹⁴Nirantar Trust, *Early and Child Marriage in India A Landscape Analysis*, April 2015

⁹⁵http://pages.au.int/sites/default/files/5465_CCMC_Africa_report.pdf

⁹⁶Nirantar Trust. (2015). *Early and Child Marriage in India*. New Delhi: Nirantar Trust. Retrieved August 2016, from http://www.nirantar.net/public/site/files/EM_Report_30-4-15.pdf

primarily because the natal family considers a girl to be '*Paraya Dhan*' (someone else's wealth).

Lack of access to education increases the chances of child marriage. Young Lives studies conducted in undivided Andhra Pradesh have clearly established the fact, with compelling evidence that the longer a girl is in education, the later she marries⁹⁷. At the same time, early and forced marriage is one of the key barriers to continuing education for girls under the age of 18. Although access to education is not the only predictor of the likelihood of child marriage, ensuring that girls stay in school is one of the most effective ways of preventing child marriage. Moreover, continued access to quality education is critical to protecting girls from the consequences of child marriage. Girls with no education are up to six times more likely to marry as children than girls who have received secondary education⁹⁸.

Research also reveals that although girls' and caregivers' educational aspirations start off high, these diminish over the early life-course as the realities of girls' gendered experiences – the challenges they face in obtaining a quality education and entering into paid employment – become more pronounced⁹⁹. Aspirations decline further during adolescence along lines of gender, caste and economic status. Parents have been found to send their sons to fee-paying private schools and their daughters to government schools. Private schools are perceived to be of higher status than government schools as the former offer English as the medium of instruction, which is thought to offer an advantage in the labour market¹⁰⁰. Traditionally, older brothers make financial contributions to a sister's marriage and this can easily be materialized with the presence of an economically active brother. This also explains the preference for a son to go to private school.

There is a strong association between higher age at marriage and higher education levels and vice versa. The Young Lives longitudinal study¹⁰¹ showed that, among girls who were married by the age of 19 in undivided Andhra Pradesh, the number of girls who had finished secondary or senior secondary school was considerably lower than the number of girls who had only upper primary education or less¹⁰². It substantiated the trend that not being enrolled in school at the age of 15 was a key predictor of being married by age

⁹⁷Singh, A. & Espinova, P. (2016, May). Teenage Marriage, Fertility, and Well-being: Panel Evidence from India. Working Paper 151 Oxford: Young Lives

⁹⁸UNFPA. (2012). *Marrying too young*. New York: United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA)

⁹⁹Moore, A. M., Singh, S., Ram, U., Remez, L., & Audam, S. (2009). *Adolescent Marriage and Childbearing in*. New York: Guttmacher Institute

¹⁰⁰Pells, K. (2011) *Poverty and Gender Inequalities: Evidence from Young Lives*, Policy Brief 13. Oxford: Young Lives

¹⁰¹Singh A. & Vennam, U. (2016, May). Factors Shaping Trajectories to Child and Early Marriage: Evidence from Young Lives in India. Working Paper 149 Oxford: Young Lives, pp.3-34

¹⁰²Singh, A. & Espinova, P. (2016, May). Teenage Marriage, Fertility, and Well-being: Panel Evidence from India. Working Paper 151 Oxford: Young

19. Girls who had left school by age 15 were four times more likely to marry before the age of 18 as compared to girls who were still enrolled. Gender gaps in enrolment widen during adolescence. Therefore, policies which support continuation of girls in school are likely to encourage delaying of marriage¹⁰³. A global analysis of data by ICRW also found that girls' education is 'the most important factor associated with child marriage'¹⁰⁴.

4.1.3 Poverty -- financial and economic crisis

Child marriage is pervasive in communities where poverty is widespread, birth and death rates are high and access to education and healthcare is low¹⁰⁵. Girl children from poor households are at a higher risk of becoming child brides. Where resources are limited, gendered social risks become more acute and opportunities more constrained, forcing parents to make decisions which disadvantage girls¹⁰⁶. Marriage of young girls can be seen as a survival strategy for short-term financial security, and marriages can take place in exchange for livestock and other goods and resources to support the survival of other family members¹⁰⁷. This becomes more pronounced during disasters such as floods, when families who lose their homes and livelihoods, find feeding and protecting young girls as an additional burden. In such situations, marriage is seen as a solution, a way to send young girls from vulnerable places to safer areas, with the assumption that, after marriage, women are safer from sexual violence and will be taken care of materially¹⁰⁸.

Wealth has a clear correlation with the median age at first marriage. Women in the higher economic strata are likely to get married more than four years later than women in the lower economic strata¹⁰⁹. Furthermore, the gap in the median age at marriage across wealth quintiles has widened over time. Data for women between 45-49 and 25-29 years of age at the time of the Nirantar survey showed that the gap in age at marriage between the highest and lowest wealth quintile widened from three and a half years two decades ago to five and a half years by 2007¹¹⁰. It does not necessarily indicate a drop in age at the lowest quintile, but a rise in age of the highest quintile. Among men, the age at

¹⁰³Winter, F., & Nambath, S. (2016, May). Tackling Child Marriage and Early Childbearing in India: Lessons from Young Lives. Policy Brief 29 Oxford: Young Lives

¹⁰⁴Jain, S., & Kurz, K. (2007). New Insights on Preventing Child Marriage: A Global Analysis of Factors and Programs. Washington D.C.: International Center for Research on Women (ICRW)

¹⁰⁵<http://www.cfr.org/global/fragile-states-fragile-lives/p33093>

¹⁰⁶<http://www.younglives.org.uk/sites/www.younglives.org.uk/files/YL-PolicyPaper-10-Sep16.pdf>

¹⁰⁷[http://www.worldvision.org/resources.nsf/main/press-reports/\\$file/Untying-the-Knot_report.pdf](http://www.worldvision.org/resources.nsf/main/press-reports/$file/Untying-the-Knot_report.pdf)

¹⁰⁸Nirantar Trust, Early and Child Marriage in India A Landscape Analysis, April 2015

¹⁰⁹Jaya Sharma, Archana Dwivedi, Purnima Gupta, Rituparna Borah, Shruti Arora, Anam Mittra, Arunima Bose and Apeksha Vora (2015) Early and Child Marriage in India A Landscape Analysis, Nirantar Trust

¹¹⁰<http://scroll.in/article/725562/hindu-and-muslim-girls-marry-earliest-jains-and-christians-later>

marriage in the lowest wealth quintile is between 19.6 and 20.1, whereas in the wealthiest quintile, the age at marriage is between 25.3 and 26.6 years of age¹¹¹.

When resources are limited, gendered social risks become more acute and opportunities more constrained, forcing parents to make decisions which disadvantage girls. Young Lives data collected from Undivided Andhra Pradesh and Telangana has provided enough evidence to support this institutionalized gender bias, particularly in the matter of education of girls. Girls from the poorest households were twice as likely to be married before age 18 as those from the least poor households. Rural girls were more likely than urban girls to marry young. These decisions reflect gendered social norms and structural factors that limit girls' future opportunities^{112 113}.

To fully understand the causes of early and child marriage and to create solutions requires an in-depth understanding of the issues of gender, education, sexuality, livelihood and culture. Each of these factors connected with early and child marriage cannot be understood in isolation¹¹⁴. Poverty compels families to discontinue education of girls and marry them early, which is likely to push them into domestic and sexual violence. This poses a major barrier to girls' empowerment, impeding the economic progress of the family or community they live in. Thus, it promotes the perpetuation of the cycle of poverty within the family and the country. In the context of child marriage, it is pertinent to note that where girls have poorer educational outcomes as their parents invested less in their education, they are more likely to marry as teenagers¹¹⁵.

Sometimes, poverty and ill-health of a family member may lead parents to arrange child marriage for their daughters and in some cases, marry younger and older daughters at the same time. There exists evidence that girls from poor homes at times regard marriage as an opportunity for escape from heavy work burdens at home¹¹⁶. A qualitative study conducted with young girls and their caregivers reveal that debt associated with the marriage of elder siblings, particularly where there was a need to pay a high dowry, or health expenditure, could actually delay a younger girl's marriage¹¹⁷.

Evidence available reveals that girls from poorer families are sometimes married

¹¹¹Nirantar Trust. (2015). Early and Child Marriage in India. New Delhi: Nirantar Trust. Retrieved August 2016, from http://www.nirantar.net/public/site/files/EM_Report_30-4-15.pdf¹¹²Feeny, Emma and Gina Crivello (2015) How Gender Shapes Adolescence: Diverging Paths and Opportunities, Policy Brief 22, Oxford: Young Lives

¹¹³Pells, Kimly (2011) Poverty and Gender Inequalities: Evidence from Young Lives, Policy Brief 13, Oxford: Young Lives

¹¹⁴Nirantar Trust, 2015

¹¹⁵Singh, A., & Espinoza, P. (2016, May). Teenage Marriage, Fertility, and Well-being: Panel Evidence from India. Working Paper 151 Oxford: Young Lives

¹¹⁶Winter, F., & Nambath, S. (2016, May). Tackling Child Marriage and Early Childbearing in India: Lessons from Young Lives. Policy Brief 29 Oxford: Young Lives

¹¹⁷Singh, R., & Vennam, U. (2016, May). Factors Shaping Trajectories to Child and Early Marriage: Evidence from Young Lives in India. Working Paper 149 Oxford: Young Lives, pp. 3-34

off younger because of the smaller dowry required for younger and tender brides¹¹⁸. Many studies have indicated that taking on debts in order to pay for weddings and dowry appears to be usual practice within poor households. Studies also corroborate instances where two or more siblings were married at the same time in order to reduce costs. It also leads to the marriage of younger siblings before attaining their legal age. In case of boys, at times they are married young, so that the dowry received in their marriage could relieve the expenditure and cost of the marriage of the daughter.

4.1.4 Patriarchy

The causes mentioned above alone do not contribute to child marriage, be it dowry, poverty or fear of sexual violence. These may be factors that influence decision-making about marriage and not essentially the causal factors. The root cause lies in structural inequalities prevalent in society and the apparent causes are external manifestations of this deep-rooted problem. It is the interplay of underlying structures -- patriarchy, class, caste, religion and sexuality -- which lead to complex realities that then influence decision-making regarding girls' marriage¹¹⁹.

Child marriage remains one of the greatest development challenges we are faced with today. It is a dangerous combination of entrenched poverty and cultural norms, which are deeply rooted in a patriarchal tradition that continues to fuel the harmful practice. As a result, customary laws and economic needs often trump national policies and legislation. In spite of well-meaning laws, child marriage continues to be one of the greatest social problems. As seen in the Census data, despite best efforts for setting a legal age of marriage, girls continue to be pulled out of school and forced into marriage. Restrictive norms continue to limit girls to the role of daughter, wife and mother. That they are first seen as the property of their father, and then of their husband is an expression of patriarchy^{120 121}.

4.1.5 Traditional Practices and Festivals Linked to Perpetuation of Child Marriage

Interestingly, some studies have identified several auspicious occasions for the entrenchment of the practice of child marriage¹²². These festivities serve to affirm the traditional acceptance of child marriage and its perpetuation.

¹¹⁸Singh, R., & Vennam, U. (2016, May). Factors Shaping Trajectories to Child and Early Marriage: Evidence from Young Lives in India. Working Paper 149 Oxford: Young Lives, pp. 3-34

¹¹⁹Nirantar Trust. (2015). Early and Child Marriage in India. New Delhi: Nirantar Trust. Retrieved August 2016, from http://www.nirantar.net/public/site/files/EM_Report_30-4-15.pdf

¹²⁰<http://www.girlsnotbrides.org/child-marriage/india/>

¹²¹Nirantar Trust, Early and Child Marriage in India A Landscape Analysis, April 2015

¹²²European Commission, Unicef, & ICRW. (2011). Delaying Marriage for Girls in India: A Formative Research to Design Interventions for Changing Norms. New Delhi: UNICEF

Serial Number	Auspicious days for marriage	Months (Hindu Calendar Month)
1	Basant Panchami	January/February/March (Falgun)
2	Akha Teej	April/May (Baisakh)
3	Besakh Purnima	May (Baisakh)
4	Badla Navami	May (Jaishtha)
5	Gangadasami	June (Jaishtha)
6	Devuthani Gyaras	August (Shravan)
7	Navratri	September/October (Ashwin)

Child marriages solemnized during these festivals are considered auspicious in the Hindu calendar¹²³ and a large number of children are married off on these days in Rajasthan, Madhya Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, Bihar, Jharkhand, Uttar Pradesh and Uttarakhand, particularly in the rural belt¹²⁴. The occasion of **Akshay Triteriya** is known as Child Marriage Day in Rajasthan, Haryana, Himachal Pradesh and Uttar Pradesh when little boys and girls are carried in the arms of their parents or guardians to the venue of marriage, usually in utter ignorance of changing social conditions and disregard for legal norms¹²⁵.

Mrityu Bhoj is another traditional occasion when child marriage takes place in parts of Rajasthan. When an elderly person dies, the family organizes a big feast, the *mrityu bhoj*, inviting members from the community, and at the same time arranges marriages to take place alongside. In all these practices, the pressure to link weddings to another event, either a funeral or a feast, often means children below the age of 18 are married off¹²⁶.

Marriage within the extended family is a common practice in Undivided Andhra Pradesh and in other southern Indian states. As part of the *mathamma* custom, a daughter is married to her maternal uncle. In such marriages, it is common to find a large age-gap between the bride and the groom. Another common practice in some parts of Undivided Andhra Pradesh is to marry a younger sister

¹²³UNICEF. (2001). *EARLY MARRIAGE*. Itly: UNICEF

¹²⁴<http://www.thehindu.com/news/national/prevent-child-marriages-on-akshaya-tritiya-states-told/article3340183.ece>

¹²⁵Srivastava, A., & Rao, J. (2016). *Early Marriage: A childhood interrupted*. Retrieved from <http://unicef.in/>: <http://unicef.in/Story/1130/Early-Marriage-A-childhood-interrupted>

¹²⁶European Commission, Unicef, & ICRW. (2011). *Delaying Marriage for Girls in India: A Formative Research to Design Interventions for Changing Norms*. New Delhi: UNICEF

to the elder sister's husband if the elder sister has failed to conceive after marriage¹²⁷.

4.2 An overview of the evidence

A quick review of the major causes that trigger child marriage have been reiterated here. These are not categorized or grouped in any logical order. However, it is felt that we need to keep in mind the evidence which could be translated into developing strategies, interventions and policies to challenge the existing customs and norms regarding child marriage. The ultimate purpose is to help individuals and families to be empowered to take informed decisions related to the future of their children. It is also to help them fully avail opportunities that are available within the system for the holistic development of individuals from the rights approach.

Highlights of evidence related to early marriage available from studies by Young Lives¹²⁸ and the Consultation held on child marriage are summarized below:

1. Children from disadvantaged groups, and girls in particular are likely to be married early.
2. Girls from rural areas are twice as likely to be married by 19 years as compared to urban counterparts.
3. Early menarche is associated with early marriage.
4. Girls enrolled in school at age 15 are less likely to be married early.
5. There exists a strong association between parents' aspiration, education of children and age at marriage both for boys and girls and more so, in the context of girls.
6. Birth order of family and size also show a pattern. If there are older brothers and a sister, the girl is less likely to be married young.
7. More number of years at school reduces the possibility of getting married below 18 years of age.
8. Communities with higher percentage of child marriage find it difficult to resist the pressure of marrying children at a tender age and continue with the practice of early marriage.

¹²⁷Yasavya Mahila Mandal, 2013

¹²⁸Young Lives India. http://www.younglives.org.uk/content/publications/07content=child+marriage&sort_order=DESC

9. Girls between 15 to 17 years and boys between 17 to 20 years are the age groups that have registered higher percentage of child marriage. These vulnerable groups need to be given special attention to save them from being pushed into early marriage.



Chapter 5

Consequences of Child Marriage

Child marriage robs children of their childhood and is fraught with negative consequences, both for boys and girls which are presented in this chapter. Typically, the consequences for girls are far more adverse. This chapter explores in details the ill effects on child brides which include early pregnancy, increased risk of maternal and infant mortality, lower employment/livelihood prospects and exposure to violence and abuse.

5.1 Consequences

Child marriage is not only a violation of human rights, but is also recognized as an obstacle to the development of young people. The practice of child marriage cut shorts a critical stage of self-discovery and exploring one's identity¹²⁹. Child marriage is an imposition of a marriage partner on children or adolescents who are in no way ready and matured, and thus, are at a loss to understand the significance of marriage. Their development gets comprised due to being deprived of freedom, opportunity for personal development, and other rights including health and well-being, education, and participation in civic life and nullifies their basic rights as envisaged in the United Nation's Convention on the Right of the Child¹³⁰ ratified by India in 1989¹³¹. Marriage at a young age prevents both girls and boys from exercising agency in making important life decisions and securing basic freedoms, including pursuing opportunities for education, earning a sustainable livelihood and accessing sexual health and rights.

The prevalent practice of child marriage has detrimental consequences for both boys and girls, but has more grave and far-reaching adverse effects on girls. Within a patriarchal family structure, girls have relatively little power, but young and newly married women are particularly powerless, secluded and voiceless. Adolescent girls have little choice about whom and when to marry, whether or not to have sexual relations, and when to bear children¹³². This is well elaborated in a study of girls in the age group 10-16 years¹³³. It was found that they were oppressed in several ways such as:

- They had to submit unquestioningly to the parents' decision regarding their marriage.
- They were over-burdened with household chores.
- They had limited knowledge of their body and its functioning.

¹²⁹<http://www.foreignersinuk.co.uk/guides/guides/family-in-the-uk/the-negative-health-consequences-of-early-marriage.html>

¹³⁰<http://www.ohchr.org/Documents/ProfessionalInterest/crc.pdf>

¹³¹<https://www.unicef-irc.org/publications/pdf/digest7e.pdf>

¹³²Gupta, M, Ramani, K.V. and Soors, W (2012) Adolescent Health in India: Still at Crossroads, *Advances in Applied Sociology*, Vol.2, No.4, 320-324

¹³³Kumari, R. Singh and Dubey, A (1990) *Growing up in Rural India: Problems and Needs of Adolescent Girls* New Delhi: Radiant.

- They were unaware of sexual changes, contraception, child bearing and rearing.
- They dropped out of school on attaining puberty.
- They had no time for leisure and social interaction.
- They were discriminated in matters of food intake and expressing their views within the family¹³⁴.

Imagine the fate of a young girl with the above profile if she is to face marital life and its challenges during adolescence. The adolescent married girl is more at risk. She is less likely to be allowed out of the house, to have access to services and usually, not be given space or freedom to exert agency. Within the marital home, which in majority of the cases is a joint family, she will probably not have much communication with her husband, and will end up socially isolated, with very little contact with her parental home¹³⁵.

Furthermore, there is tremendous societal pressure on girls to marry early and bear a child early. Women have to prove their fertility as soon as possible after marriage: social acceptance and economic security in the marital home are established largely through fertility, and particularly through the birth of a son¹³⁶.

The key consequences of child marriage of girls may include early pregnancy; maternal and neonatal mortality; child health problems; educational setbacks; lower employment/livelihood prospects; exposure to violence and abuse, including a range of controlling and inequitable behaviours, leading to inevitable negative physical and psychological consequences; and limited agency of girls to influence decisions about their lives.

Census data have demonstrated an upswing of female deaths in the age group of 15-19 years. This high mortality rate could be attributed to the deaths of teenage mothers. Child marriage virtually works like a double-edged sword; lower age at marriage is significantly associated with worse outcomes for the child and worse pregnancy outcomes for the mother. All these factors push girls and their families into perpetuation of intergenerational poverty and marginalisation. The impact of early marriage on girls – and to a lesser extent on boys – is wide-ranging, opines the Innocenti Digest on child marriage. Child brides often experience overlapping vulnerabilities—they are young, often poor, and undereducated. This affects the resources and assets they can bring into their marital household, thus reducing their

¹³⁴Kumari, R. Singh and Dubey, A. (1990) *Growing up in Rural India: Problems and Needs of Adolescent Girls* New Delhi: Radiant.

¹³⁵Gupta, M, Ramani, K.V. and Soors, W (2012) Adolescent Health in India: Still at Crossroads, *Advances in Applied Sociology*, Vol.2, No.4, 320-324

¹³⁶Jejeebhoy, S. J. (1998). Adolescent sexual and reproductive behaviour: A review of the evidence from India. *Social Science & Medicine*, 45, pp. 1275-1290

decision-making ability. Child marriage places a girl under the control of her husband and often in-laws, limiting her ability to voice her opinions and form and pursue her own plans and aspirations¹³⁷. While child marriage is bound to have a detrimental effect on boys who would need to shoulder the responsibility of a wife and in most cases, have to also discontinue their education, there is very little research evidence to capture the long term economic and psychological effect on boys who are married early. The Lancet 2015 acknowledges that adolescent boys are not important and neglected part of the equation¹³⁸. The assumption that girls need more attention than boys is now being challenged¹³⁹.

Looking at the impact of early marriage from a rights perspective, it can be said that the key concerns are denial of childhood and adolescence, curtailment of personal freedom, deprivation of opportunities to develop a full sense of selfhood, and denial of psychosocial and emotional well-being, reproductive health and educational opportunity, along with consequences described earlier.

5.2 Sexual Relations

In the case of girls married before puberty, the normal understanding between families is that there will be no sexual intercourse until first menstruation. In this case, the mother-in-law acts as the protector of the girl¹⁴⁰. This protection may fail, especially where the husband is much older than the girl and cases of forced intercourse by much older and physically fully developed husbands with young wives have been reported¹⁴¹.

A young girl who is still struggling to understand her own anatomy, when forced to make conjugal relations, often shows signs of post-traumatic stress and depression owing to sexual abuse by her older partner. Neither the bodies of these young brides nor their innocent little minds are prepared, therefore, forced sexual encounters can lead to irreversible physical and psychological damage. A study conducted in 2013 showed that young girls are three times more likely to experience marital rape¹⁴².

The Nirantar study narrates the gradual transition of a 'child bride' to a 'good married woman'. The girl's ability to say no to sex is compromised after the wedding, so, too, is her ability to express desire. Girls are expected not to have knowledge regarding their desires, and if a young bride expresses desire, she is viewed with suspicion. The young bride is expected to conform to the gender norms of a good married woman: otherwise,

¹³⁷Parsons, J, Edmeades, J, Kes, A, Petroni, S., Sexton, M and Wodon, Q (2015) Economic Impacts of Child Marriage: A Review of the Literature, *The Review Of Faith & International Affairs* Vol. 13, Iss. 3, 12-22

¹³⁸Lancet [editorial] (2015) 'Adolescent Health: Boys matter too', *The Lancet*, 386: 2227.

¹³⁹Kato-Wallace, J., Barker, G., Sharafi, L., Mora, L., and Lauro, G. (2016) *Adolescent Boys and Young Men: Engaging them as supporters of gender equality and health and understanding their vulnerabilities*. Washington, DC: Promundo US and New York City: UNFPA.

¹⁴⁰Berhane-Selassie, T. (1993). 'Early Marriage in Ethiopia', Report to the Inter-African Committee on Traditional Practices Affecting the Health of Women and Children. Addis Abeba

¹⁴¹Change Newsletter. (2000). Non-Consensual Sex in Marriage Programme (NCSM). London.

¹⁴²Tangri, S. (2013). *The Impact of Early Marriage: Domestic Violence and Sexuality*. Retrieved from <http://www.breakthrough.tv/>
<http://www.breakthrough.tv/earlymarriage/2013/08/impact-early-marriage-domestic-violence-sexuality/>

she may face violence and aggression. It is commonly said that eventually the bride “learns to adjust” to these norms, and may perform against her own wishes in order to leverage other gains¹⁴³.

5.3 Impact of Early Childbirth on Health

Evidence supports the fact that in the majority of cases, child marriage is soon followed by early¹⁴⁴ or teenage pregnancy. Data gathered by Young Lives confirms that the most powerful influence over early child-bearing is getting married early. Social norms that encourage early child-bearing are compounded by inequitable access to health and education services, causing these married girls to have their first baby without delay.

Teenage brides are also at risk of contracting many sexually transmitted diseases, including HIV and the human papilloma virus, as most of them remain unaware of the chances of contracting such diseases or of the measures to safeguard themselves from these situations. Inadequate knowledge about sexuality and lack of power to decide for themselves in conjugal relations result in them having no control on their own body. They are unable to insist on their partners to use condoms, to be monogamous or undergo tests for HIV¹⁴⁵. All these combine to make them vulnerable to risks associated with sexual health.

Early marriage extends a woman's potential childbearing capacity, which itself represents a risk to mothers¹⁴⁶. Women who bear children at a young age may face serious reproductive health consequences. Young mothers experience higher rates of maternal mortality and higher risk of obstructed labour and pregnancy-induced hypertension because their bodies are not prepared for producing new life^{147 148}.

Child-bearing at early ages can lead to serious health problems which are associated with lack of biological maturity and an under-developed body, such as obstetric fistula, that happens when a young mother's vagina, bladder and/or rectum tear during childbirth¹⁴⁹. In addition, young mothers have been found to be more likely to develop cervical cancer at some point later in their life¹⁵⁰. With no access to contraception, nor the freedom to delay pregnancy, which may not be acceptable to husbands and in-laws, childbearing soon after marriage is a normal chronological event, which is considered integral to a woman's social status¹⁵¹.

Girls between ages of 10 to 14 are five times more likely than women aged 20 to 24 to

¹⁴³Nirantar Trust. (2015). Early and Child Marriage in India. New Delhi: Nirantar Trust. Retrieved August 2016, from http://www.nirantar.net/public/site/files/EM_Report_30-4-15.pdf

¹⁴⁴Roast, J. (2016, September). Child Marriage and Early Child-bearing in India: Risk Factors and Policy Implications. Policy Paper 10 Oxford: Young Lives

¹⁴⁵UNICEF. (2001). EARLY MARRIAGE: CHILD SPOUSES. Itly: INNOCENTI DIGEST. Retrieved from <https://www.unicef-irc.org/publications/pdf/digest7e.pdf>

¹⁴⁶<https://www.unicef-irc.org/publications/pdf/digest7e.pdf>

¹⁴⁷Save the Children. 2004. State of the World's Mothers 2004. Save the Children: Westport, CT

¹⁴⁸Mathur, S., M. G., & Malhotra, A. (2003). Too Young to Wed: The Lives, Rights and Health of Young Married Girls. Washington, D.C: International Center for Research on Women (ICRW).

¹⁴⁹UNFPA. (2003). Obstetric Fistula Needs Assessment Report: Findings From Nine African Countries. New York: United Nations Fund Population (UNFPA)

¹⁵⁰<http://www.foreignersinuk.co.uk/guides/guides/family-in-the-uk/the-negative-health-consequences-of-early-marriage.html>

¹⁵¹Mensch, Barbara S., Judith Bruce, and Margaret S. Greene (1998) The Uncharted Passage: Girls' Adolescence in the Developing World, p 71, The Population Council, New York

die in pregnancy and childbirth¹⁵². Girls aged 15 to 19 are twice more likely than older women to die from childbirth and pregnancy, making pregnancy the leading cause of death in poor countries for these age groups¹⁵³. Girls from the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes were on an average 10 per cent more likely (after accounting for other variables) to give birth earlier than girls from the other Castes¹⁵⁴. Singh and Espinoza also found that the girls most likely to have had a child by 19 years (as compared with all other married and unmarried girls) were from the poorest groups; were more likely to live in rural areas; had the least educated mothers; had earlier experiences of menarche; had lower educational aspirations; and were less likely to be enrolled in school at the ages of 12 to 15. Being young and immature mothers, they have little say in decision-making about the number of children they want, nutrition, health-care etc¹⁵⁵. Lack of self-esteem or of a sense of ownership of her own body exposes a woman to repeated unwanted pregnancies.

The Nirantar study points to the fact that the current discourse on the health of child brides is too focused on early pregnancy, and that the discussion needs to be expanded to include other factors such as access to food and nutrition within the household, that lead to the poor health of young brides¹⁵⁶. The study found women reporting that their overall health had deteriorated, their immunity had been compromised and they were more vulnerable to several diseases. It was revealed that underlying structural and discriminatory practices can impact the overall health of women, both physical and mental, which is manifested in countless ways. It includes situations such as not getting sufficient nutrition because other members in the marital family are fed first or the fear that reporting a disease or sickness will affect the way in which the young bride is perceived. A young bride, physically unable to contribute to household chores, or a bride seen as 'weak or unhealthy', is often stigmatized as a liability rather than an asset.

5.4 Violence, neglect and abandonment

In many cases parents feel it is in their daughter's best interest to marry her at a young age: they believe marriage will protect her from physical or sexual assault. Yet, this belief is often mistaken. Child marriage puts women and girls at particular risk of sexual, physical and psychological violence throughout their lives¹⁵⁷.

According to a United Nations study, girls who marry before they reach the age of 18 are more likely to become victims of violence by their partners than those who marry at an

¹⁵²http://erepository.uonbi.ac.ke/bitstream/handle/11295/92904/ikutwa_Factors%20influencing%20early%20marriage%20on%20the%20girl%20child%20s%20maternal%20health%20projects.pdf?sequence=1

¹⁵³Save the Children. (2004). State of the World's Mothers 2004. Westport, CT: Save the Children

¹⁵⁴<http://www.younglives.org.uk/sites/www.younglives.org.uk/files/YL-PolicyPaper-10-Sep16.pdf>

¹⁵⁵https://www.unicef.org/earlychildhood/files/Guide_to_GC7.pdf

¹⁵⁶Nirantar Trust. (2015). Early and Child Marriage in India. New Delhi: Nirantar Trust. Retrieved August 2016, from

http://www.nirantar.net/public/site/files/EM_Report_30-4-15.pdf

¹⁵⁷Girls not Brides; <http://www.girlsnotbrides.org/why-is-child-marriage-a-form-of-violence-against-women-and-girls/>; dtd 07/10/2014

older age¹⁵⁸. Often married to much older men, child brides are more likely to believe that a man is sometimes justified in beating his wife than women who marry later. Moreover, as their husbands are older to them, they are more sexually experienced than them and are expected to have unprotected sex to demonstrate their fertility¹⁵⁹. Studies found that many of the victims of child marriage suffer from prolonged domestic violence, but are unable to leave the marriage because of economic pressures, lack of family support and other social circumstances¹⁶⁰. Typically, such information available is anecdotal in nature and requires locally relevant mechanisms to tackle it¹⁶¹. When girls marry before eighteen, their lives are all too often marked by an unspoken, yet very real, kind of violence; one that is happening, as Ela Bhatt of The Elders describes, "with the consent of society"¹⁶². If some girls run away from such marriages, they get into further trouble. In case they are brought back home, they are punished for their act and are also blamed for bringing dishonour to the family. This stands true for boys as well. Forced marriage at younger age is also a contributing factor for them to run away from home.

Early marriage is also often linked to abandonment of wives, as shown by its association with divorce and separation, says a Population Council study by Bruce Lloyd and Leonard (1995). Divorce or abandonment often plunges a woman into poverty, as she usually assumes sole responsibility for dependent children. If she is married young, is under-educated and has few income-generating skills, her poverty may be acute¹⁶³. Sabitra Dhakal, who is leading the Tipping Point movement in Nepal, says, "Child marriage is not only a bad practice for girls, it is really a bad practice for boys too"¹⁶⁴.

5.5 Psychosocial disadvantage

The loss of carefree adolescence, forced sexual relations and denial of freedom and personal development associated with early marriage have profound psycho-social and emotional consequences on children. The impact can be subtle and insidious and the damage hard to assess. It includes intangible factors such as the effect of a girl's loss of mobility and her confinement to the home and to household roles. There is dearth of information or data in these areas, and social researchers have failed to examine the impacts of early marriage in this context.¹⁶⁵ Boys, too, as mentioned earlier are negatively affected by child marriage. The responsibility to earn and care for a family at such a tender age also puts them into a difficult situation emotionally.

¹⁵⁸UNFPA. (2012). *Marrying Too Young: End Child Marriage*. New York: UNFPA

¹⁵⁹Girls Not Brides. (2016). WHY IS CHILD MARRIAGE A FORM OF VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN AND GIRLS? Retrieved from

<http://www.girlsnotbrides.org/>; <http://www.girlsnotbrides.org/why-is-child-marriage-a-form-of-violence-against-women-and-girls/>

¹⁶⁰UK Government, Home Office (2000) 'A Choice by Right: The Report of the Working Group on Forced Marriage'; www.homeoffice.gov.uk

¹⁶¹<https://www.unicef-irc.org/publications/pdf/digest7e.pdf>

¹⁶²Girls Not Brides. (2016). WHY IS CHILD MARRIAGE A FORM OF VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN AND GIRLS? Retrieved from

<http://www.girlsnotbrides.org/>; <http://www.girlsnotbrides.org/why-is-child-marriage-a-form-of-violence-against-women-and-girls/>

¹⁶³<https://www.unicef-irc.org/publications/pdf/digest7e.pdf>

¹⁶⁴Tipping Point is a new campaign, which is collaborating with CARE USA to fight child marriage in Nepal

¹⁶⁵UNICEF. (2001). *EARLY MARRIAGE: CHILD SPOUSES*. Itly: INNOCENTI DIGEST. Retrieved from <https://www.unicef-irc.org/publications/pdf/digest7e.pdf>

Married at the age of 12, Parashuram aged 31, confided that after the wedding, everyone around you reminds you of your responsibilities and one gets tormented by the responsibility of having a wife and family¹⁶⁶. This dampens one's enthusiasm and dreams as a youth. At 12, Parashuram was neither ready for sexual activity nor prepared to be a father or for the responsibility of supporting a family. In his early 30's, he admitted that he couldn't do what was expected of him as a married man, instead he felt trapped, between boyhood and fatherhood¹⁶⁷. According to the Nirantar study, pressures of gender weigh heavily on the grooms as well. While they tend to resort to drugs or alcohol to overcome their anxieties about sex, they turn to coercion or violence to discipline or control their wives and to assert themselves, which is a masculine role attributed to them by societal/ cultural norms¹⁶⁸.

Sometimes, in certain communities, if the husband dies before consummation of the marriage, the girl is treated as a widow and given in 'nata' to the widower's family¹⁶⁹. The practice of 'nata' makes her the common property of all the men in the family. She thus continues to suffer in silence with further loss of status and self-esteem.

5.6 Low self esteem

Marriage at an early age, as discussed, has some adverse effects for both boys and girls; however, girls are at higher risk of severe consequences such as low self-esteem, depression, and many bodily associated burdens¹⁷⁰. She is not only controlled by men but also becomes subordinate to senior women of the family. With no power to negotiate, she is subjected to physical and psychological violence and humiliation, shattering the core of her personality, confidence and self-esteem. A study by the Population Council aptly captures the plight of one such young girl in Rajasthan. The girl who till recently was frolicking around in her parents' village, is suddenly catapulted to a new position through early marriage, where she has to play the role of a deaf and mute wife in a long veil, and be seen only as working with her two hands¹⁷¹.

Isolation, confinement, restricting and non-enabling surroundings result in depression, lack of sleep, feelings of guilt and decreased self-esteem. The frustration, maladjustment and anxiety manifests in mood swings, aggressiveness, crying spells, general unhappiness, loss of concentration and lethargy¹⁷². Such situations present an

¹⁶⁶<http://www.care.org/impact/stories/how-one-child-groom-fighting-child-marriage-today>; dtd September 2016

¹⁶⁷Ibid

¹⁶⁸Nirantar Trust. (2015). Early and Child Marriage in India. New Delhi: Nirantar Trust. Retrieved August 2016, from http://www.nirantar.net/public/site/files/EM_Report_30-4-15.pdf

¹⁶⁹Saxena, S. (1999). Who Cares for Child Marriages? Pioneer, 29/1/99. Retrieved from www.hsph.harvard.edu/grhf/Sasia/forums/childmar

¹⁷⁰Ahmed, S., Khan, A., Noushad, S., Shah, N., Saleem, S., & Syed, S. (2015). Early Marriages leads to low self-esteem of young girls. International Journal of Endorsing Health Science Research, 3(1), 32-34

¹⁷¹Santhya, K. G. & Jejeebhoy S. (2003). Sexual and reproductive health needs of married adolescent girls, Economic and Political Weekly 2003; 38(41): pp. 4370-77

¹⁷²Whitton, S. W., Olmos-Gallo, P. A., Stanley, S. M., Prado, L. M., & Kline, G. H. (2007). Depressive symptoms in early marriage: predictions from relationship confidence and negative marital interaction. Journal of Family Psychology, 21(2), 297. Retrieved from <http://oaji.net/articles/2015/1909-1429395253.pdf>

increased risk of clinical depression which sometimes leads to suicidal attempts¹⁷³. A study by Singh and Espinoza showed that as compared to their unmarried peers, married young women were found to be much less confident and unable to cope with problems and difficulties. Married young girls were also much less likely to have future plans and aspirations and reported lower self-perceptions of their relationships with peers¹⁷⁴.

As mentioned earlier in the report, there is little empirical data on how an early marriage affects young men. Organizations working to combat child marriage feel that the gap in knowledge about the issue of underage grooms needs to be studied¹⁷⁵. At the hypothetical level, the additional responsibility of a spouse is likely to cause emotional problems. Physical and psychological immaturity and lack of awareness of sexuality can be challenging for young grooms to prove their masculinity. It could be a cause of frustration and low esteem.

5.7 Low education and limited employability

Child marriage is often marked by lower education and poor economic status for both males and females. Child brides and grooms are found less able than older or unmarried girls to access schooling and income-generating opportunities or to benefit from education or economic development programs¹⁷⁶. There exists evidence that girls whose parents had the lowest educational aspirations for them when they were 12 were twice as likely be married by the time they were 18 as compared to those whose parents had the highest educational aspirations¹⁷⁷. Morrow (2013a, 2013b) has substantiated through her study that aspirations decline further during adolescence along lines of gender, caste and economic status¹⁷⁸.

Early and child marriage can prompt adolescents (boys and girls) to drop out of school and join the unskilled workforce, which in turn tends to reproduce work conditions that are exploitative in nature¹⁷⁹. Boys are expected to support a family after their marriage and thus, are forced to drop out of school and take menial jobs. It perpetuates the cycle of poverty, generation after generation, unless the members struggle hard to pull themselves out of this vicious cycle¹⁸⁰. In poor families, a newly married girl's labour potential is bartered, with her taking over household responsibilities from older women in the family, who then work as wage labour. Unable to earn an income and financially dependent on others, the young bride is pushed further into a position of no power of negotiation or bargaining.

¹⁷³Brown, G. W., Andrews, B., Harris, T., Adler, Z., & Bridge, L. (1986). Social support, self-esteem and depression. *Psychological medicine*, 16(4), 813-831

¹⁷⁴Singh, A., & Espinoza, P. (2016, May). Teenage Marriage, Fertility, and Well-being: Panel Evidence from India. Working Paper 151 Oxford: Young Lives

¹⁷⁵The Daily Beast; <http://www.thedailybeast.com/articles/2014/09/18/the-sad-hidden-plot-of-child-grooms.html>; dtd 18/09/2014

¹⁷⁶Save the Children. (2004). State of the World's Mothers 2004. Westport, CT: Save the Children.

¹⁷⁷Singh, A., & Espinoza, P. (2016, May). Teenage Marriage, Fertility, and Well-being: Panel Evidence from India. Working Paper 151 Oxford: Young Lives

¹⁷⁸Morrow Virginia (2013b) 'Whose Values? Young People's Aspirations and Experiences of Schooling in Undivided Andhra Pradesh, India', *Children & Society* 27.4: 258-69

¹⁷⁹Nirantar Trust. (2015). Early and Child Marriage in India. New Delhi: Nirantar Trust. Retrieved August 2016, from

http://www.nirantar.net/public/site/files/EM_Report_30-4-15.pdf

¹⁸⁰Ibid

Several studies have emphasised the importance of agency for helping girls 'to challenge gender norms within their family and community', to delay marriage and child-bearing and to empower them with financial independence¹⁸¹. Needless to say, it is equally important to focus on young boys to make them educated, skilled and not marry before 21 years. If boys are convinced to marry only when they reach the legal age, it is likely to make them harness their labour potential and create better future prospects. It also leads to raising the age at marriage for girls - this will automatically resolve the issue of child marriage¹⁸².

5.8 Human Trafficking

Child marriage is linked closely to human trafficking, especially when it is solemnized through force, coercion or abuse and as a means of subjecting wives to conditions of slavery in the form of sexual servitude or domestic labour¹⁸³. For economic reasons, girls when sold for marriage, face abuse and are often further sold by buyers or trafficked. Child marriage thus has resulted in prostitution for several girls.

5.9 Under-nutrition

The issue of under-nutrition vis-a-vis child marriage is a relatively less researched topic. It is, however, well established that early marriage and child-bearing are significantly related to malnutrition and under-nutrition amongst young mothers. Considering that adolescence is a period of rapid growth and is a catch-up period of physical development during the years of growth spurt, the quality of changes and outcomes is directly influenced by intake of nutritious diet and quality of food. Due to discrimination in diet distribution pattern, adolescent girls rarely get the food / diet as per the recommended standards. Under-nutrition, therefore, is likely to result in under-developed women. They are entering into pregnancy, child-bearing and lactation, and are vulnerable to face varied nutritional risks. It consequently ends in 'woman wastage', contributing to complications such as pre-mature deliveries, difficult labour, birth of low-weight babies and maternal death.

In the Indian context, women's roles in relation to others – defined as wife, daughter, daughter-in-law and mother restricts girls 'from having aspirations beyond marriage'.¹⁸⁴ Marriage continues to be central to the aspirations and life plans of a vast majority of individuals across the country. Limited mobility, new household responsibilities, lack of family support, pregnancy, child rearing and other social restrictions experienced by young brides, coupled with their limited ability to negotiate with their marital family, reinforce these socially and culturally imposed disadvantages,

¹⁸¹Roast, J (2016, September). Child Marriage and Early Child-bearing in India: Risk Factors and Policy Implications. Policy Paper 10 Oxford: Young Lives

¹⁸²Nirantar Trust: (2015). Early and Child Marriage in India. New Delhi: Nirantar Trust. Retrieved August 2016, from http://www.nirantar.net/public/site/files/EM_Report_30-4-15.pdf

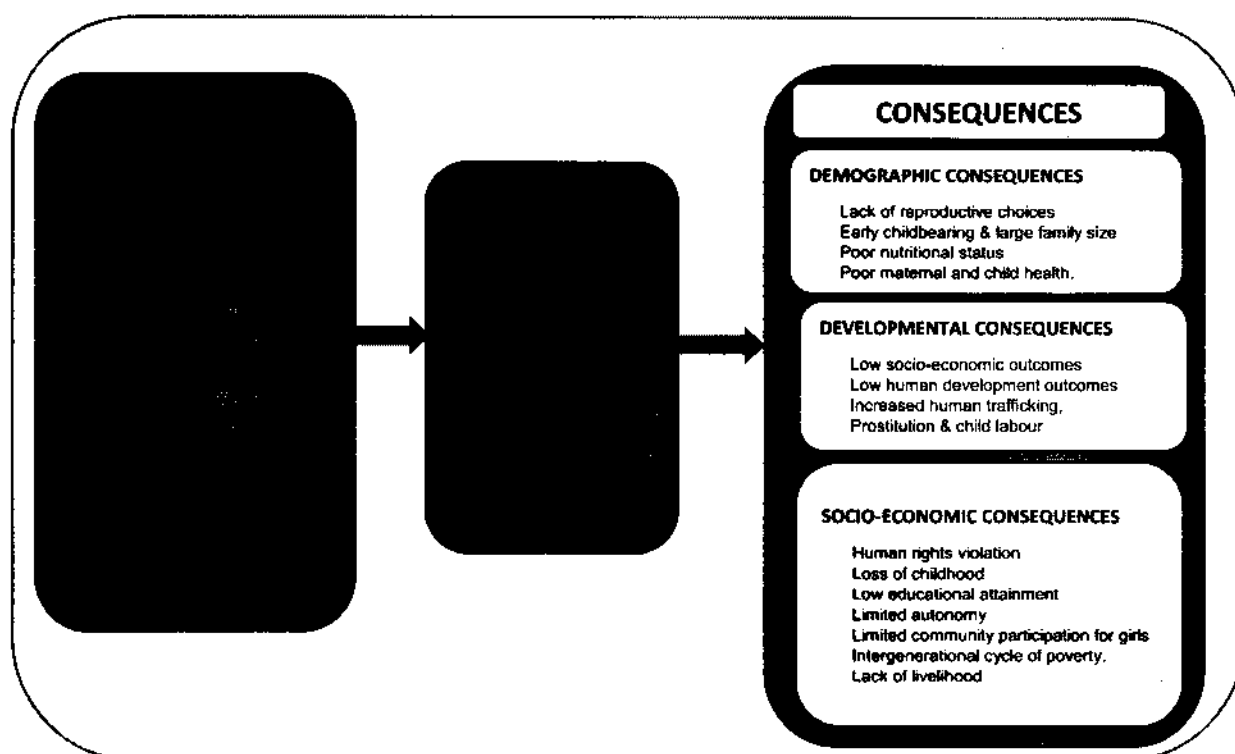
¹⁸³Aptel, C (2016) Child slaves and Child Brides. *Journal of International Criminal Justice*, 14 (2) pp 305-25

¹⁸⁴Nirantar Trust: (2015). Early and Child Marriage in India. New Delhi: Nirantar Trust. Retrieved August 2016, from http://www.nirantar.net/public/site/files/EM_Report_30-4-15.pdf

which prevent them from taking advantage of education or work opportunities¹⁸⁵. Early marriage combined with its consequences closes the path of further development of women in India.

There are a large number of antecedents such as poverty, social cultural norms such as dowry and son-preference leading to child marriage, which in turn creates social, economic and political disadvantages for both boys and girls, though the latter face graver consequences. Fig 5.1 below captures both the antecedents and consequences of child marriage.

Figure 5.1 : Antecedents and consequences of child marriage



¹⁸⁵Mathur, S., M. G., & Malhotra, A. (2003). Too Young to Wed: The Lives, Rights and Health of Young Married Girls. Washington, D.C: International Center for Research on Women (ICRW)



Chapter 6

Preventive Actions and Cost Effective Strategies

This chapter reviews the challenges to eliminating child marriage in India and presents an overview of on-going efforts to prevent child marriage in India and abroad. The various national and international schemes and programmes to empower adolescents, particularly young girls and to prevent or delay child marriage are collated here with the aim of providing strategic learnings.

6.1 Prevention and challenges

Clearly, preventing child marriage or eliminating it from Indian society is a herculean task compounded by several difficult challenges. Governmental efforts comprising legal provisions, policy initiatives and designing intervention programmes have not been sufficient to combat child marriage. A systematic review of child marriage interventions indicates that reform of the legal and policy framework is a necessary but insufficient part of the answer (Malhotra et al. 2011). These efforts have not been able to break the stronghold of tradition and culture that favours child marriage as elaborated earlier in this report. It is felt that legal and policy provisions have not succeeded due to two reasons: One, perhaps, is the lack of a feminist approach to law making and, two, the inadequate machinery, structure and ineffective implementation could not translate provisions from documents to practice, to abate the trend of child marriage within the country¹⁸⁶.

In recent years, the rights approach to child marriage has added a new dimension. Child marriage as a violation of human rights has become an issue of grave concern for states and civil society rather than a private matter within the domain of families. Child marriage as per this perspective is a crime against women and the girl child. Child marriage disproportionately affects the girls because of their gender and despite neutral laws, women and girls are de facto unequal before law¹⁸⁷. It is hoped that the rights perspective will ensure stringent measures to enforce existing laws against child marriage. Further, an integral approach to child marriage will be needed to link the Prohibition of Child Marriage Act 2006 to other existing legislations, such as the Protection of Children from Sexual Harassment Act 2012 and Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Amendment Act 2006¹⁸⁸.

Another noteworthy aspect related to prevention of child marriage which needs to be considered is the contemporary structural change in the Indian family. Urbanisation,

¹⁸⁶Red Elephant Foundation (2013) *Child Marriages in India: An Insight into Law and Policy*.

¹⁸⁷UNICEF Background Paper for UNICEF Report on State of the World's Children, 2007.

¹⁸⁸Action Aid, 2016, *Eliminating Child Marriage in India: Progress and Prospects*, Child Rights Focus, p. 30.

population mobility and instability in the global markets are causing social upheaval in families and resulting in economic marginalisation. Families are increasingly getting fragmented and there is an erosion of its extended structure. This process of transition results in families getting torn between traditional and modern values. Migration to urban areas with the entire family or leaving the family behind impacts differently on the continuance of customs and traditions. In the former case, exposure to modern developments is likely to bring flexibility in the value system which helps in breaking barriers of traditions; whereas in the latter case, when men leave, their wives, married during their teens, along with children, continue their traditional lives in the native place and, therefore, early marriage may get reinforced.

6.2 International Good Practices

A few of the well documented good practices to prevent child marriage are given below:

(i) Tapping Tradition to Prevent Child Marriage: Senegal

Tostan, an international non-governmental organization based in Senegal, uses a combination of non-formal education and social mobilization to advance its goal of empowering communities and reducing the practices of child marriage and female genital cutting (FGC). Local facilitators are engaged in education sessions which include child marriage-related issues such as sexually transmitted infections, AIDS, birth control and birth spacing. Those who take part in the education program become change agents and pass on their new knowledge to the rest of the community and to other villages through inter-village meetings. Public discussions are held with the community to seek its support in denouncing harmful practices, including early marriage. The program also taps into African traditional folk-techniques — dance, poetry, theatre and song — to convey messages and has succeeded in convincing stakeholders, including girls, to delay marriage. Tostan's model for peaceful social change is based on the belief that communities themselves must consciously and actively pursue the process of change from within. The program has reported change in knowledge, attitudes and behaviours in 90 intervention villages, and these were reinforced by a public declaration by approximately 300 villages against child marriage and FGC.¹⁸⁹

(ii) 'Booking' Practice Substitutes School for Prospective Grooms: Kenya

Christian Children's Fund (CCF) in 1999 started a program to prevent child marriage among Kenya's Maasai tribe through an approach that taps into Maasai traditions and compensates for the economic incentive of marrying girls.

¹⁸⁹Ibid

In Maasai culture, baby girls are promised as wives to men before they are even born—a practice called 'booking'. The project called the Naning'oi Girls Boarding School substitutes the traditional practice of booking girls for marriage with booking them for school instead. Naning'oi works within the framework of the dowry system, where the school represents a man in search of a young bride. Well respected members of the Maasai community become 'suitors' on the school's behalf, offering gifts to a girl's father in exchange for his committing to his daughter's attendance at the boarding school. The on-going programme enrolled more than 500 infants and girls within a short period of initiation and they attend school as and when ready for it.¹⁹⁰

(iii) Local Governance Efforts Prevent Child Marriage: Ethiopia

In the Amhara region of Ethiopia, Berhane Hewan, a Population Council project, helps girls avoid early marriage by promoting functional literacy, life skills, reproductive health education and opportunities for saving money. The local Ministry of Youth and Sports which developed this program, felt that efforts to reduce child marriage needed to focus on the economic incentives of marrying girls early. Accordingly, families were assisted financially so they could allow their daughters to participate in girls' groups and remain in school. The project has been enthusiastically embraced by the community.¹⁹¹

(iv) Chunauti: Nepal

The "Chunauti" project in Nepal supported by USAID and implemented by CARE aimed at reducing the harmful practices of child marriage and gender-based violence in three districts of Nepal, namely Dhanusha, Mahottari and Rupandehi. The project hoped to strengthen the enabling environment at the national and district levels through behaviour change communication and social mobilization to combat child marriage. The project adopted a multi-channel communication approach with equal emphasis on mass media, local and talk media. Capacity building was integrated to provide on-going support to peer educators. Social mobilization initiatives, promoting awareness, creating an enabling environment by rewarding families to delay age at marriage, were used as strategies. Peer educators and child marriage prevention committees also worked with private companies that provide wedding services (caterers, decorators, bands etc.), to boycott child weddings. They were encouraged to abide by their commitment to prevent child marriage and have a code of conduct focused on prevention of dowry and child marriage. It is reported that this resulted in an increase in the number of men and women in the community

who realised the harmful effects of child marriages and became change agents to stop child marriages. Stakeholders at district and national levels were identified to further advocate stopping of child marriages. The law enforcement mechanisms were also activated¹⁹².

(v) Legislation and Change in Sri Lanka

In Sri Lanka, where age at marriage has traditionally been low, today, the average age at marriage is 25 years. This country's success in raising the age at marriage has been driven by the introduction of legislative reforms requiring all marriages to be registered and consent of both marriage partners to be recorded. Additionally, Sri Lankan courts have ruled that specific cases of non-consensual marriages arranged by parents on behalf of their children are invalid. The positive impact of these legislative changes have been supported by social policies on health and education (including free education from primary to university level) to create an environment in which the practice of early marriage is in steep decline.

6.3 Informed focus

The report has highlighted several issues related to child marriage in India: the magnitude of the problem, variations across states, the rural-urban differential and age-specific trends in the incidence of child marriage. This report also reveals that despite moderate decline in child marriage, there are still large numbers of girls and boys who were married below the legal age. The average age at marriage may appear to be rising, but it disguises the fact that large sub-populations are still marrying young. Data analysis used in the present study has provided actual incidences across states, districts and age groups for boys and girls to facilitate micro level planning within local contexts to prevent the incidences of child marriage.

The identification of 13 states and 70 districts with high incidences of child marriage is a significant contribution in mapping the geographical spread for initiating area-specific actions. The causes and consequences have been elaborated to design programme inventions to fix the causes and abate the trend of child marriage and also, make suitable provisions of supportive services to deal with the consequences. The information collated in the report will help in the formulation of need-based programming strategies for designing new interventions or improving the existing ones.

6.4 Mapping the opportunities

There are a range of programmes and schemes addressing the development of the girl

¹⁹²CARE. (2015). Addressing Child Marriage in Nepal through Behavior Change Communication and Social Mobilization. Care.

child in general, but there are very few programmes which focus specifically on the issue of child marriage. Most government programmes which indirectly help in delaying the age of marriage of girls actually focus on:

- Education
- Economic opportunities and financial incentives for the family or girls
- Improving nutrition and health status of adolescent girls

Some of these programmes have been elaborated in Chapter 2 of this report. At this juncture, a few issues are mentioned as a critique of these provisions.

6.4.1 Programmes and Schemes for Education

It has been proved beyond doubt that encouraging and ensuring continuation of education of girls, especially beyond the elementary level, delays their marriage. The programmes planned with this objective primarily include Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan and Rashtriya Madhyamik Abhiyan as well as schemes that provide annual scholarships and financial support for purchase of uniforms and travel to school. In states like Bihar, these schemes are particularly useful as they reduce the economic burden on parents belonging to relatively lower socio-economic strata. However, whether these schemes have been successful in curbing child marriage remains a question mark. In addition to the above governmental schemes, several international, national and civil society organisations are also working to mobilise the community, generate awareness and provide life-skills education to girls.

Mahila Samakhyā, an integrated programme by the government includes residential facilities for out of school girls from marginalized communities in rural and tribal areas. The Kasturba Gandhi Balika Vidyalaya (KGBV) has similar goals but focuses on girls from SC, ST and OBC communities studying at the upper primary level. After it was merged with Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan, the KGBV is in operation in 460 districts of the country with low literacy levels for girls/women. Though this scheme does not fully live up to its mission of catering to out-of-school girls and drop-outs, it has potential and needs to be extended to X and XII grade in a phased manner.

The **Beti Bachao, Beti Padhao (BBBP)** scheme of the Ministry of Women and Child Development in convergence with the Ministry of Health and Family

Welfare (MOHFW) and Ministry of Human Resources Development (MHRD) aims at high enrolment of girl students, ensuring continuation of their education beyond primary level, improving girl-friendly environment in schools with functional toilets, hostels and giving impetus to girls' participation in education through the Balika Manch campaign. An assessment of the BBBP scheme highlights that if the scheme has to succeed, it needs to engage at a more in-depth and sustainable level to effectively tackle the blind spots responsible for low value of girl child in our community¹⁹³.

6.4.2 Economic Opportunities and Financial Incentives

There are several government schemes for providing economic opportunities and financial incentives to girls through cash transfer. One example is the Mukhyamantri Kanya Suraksha Yojana in Bihar where the first two girl children in a family are given financial incentives on completion of 18 years. Under this scheme, an amount of Rs. 2,000 is invested in UTI mutual funds in the name of the girl child. The said amount can be utilized for further education or starting a small business etc.

As elaborated in Chapter 2, other schemes with conditional cash transfer (CCT) include: Apni Beti Apna Dhan in Haryana; Dhan Lakshmi of Central Government; Bhagya Lakshmi in Karnataka; Girl Child Protection in Undivided Andhra Pradesh; Balika Samradhi Yojna in Gujarat; Beti Hai Anmol in Himachal Pradesh; Mukhya Manthri Vivah Yojna in Gujarat, Madhya Pradesh and Jharkhand, Kanwar Bhenu in Gujarat and Kanyashree in West Bengal.

All these schemes promise a cash transfer incentive for the family, which is tied to varied conditions for eligibility. These conditions include birth registration, immunization, enrolment in school till class VIII, and insurance coverage etc. till the age of 18 years. As is obvious, these schemes are aimed at improving the gender ratio, changing mindsets to value the girl child and ensuring continuation of education and delaying marriage until 18 years, the legal age of marriage for girls.

A few studies have been carried out to evaluate some of these schemes. The feedback confirms that the cash transfer provides a sense of security to the families and the eligibility conditions are largely fulfilled. However, no empirical

¹⁹³www.cdhr.org.in/womens-empowerment/an-evaluation-of-prime-minister-Modis-Beti-Bachao-Beti-Padhao-initiative/

evidence exists that these schemes ensures higher desirability for daughters. The deep-rooted perceptions related to the girl child still continue. Comparisons between beneficiaries of this scheme and non-beneficiaries reveal that girls did attain higher levels of education but the differential value given to the education of girls as compared to boys remained. Boys' education was expected to improve their job prospects, for girls, it was to make them attractive in the marriage market¹⁹⁴. Due to mixed feedback, which was not conclusive, the Ministry of Women and Child Development introduced a comprehensive scheme SABLA for adolescent girls merging KSY and NPAG schemes to cover 11-18 year old girls. ICDS is used as a platform to implement this scheme which aims at empowering adolescent girls by improving their nutritional and health status and upgrading various skills related to life and vocation. One hopes that empowered adolescents will say no to child marriage, which seems a difficult outcome in our culture where girls and women have no decision-making power.

6.4.3 Improving Nutrition and Health

There are several schemes to improve the nutrition and health status of adolescent girls. The Rajiv Gandhi Scheme for Empowerment of Adolescent Girls – SABLA was initiated by Government of India in November 2010 with an integrated package of services comprising nutrition and non-nutrition components. Similarly, the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare (MOHFW) has a comprehensive programme, the Rashtriya Kishore Swasthya Karyakram (RKSK), for both boys and girls, in the age groups of 10-14 years and 15-19 years to raise their awareness about health and well-being and avail services being provided by MOHFW. The key principle of this programme is adolescent participation and leadership. MOHFW in collaboration with UNFPA has developed a National Adolescent Health Strategy. It re-aligns the existing clinic-based curative approach to focus on a more holistic model based on a continuum of care for adolescent health and developmental needs. It introduces community-based interventions through peer educators, and is underpinned by collaborations with other ministries and state governments. The package of intervention consists of improving nutrition, sexual and reproductive health, enhancing mental health, preventing injuries and violence, and preventing substance misuse.

¹⁹⁴ICRW, 2010, Impact on Marriage. Programme Assessment of Conditional Cash Transfers. Washington D.C.

There are several other schemes and programs implemented by government and Civil Society Organizations to generate awareness and mobilize the community to access appropriate health care services. These include

The Integrated Child Protection Scheme (ICPS) has been a flagship programme of MWCD since 2009. It aims at providing children in difficult circumstances with protection and a safe environment to develop and flourish. It focuses on reducing the risks and vulnerabilities of children and prevention of abuse, neglect, exploitation and abandonment. Its objectives are to institutionalize essential services and strengthen structures, enhance capacities of all systems and caregivers, create database and knowledge base for child protection services, strengthen child protection at family and community level, coordinate and network with government institutions and non-government institutions to ensure effective implementation, and raise public awareness about child rights, child vulnerability and child protection services.

- **The Mahila Samkhya programme** has been specially designed for women and children by the Ministry of Human Resource Development (MHRD). The programme was launched in Kerala in 1998 with the Kerala Mahila Samkhya Society's (KMSS) campaign against child marriage and desertion in Malapuram. This programme also focuses on issues such as domestic violence, skill development etc. with the aim of empowering girls and women. The rationale is to create "an alternative space for girls" by providing livelihoods and education especially technical education and higher education to make women and girls self-reliant. It has been envisaged as a program for the education and empowerment of women in rural areas, particularly of women from socially and economically deprived backgrounds¹⁹⁵.

6.5 Incentives to Catalyse Change

The strategy used focuses on Gender Critical Districts and Cities low on CSR for intensive and integrated action. It is implemented by training and mobilizing Panchayat Raj Institutions and urban local bodies as catalysts for social change, with active involvement of local community, particularly youth and women's groups. The activation of governance is built in its implementation by ensuring service delivery structures/schemes related to gender and children's rights. It solicits inter-sectoral and inter-institutional convergence at District/Block/Grassroot levels for its effective operation.

¹⁹⁵http://mhrd.gov.in/sites/upload_files/mhrd/files/upload_document/Genesis_ms.pdf

6.6 Key Strategies at the State Level

A number of schemes and programmes are operational across India which, directly or indirectly, aim to reduce the prevalence of child marriage. These include schemes run by different government departments. While some of these are state-specific, others are conceptualized and supported by the union government and are operational in either all or a number of states. There are also similarities across some of the state-specific schemes described in previous sections of the report.

However, some intervention strategies used in these programmes are reiterated here. **Training and Capacity Building** in Mahila Samakhya Karyakram and in a number of other training programmes that vary from state to state, is an important component towards reducing child marriage. Techniques are used for breaking gender stereotypes and building aspirations. Girls and women are encouraged to share their own experiences. Besides, training in self-defence and the use of the collective to build a support system to question unjust practices together.

Interestingly, the **SABLA** programme and the **Kishori Shakti Yojna (KSY)** also provide vocational training, literacy and numeracy skills, health and nutrition awareness and, through these aim at postponing age of marriage. These schemes (similar in nature and design) are comprehensive in design but there is not much feedback available about their impact. A review of KSY in Rajasthan and Uttar Pradesh concluded that the implementation was weak, leaving a lot to be desired and therefore the impact was also limited, especially in Rajasthan¹⁹⁶. The cut in social spending in the union budget is threatening the survival of these schemes.

Residential school model is another strategy used by a number of NGOs and MSKs. The rationale of this model is based on assumptions that girls, when away from their regular home environment, are likely to learn better and inspire each other. Incentivizing the change through both monetary and non-monetary transfers have been part of the education and health delivery systems and acted as incentives (e.g., scholarships linked to the continuation of schooling and academic performance, monetary incentives to limit family size). Conditional transfers have entered the policy regime in a more comprehensive manner only in the last decade. States have adopted conditional cash transfer schemes, linking cash transfers to the continuation of secondary education and not getting married before turning 18 years old.

¹⁹⁶Ministry of Women and Child Development, Kishori Shakti Yojana (KSY) under the ambit of ICDS in Uttar Pradesh and Rajasthan, <http://icds-wcd.nic.in/research/ksyreport/executivesummary-ksy.pdf>, Formative Research and Development Services, New Delhi, 2006

6.7 Engaging men and boys:

There are no clear state sponsored strategies or schemes that encourage engagement with men and boys on the issues of empowerment and child marriage (except the Beti Bachao, Beti Padhao programme, which had not been launched at the time this report was prepared). However, a number of NGOs have engaged with boys. Based on an analysis of work undertaken by several organizations working in India, Dasra (undated) identifies youth engagement, both boys and girls, as one of the most effective strategies in making a difference in the lives of adolescents. Dasra identifies youth groups and peer educators as effective strategies with high potential for 'scalability' that have worked in several cases in terms of delaying marriage and enhancing women's agency.

6.8 Programs and schemes from civil society and their impact

6.8.1 Deepshikha:

Deepshikha was launched by UNICEF in 2008 in partnership with the Government of Maharashtra and local non-governmental organizations. There are now more than 2,200 Deepshikha groups in four districts in Maharashtra, reaching more than 50,000 adolescent girls. Potential 'prerikas' are identified by local village committees and nominated for a 20-day training programme in which they learn about child rights, health as well as sex and gender issues. After the training session, each one goes back to her village, identifies local adolescent girls and invites them to form a Deepshikha group. Deepshikha groups are encouraged to form a Self-Help Group (SHG). The SHG opens up a savings bank account, with small amounts of money added each time, to form a small-scale fund.

One of the girls shows her learned skill in Deepshikha. "Just two years ago, Pratibha Vankherde wouldn't dare raise her eyes as she walked the dirt paths of her village. "Before, I was always very scared," the 17-year-old girl recalls. "If I passed people, I would keep my head down because a girl was supposed to be shy and docile." But now, with eyes flashing and a quick smile, the 'new Pratibha', as her parents call her, easily stands before any crowd. With confidence, she talks with 35 other village girls about everything from fighting domestic violence or dowry demands to finishing school and launching lucrative careers. "Now my parents tell people: She's not a daughter to us, but even more than a son!" Pratibha says her dramatic transformation is thanks to lessons learned in Deepshikha, or the 'Light a Lamp' program, which aims to break down age-old negative attitude toward women.

Source: unicef.in/Story/741/Girls-Learn-Life-Skills-in-Deepshikha

6.8.2 Main Kuch Bhi Kar Sakti Hoon – (A Woman, Can Achieve Anything) is an Indian Trans-media initiative (TV, radio, internet and mobile phone) launched by the Population Foundation of India (PFI) to challenge the prevailing social and cultural norms around family planning, early marriage, early and repeated pregnancies, contraceptive use, domestic violence and sex selection. It is a communication intervention and was launched as a family drama series challenging the discrimination against women in day to day life, with simultaneous broadcast on All India Radio. Using a 360 degree communication approach, it has reached out to intended audiences through television, radio, mobile, social media and an intensive outreach through NGO partners in five districts each of Bihar and Madhya Pradesh, to enhance knowledge, change perceptions and shift attitudes on these social issues¹⁹⁷. Main Kuch Bhi Kar Sakti Hoon turned out to be one of the top three serials during the course of its telecast on Doordarshan, and a positive feedback from viewers and audience. A unique feature of the TV series is the Interactive Voice Response Service (IVRS), which provided a discussion forum for viewers as also a platform to share feedback. An estimated 58 million viewers watched Season One on DD National, the national public broadcaster and one of the largest TV networks reaching the remotest areas in India. The show had total 52 episodes in Season 1 and was telecast in West Asia, Far East, Canada and Europe through DD India. The radio adaptation was broadcast on a total 155 channels covering Primary Channels/Local Radio Stations, FM Stations and Vividh Bharati Stations across India through All India Radio (AIR). Additionally, they were aired through a few community radio stations in select states.

Season Two of the series was aired starting in April 2015 and comprised 79 episodes. With the help of the National Adolescent Health programme, Population Foundation of India and the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, it brought up various issues faced by adolescents through this edutainment series.

6.8.3 Girls Not Brides is a global partnership of more than 350 civil society organisations from over 55 countries working to address child marriage. Members are based throughout Africa, Asia, the Middle East, Europe and the Americas and are united by a commitment to end child marriage and enable girls to fulfill their potential. It grew and expanded under the institutional umbrella of The Elders. Girls Not Brides was registered as the independent entity in England and Wales and received its own charitable status¹⁹⁸. The partnership has also

¹⁹⁷ <http://mkbksh.com/about-population-foundation-of-india2/>

¹⁹⁸ http://www.sbs.ox.ac.uk/sites/default/files/Skoll_Centre/Docs/Ecosystem_Opps/girls-not-brides-proposal.pdf

worked towards mobilising policy, financial and programme support to end child marriage.

- 6.8.4 Breakthrough** has implemented a girls empowerment initiative in two districts, Ranchi and Hazaribagh in Jharkhand and in Gaya district in Bihar. The programme consists of mass media intervention, block-level training with NGOs, CBOs, self-help groups, and youth groups, and community mobilizations. The model adopts an ecological approach impacting equity issues. Breakthrough has applied a three-pronged approach to tackle child marriage, which includes mass media campaigns to create awareness around child marriage and ignite public dialogue; training influential community members and creating champions for the cause; and direct interventions through large scale campaigns.

Early Marriage is one of the noteworthy campaigns launched by Breakthrough that aims to eradicate early marriage. Breakthrough has also produced mini-documentaries about girls who were confronted with early marriage and videos on child marriage and its consequences.

- 6.8.5 Centre for Catalyzing Change (Formerly CEDPA)** has been supporting the government in implementing several comprehensive in-school and out-of-school programmes for young people aimed at strengthening their life skills and agency. The in-school AEP, *Udaan* was initiated in Jharkhand in 2006 and catered to boys and girls from classes 6-11. The *Udaan* curriculum was integrated into the school academic calendar with a designated weekly period where teachers facilitated Life Skills sessions.

The *Tarang* programme was implemented by the Centre for Catalyzing Change in partnership with Department of Education, Government of Bihar and UNFPA, wherein non-conventional methods and interactive techniques were used to deliver Life Skills training to adolescent boys and girls. An Adolescent Education Cell was also established within the State Council for Educational Research and Training with a nodal officer for facilitating implementation of the programme and training of functionaries.

Youth LIFE, a digital self-learning curriculum has been recently launched for young girls and boys in classes 6, 7 and 8. This curriculum combines Life skills and SRH curriculum with peer discussion and sharing of information through the use

of technology, and engages students in interactive and simulative games and exercises. The teacher acts as a facilitator.

The Centre for Catalyzing Change has also extended support to the governments of Jharkhand and Delhi for implementation of SABLA by facilitating convergence among line departments; developing uniform state specific training module and building capacities of SABLA functionaries.

6.8.6 CREA through *It's My Body* programme works to strengthen the sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR) of adolescent girls in India through sports. The programme enhances access to public spaces and provides SRHR information to young girls (12-16 years) using sports as an entry point. Use of sports allows CREA to address and increase bodily autonomy among young girls, enabling them to exert greater control over their bodies. This helps them to make their own decisions related to their bodies, health, and lives. Use of sports also strengthens girls' team working and leadership capacities, and enhances their mental and physical well-being and self-esteem. Community-based partner organisations in eight rural districts across Bihar, Jharkhand, and Uttar Pradesh are implementing the programme.

6.8.7 MAMTA Health Institute for Mother and Child has, since 1990, provided clinical services to women and children in a slum area of New Delhi, with the aim of enhancing their health status and improving pregnancy outcomes. MAMTA has been extending technical support in maternal, child and adolescent health. The organization has been engaged in capacity building, advocacy, programme implementation and research. The organizational strategies include community outreach, capacity building, systems strengthening, networking and advocacy through evidence generation and the development of global partnerships.

As can be seen from the brief overview of the programmes mentioned above, most of the agencies are implementing innovative programmes as promising pilot projects. These pilots need to be rigorously evaluated to determine if they have the potential for scale up. For sustainability, it is essential that state governments adopt those innovations that are cost effective and scale-able and integrate them into existing programmes.

6.9 Good Practices

This section describes some noteworthy innovative programmes, in order to cull out some strategies that can be emulated to design effective interventions. Child marriage has rapidly gained international attention over the last decade with donors increa

recognizing the long-term adverse effect of child marriage and its links to a range of development priorities from economic development and poverty alleviation to health, human rights, and social justice¹⁹⁹.

(a) Community Mobilization Key to Preventing Child Marriage: India

In the Aurangabad area of Maharashtra, India, girls typically married early, usually around age 14, and childbearing followed shortly afterward. The Institute for Health Management, Pachod (IHMP), started a year-long life skills programs for unmarried 11–17-year old girls by closely working with parents and leaders, and members of the communities to do advocacy in relevant aspects of child marriage. The life skills course included individual projects carried out in the communities, local recruitment of teachers, and regular and planned meetings with parents. As formal education beyond the 4th standard was unavailable in the communities, the life skills program as an alternative was well-received. After only one year of the program, age at marriage in the area increased from 16 to 17 years²⁰⁰. This increase was at the community-level. The outcome was not just among girls participating in the life skills classes themselves. It is indeed heartening to find that when communities are mobilized, it is possible to change the social norm about the age at marriage²⁰¹.

As discussed earlier, each state in India has taken some initiatives to combat child marriage. These interventions have been identified from programmes described in the report. The table below highlights the key interventions to address child marriage undertaken in a few states²⁰²:

Key Interventions	
Andhra Pradesh	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The approach involved give incentives to Panchayats to play an active role in dealing with child marriage. The policy dealt with incentives such as additional development fund allocation for the ward/village that reports no child marriage within a panchayat. The community in that ward/village takes decision to use this additional funding. • Campaign against traditional customs such as marrying maternal uncles and cross cousins was undertaken to emphasize possible adverse impact on infertility and genetic disorders. Frontline workers such as Anganwadi Workers (AWWs) and Accredited Social Health Activists (ASHAs) were used as change agents. • Stricter vigil on mass marriages on auspicious days, with emphasis on giving public recognition as an incentive to the initiatives taken to prevent these events. • Stricter anti-child labour laws and better enforcement using panchayats and frontline workers. • Both school and community-based interventions with a focus on gender awareness and empowerment involving girls/ women and boys/men (single and mixed sex activities).

¹⁹⁹<http://www.girlsnotbrides.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/03/1.-Overview-Addressing-child-marriage-role-of-diff-sectors.pdf>

²⁰⁰Pandey, R., Kurz, K., Walla, S., MacQuarrie, & Jain, S. (2006). "Improving the Reproductive Health of Married and Unmarried Youth in India: Evidence of Effectiveness and Costs from Community-based Interventions." Final Report and Briefing Kit of the Adolescent Reproductive Health Program in India. Washington, D.C.: International Center for Research on Women (ICRW).

²⁰¹ICRW. (2007). New Insights on Preventing Child Marriage: A Global Analysis of Factors and Programs. International Center for Research on Women (ICRW).

²⁰²<http://cbps.in/wp-content/uploads/Child-Marriage-UNICEF.pdf>

Gujarat	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Expansion in the number of government secondary schools for both girls and boys in rural areas; increasing free and appropriate transport facilities to enable girls to attend secondary schools located at long distances. Incentives such as cash or bicycles for all girls to attend schools so that schooling becomes a social norm. • Laws against policy makers including politicians and officials either supporting or seen as endorsing child marriage in any form. Clear instructions against any kind of political patronage by political parties; media and public campaign against leaders who are seen as endorsing the practice. • Campaigns for low-cost weddings; incentivizing low-cost/simple and adult weddings through appropriate transfer schemes, e.g., interest-free loan to the couple for self-employment/entrepreneurship. • Stricter vigil on mass marriages on auspicious days, with emphasis on celebrating and public recognition of any community initiative as incentives to prevent these events. • Both school and community-based interventions with a focus on gender awareness and empowerment involving girls/ women and boys/men (single and mixed sex activities).
Rajasthan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Engagement with caste panchayats to build an agenda against child marriage. Such an initiative by a caste panchayat or the community is to be publicized and celebrated. • Policy initiative to take action against child marriage. Incentives are linked so that the benefits are visible to everyone, e.g., additional development fund allocation for the ward/village that reports no child marriage has taken place within a panchayat. • Stricter vigil on mass marriages on auspicious days and celebration on conforming to it. • Provision of free and appropriate transport facilities to enable girls to attend post primary/secondary schools located at long distances, and other suitable incentives. • Both school and community-based interventions with a focus on gender awareness and empowerment involving girls/ women and boys/men (single and mixed sex activities). • Removal of inconsistencies in the marriage registration act to disallow any form of child marriage.
West Bengal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strict laws and action against child trafficking; incentivizing civil society, police action against child marriages used to disguise trafficking. Strict message to police force against any possible nexus and strict action against any such nexus being identified. • Stricter enforcement of compulsory registration of marriages by panchayats, especially in cases of girls being married off in other states/countries. • Rigorous review of Kanyashree scheme and policy reforms based on the results/feedback has been initiated. • Engagement with communities to stop practice of arranging marriage fairs.



Chapter 7

Recommendations: Way Forward

This chapter provides an overview of the strategic implications of Census data analysis to arrive at the incidence of child marriage. Based on the identification of districts with high incidence of child marriage,

It is clear from the review of literature and evidence from the analysis of Census data that a multi-pronged strategy is required to deal with the problem of child marriage in India. The determinants are so deeply entrenched in the ecology and traditions of our society, that only a concerted effort and the active involvement of all stakeholders will prove effective in reducing child marriage. The laws, policies and interventions, operating in isolation without proper implementation and strong buy-in from the community, are likely to have little impact.

It is definitely a challenging task to understand the complex drivers behind the practice in different contexts and adapt the interventions accordingly. Most central and state government programmes have been running across ministries/departments to ensure convergence and have met with varied levels of success. Some of the programs have also been withdrawn or merged with new schemes or modified to suit the changing situations. Still, gaps exist in programs and policies to ensure prevention of child marriages and this is largely due to lack of convergence across sectors at both macro and micro level.

Currently, programmes and schemes for boys and girls are designed in silos and there are very few instances of programmes that simultaneously work with both boys and girls in the same community. Working with one group to the exclusion of the other gender is unlikely to lead to sustained impact. Therefore, we need to recognise that both boys and girls experience vulnerability which also effects gender equality.

Accordingly, in this report, an overview has been presented of causes, consequences and preventive measures required such as policies, laws and programme interventions. Census data has provided empirical evidence to identify districts where there are high incidences of child marriages, facilitating micro-level planning for effective interventions. It is hoped that the comprehensive information presented in the earlier sections will guide stakeholders such as policy-makers, administrators, civil society researchers, academicians and NGOs to prepare a road-map of appropriate action in their respective contexts. Social problems like child marriage, however deep-rooted, need to be eliminated so that young boys and girls can avail the right to survive, grow and develop to their full potential. This section highlights a few crucial points that need to be considered while strategising for the way forward.

7.1 Implications from Census Analysis

The analysis of the Census data provided a clear understanding of the incidence and intensity of child marriage in India at the national, state and district levels. It helped to identify districts across the country with high incidence of child marriage and also, across various age groups (10-14 and 15-17 years with respect to girls and 10-14 and 15-20 years with respect to boys) and in terms of locality (rural and urban). This analysis has provided a goldmine of information related to the scenario of child marriage as a ground reality and not simply as an estimation or prevalence available from other data sources. The empirical data has further become enriched and valuable due to the disaggregation by age, location and gender. This is a ground-breaking effort to furnish information and data for taking appropriate action to modify existing policies, laws or enunciate new areas and design interventions to effectively meet the challenges as per intensity and incidences of child marriage in the context of situation to be addressed. Implications emerging from the data need to be dealt with at various levels, in terms of state-specific policies and interventions to address the local situation. Developing state and district plans in locations with high incidence of child marriage is definitely a way to reduce child marriage. Actions to fulfil or restore the rights of those already married should go hand in hand with preventive actions aimed at wider society. In either case, the aim should be to inform parents and young people currently complicit in the practice of early marriage so that they are aware of its true implications and empowered to resist it²⁰³.

7.2 Power of Incidences over Other Data

Typically, child marriage has been presented as a macro-level picture through usual data sets. The average means and percentages of incidence are given at national and state levels and, at times, at district levels also. These data sets provide a descriptive picture and fail to capture pockets or areas where there are higher incidence and intensity, i.e., high incidence of child marriage cases within the population.

For example, review of Census data across rounds has reported a decline in incidence of child marriage in the country over years. The mean age at marriage, both for men and women, has been rising continually as shown in the Census data. However, the analysis of Census data carried out in the present study has identified 70 districts with high incidence rates of child marriage, by age, gender and location-wise. Let us review some key findings again to see how the data related to incidence of child marriage is more useful for taking action.

The overshadowing of the data, when not available with incidences, prevents micro

²⁰³ UNICEF (2001) Early Marriage: Child Spouses

planning. As can be seen from the fact that these 70 districts together contain nearly 14 per cent of India's child (girls of below age 18 years and boys of below 21 years) population, but these districts together contribute to 21 per cent of the incidence of child marriage, as reported by the Census 2011. While the urban districts amongst these 70 contribute to 25.8 per cent of child marriage in urban areas, the percentage contribution of rural districts towards incidence of child marriage is only 20.6. Interestingly, while 21.1 per cent of child marriage among girls in the country can be attributed to these 70 districts, a slightly higher contribution of 22.5 percentage of child marriage among boys occurred in these districts. The variation in boys and girls in these districts presents different scenarios as reported in Chapter 3. It is obvious that strategies to eliminate and reduce child marriage will require different focus, both in terms of policy and programmes in response to local situations. The comparison of incidences across two Census (Table 3.11 and 3.12) has given further insights related to change in population of ever married over the decade which is not in line with data reported in the regular tables of child marriage in the Census.

To illustrate the powerful potential of incidence, the description below is self-explanatory. The analysis reveals an increasing surge in the incidence of child marriage in Maharashtra, with Bhandara district being the worst affected, with more than a 5-fold increase in the incidence of child marriage among girls, along with 15 other districts (both rural and urban) in the state showing an increasing trend. Shockingly, urban districts such as Mumbai (> 2 fold), Pune (2.4 fold) and Thane (2.8 fold) are also reporting an increasing trend. Kolhapur, Sindhudurg and Satara are reporting more than 3 times increase in child marriage among girls. This is in spite of the fact that there is a decline in the number of girl children below the age of 18 years in more than half of these districts. It is important to note that out of the 13 districts from Rajasthan which are part of the identified 70 districts with highest incidence of child marriage in Census 2011, only Banswara is showing a slight increase in the number of child marriages. The other twelve districts are all showing a positive decline as compared to Census 2001.

This report highlights that 32 districts out of the seventy have shown a decline in the **incidence of child marriage among boys**. Not a single district in Rajasthan has shown an increase in child marriage incidence in the Census 2011 data for boys. However, there are nine districts (rural as well as semi-urban like Thane) in Maharashtra with more than 10-fold increase in incidence of child marriage among boys below the legal age of 21 years. Noteworthy is that these districts registered only marginal increase in the population of boys in this age group. Bhandara registered more than 20-fold increase in child marriage among boys, with an insignificant increase in the population below the age of 21 years during the decade 2001-2011. It is very important for India as a nation

and Maharashtra as a state to take note of this fact. Compared to incidence of child marriage amongst boys, not a single district reported more than approximately 5-fold increase in child marriage among girls.

7.3 Way Forward

The data analysis in this report will enable states to undertake area-specific initiatives to rectify the situation with regard to child marriage. For instance, Maharashtra with 16 districts with high incidence of child marriage for both boys and girls, especially Bhandara with a five-fold increase in child marriage amongst girls and more than twenty-fold increase amongst boys presents a grave situation warranting immediate attention. Initiatives to bring down the incidence of child marriage in the worst-affected areas may include changing of laws, improving enforcement, designing interventions, improving governance, mobilizing communities and giving incentives.

The process of making changes requires political will and concerted efforts. In a proactive stance, the state of Assam has proposed an exemplary action and has drafted an amendment recently, according to which the minimum age for marriage has been made an eligibility criteria to apply for government jobs. Families with more than two children have been denied the provision of social welfare services offered in the state. Further, the term of imprisonment of two years in jail is to be extended to four years under CPMA implementation. This initiative is very positive. Rajasthan has started demanding that all tent vendors check the birth certificates of the brides and grooms for whom they supply tents for weddings. In Telangana, a drive to stop child marriage during the peak wedding season in the summer months has demanded that all priests must request proof of age for the bride and groom before marrying them. All these are commendable steps taken by state governments.

7.4 Suggested Recommendations

Based on the review of literature, the consultative meet of Young Lives held on child marriage and the Census analysis done for the study on incidences of child marriage, a few recommendations are made for the way forward to deal with the issue of child marriage in the country.

1. **Promoting education:** Education can influence young people, their families as well as society at large to combat the undesirable practices and beliefs that perpetuate child marriage. Children completing secondary education are most likely to escape child marriage and be better equipped for the future. It is time India made secondary education a fundamental right and amended the Right to Free and Compulsory Education Act, 2010 to incorporate the same.

Attempts to close gender gaps in education have included approaches to make schools more girl-friendly. These include building schools close to communities so that parents are less worried about their daughters' safety; providing hostel facilities; employing more female teachers; improving the relevance of the curriculum and the quality of teaching; and separate sanitary facilities for boys and girls.

2. **Prevent trafficking:** Trafficking and acts of violence against the girl child are correlated with child marriage. This is because many girl children are forced into marriage after being kidnapped. To curb such happenings, laws have to be made more stringent and the Prohibition of Child Marriage Act in conjunction with the Immoral Traffic Prevention Act particularly in border states/areas needs to be strictly implemented. Other efforts to ensure safety and security of the girl child from abuse within the home and outside are equally important. An enabling school set-up is needed for them to continue education beyond elementary school as discussed earlier.
3. **Promote Gender Equity:** Gender training programmes have been found to help sensitize stakeholders, especially at the community level across all the districts. These training programmes may be also held for police, judiciary, NGOs etc. Advocacy needs to focus not only on the risks and disadvantages of child marriage, but also on the proactive action that needs to be taken by one and all.
4. **Build a Campaign against the Practice of Dowry:** Since dowry continues to have a negative impact on both girls and boys, and the latter often have to take out large loans to pay for their sisters' marriages, and is a major cause of girls being married to the first male who makes 'reasonable demands', it is critical to build a campaign against this practice. 'Dowry-free blocks and districts' should be declared and celebrated in the country.
5. **Registration of Marriages:** Provisions for registration of marriages need to be made mandatory and implemented in a simple and user-friendly manner. In India, families are not aware of it and usually do not register marriages. Registration facilities should be provided at the lowest level of administrative structures i.e. Panchayat for easy access. Awareness generation about the importance of registration of marriage and the procedures require a mass media campaign. If it could be linked to the Unique Identification Number (UID), it would be possible to achieve universal tracing of records.

6. **Awareness Generation:** All stakeholders, including parents, siblings, relatives, panchayats, schools (management and teachers), police, judiciary, NGOs, social workers etc., as stated earlier, should be sensitized and convinced about the negative impact of child marriage on children's psycho-social health and wellbeing. The myth that marriage is a way of protecting daughters from harassment and sexual violence needs to be dealt with by raising awareness about the harmful effects of child marriage and pregnancy at a younger age including robbing girls of their right to healthy growth and development. Parents, being custodians of children, if made aware, can take the informed decision of postponing their children's marriage until legal age is attained. Children must also be made aware of prevailing laws and ill effects of child marriage by including this topic in elementary curriculum. Awareness generation on sexual and reproductive health and rights of girls and young women also needs attention.
7. **Mobilization of religious leaders and community elders:** Religious elders and community leaders are the decision makers in communities where early or child marriage is prevalent. Engaging and educating these powerful community leaders is perhaps a key to changing the attitude of a community regarding early marriage.
8. **Provision of relevant economic support:** Inter-generational poverty is often one of the most prevalent reasons for forcing children, especially girls, into child marriage. Therefore, providing social support nets to the poorest families or communities may be a way of helping parents who do not want their daughters to get married early.
9. **Using the power of Mass Media:** Mass media can play a powerful role in changing mind-sets. Both electronic and print media can be used to create awareness about child marriage and its ill effects. The media's projection of positive role models such as girl achievers can play a crucial role in enhancing the value of the girl children within families and society at large.
10. **Reviewing the Law and its implementation:** Identifying the loopholes in the present laws and in its implementation, as required by CRC and other commitments, will be useful in a significant way to reduce or stop child marriages. Once existing loopholes are plugged, it will deter families from breaking the law.

11. ***Strengthening the legal system:*** Under the Prohibition of Child Marriage Act, 2006, whoever performs or is associated with a child marriage, is punishable with rigorous imprisonment which may extend to two years or with fine, which may extend to one lakh rupees, or with both. In the present scenario, due to the lack of stringent enforcement and inadequate political will, the Act has not had much effect on significantly reducing the practice of child marriage. Violation of law is the norm and no punishment is given for the violators. Therefore, the child marriage continues unabated. The Act has become rhetorical without effective structures in place and hence, is not able to make any dent in the society.
12. ***Appointment of full time Child Marriage Prohibition Officers (CMPO's):*** Full time CMPOs need to be appointed in the states rather than other officials being given additional charge of enforcing the law against child marriage. Once appointed, the CMPOs need to be trained and sensitised about various aspects of child marriage and the law to prevent it.
13. ***Setting up of Special Cells/ Watch Groups:*** Special Cells/Watch Groups could be set up in regions with high prevalence of child marriage. People could be selected from within the community itself who will keep a watch on child marriages taking place in the villages, report them, and thus, help in bringing down the number of child marriages in the area.
14. ***Gather NGO Support:*** NGOs and members of the local community should be encouraged and incentivised to report and intervene when child marriages take place or are planned, with support from the police and district magistrates or other social workers/agencies. NGOs with local presence have the potential to influence the community and work as change agents.
15. ***Political Will:*** Political leaders such as Members of Parliament, Legislative Assemblies and local bodies can play a very important role as they are role models for the community. Efforts should be made to educate and sensitise them on the need for advocacy against child marriage. Elected representatives should be vigilant about the violation of the Child Marriage Act.
16. ***Support married adolescent girls:*** Although the focus must be on preventing child marriage, there is also need to pay attention and give support to young married girls, as they are extremely vulnerable, and are at high risk of physical and sexual violence, and of suffering from the psycho-social consequences associated with early marriage.

17. **Study of Enabling Situations:** There is a need to identify factors that enabled the declining trend in the incidence of child marriage from evidence available, so that lessons can be learnt about what works.
18. **Further Study of High Incidence Areas:** Areas displaying increasing trend in incidence of child marriage need to be studied for the drivers and triggers that lead to the current situation.
19. **Scale up successful interventions:** Efforts must be made to replicate and scale up successful interventions at the national, state and district levels as per the context. The objective is to make interventions effective in combating the problem of child marriage in the country.
20. **Focus on Boys too:** It seems from review of the Government programmes that we are focussing on girls mostly. Boys also need to be included as focus of interventions.
21. **Monitoring of districts with high incidence of child marriage:** As mentioned earlier, this analysis gives a detailed account of the prevailing situation and provides a list of 70 districts with high incidence of child marriage. These districts need to be studied and monitored as part of an inter-disciplinary research to understand factors contributing to the increase and / or persistence of high incidence of child marriage.
22. **Gather Research Evidence:** As is clear from this study's analysis, it is very vital to have evidence-based information. We need to have in-depth studies to supplement data source available. Dis-aggregation at district and village level is needed for local-specific strategies and solutions. There is a need of evidence to ascertain effectiveness of interventions. Very negligible information is available and requires investment in evaluating interventions to gauge both effectiveness and scalability. Need based research studies at district and sub-district level need to be initiated to understand local customs and norms that pose as barriers in preventing children marriage. Based on these evidences from the ground, the government (state as well as national) could develop strategies and plan of action to better the situation as well as scale up good practices that have shown

7.5 Strategic Approach

In order to eliminate the practice of child marriage, a clear direction and strategy needs to be developed. The strategy needs to be based on a comprehensive understanding of

the ecology of child development within diverse contexts and culture, and embedded in the policy provisions, national goals, and human rights framework affirming and the rights of children. The feasibility of implementation need to be harmonised with structures available, or upgradation of these structures. It obviously will require close partnership between the centre, states, voluntary agencies, communities and children/adolescents themselves. As in CRC, the best interest of the child will/should be of paramount importance. Since gaps still exist in legislation, programs and policies for prevention of child marriages, policymakers need to develop a multi-pronged strategy to address lacunae in education, health, legal, policy and economic framework as well as existing social norms, to reduce the child marriage. Ending child marriage requires work across all sectors and at all levels. It requires identification and understanding of the complex drivers behind the child marriage practices in different contexts and a contextual adaption of the associated intervention.

It is paramount that India adopts a Strategy and Plan of Action to prevent child marriage so that we can achieve our SDG Goals as well as the objectives of the National Plan of Action for Children, 2016²⁰⁴ since the persistence of child, early and forced marriage will contribute to impairing the achievement of the SDG's. We will need to work in partnership with civil society, academics, PRI's and child protection systems to enforce, and raise public awareness of legislation that sets 18 years as the minimum legal age for marriage for girls and 21 years for boys. This will need to be accompanied by a nation-wide campaign that challenges existing gender inequity and son preference.

The incidence of child marriage is declining in India. However, drawing on a detailed analysis of Census data from 2001 and 2011, this report shows there is substantial variation in child marriage incidence and trends between different states and districts. By making this data available alongside research into the drivers of child marriage, its consequences for children and society, and an overview of programmes to address child marriage, it is hoped that this report will contribute to well-designed and effective strategies to support girls and boys to delay marriage and develop to their full potential.

²⁰⁴http://wcd.nic.in/sites/default/files/National%20Plan%20of%20Action_0.pdf

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ANNEXURE**Table A1: Percentage of ever married girls (10-17) and boys (10-20) below legal age by district (Census 2011)**

State	District	Girls (10-17)			Boys (10-20)		
		Total	Rural	Urban	Total	Rural	Urban
Andaman & Nicobar Islands	Nicobar	7.9	7.9	0.0	1.9	1.9	0.0
Andaman & Nicobar Islands	North & Middle Andaman	12.7	12.7	12.8	1.0	1.0	0.8
Andaman & Nicobar Islands	South Andaman	12.8	14.4	11.6	2.3	2.6	2.2
Andhra Pradesh *	Adilabad	16.3	17.3	13.5	3.7	3.9	3.1
Andhra Pradesh	Nizamabad	17.0	18.3	12.7	4.0	4.2	3.1
Andhra Pradesh	Karimnagar	13.8	14.6	11.6	2.8	2.9	2.5
Andhra Pradesh	Medak	18.3	19.1	15.7	3.0	3.0	2.7
Andhra Pradesh	Hyderabad	15.5	0.0	15.5	4.8	0.0	4.8
Andhra Pradesh	Rangareddy	18.7	19.2	18.5	4.3	3.7	4.6
Andhra Pradesh	Mahbubnagar	21.0	22.1	15.2	3.9	4.1	2.9
Andhra Pradesh	Nalgonda	19.1	20.3	14.5	3.1	3.3	2.5
Andhra Pradesh	Warangal	16.1	17.3	12.9	3.1	3.3	2.5
Andhra Pradesh	Khammam	18.5	19.4	15.4	3.8	3.9	3.3
Andhra Pradesh	Srikakulam	16.7	17.4	13.4	2.1	2.2	1.8
Andhra Pradesh	Vizianagaram	17.3	18.1	14.5	3.3	3.4	2.7
Andhra Pradesh	Visakhapatnam	17.9	19.5	15.9	3.8	4.2	3.4
Andhra Pradesh	East Godavari	17.7	18.7	15.0	2.4	2.5	2.3
Andhra Pradesh	West Godavari	16.9	17.7	13.6	2.4	2.5	2.3
Andhra Pradesh	Krishna	19.0	20.2	17.3	4.0	4.0	4.0
Andhra Pradesh	Guntur	20.5	22.8	16.5	3.0	3.2	2.6
Andhra Pradesh	Prakasam	21.7	23.0	16.6	3.1	3.3	2.4
Andhra Pradesh	Sri Potti Sriramulu Nellore	18.6	20.7	14.1	2.8	3.0	2.2
Andhra Pradesh	Y.S.R.	17.6	18.3	16.4	2.8	2.9	2.6
Andhra Pradesh	Kurnool	20.2	21.4	17.1	4.1	4.3	3.6
Andhra Pradesh	Anantapur	19.8	21.0	16.7	3.7	3.9	3.3
Andhra Pradesh	Chittoor	17.8	19.2	14.7	3.4	3.6	3.0
Arunachal Pradesh	Tawang	8.1	8.3	7.5	3.5	3.4	4.4
Arunachal Pradesh	West Kameng	13.2	14.0	10.0	4.3	4.6	2.9
Arunachal Pradesh	East Kameng	13.2	13.2	13.0	4.5	4.4	4.6
Arunachal Pradesh	Papum Pare	13.4	14.5	12.5	4.2	4.6	3.8
Arunachal Pradesh	Upper Subansiri	12.2	12.2	12.2	4.6	4.7	4.2
Arunachal Pradesh	West Siang	9.9	9.5	11.3	3.7	3.4	4.9
Arunachal Pradesh	East Siang	9.6	8.9	11.1	3.4	3.2	4.0
Arunachal Pradesh	Upper Siang	10.1	9.2	12.9	3.7	3.6	4.4
Arunachal Pradesh	Changlang	14.0	14.3	12.5	4.6	4.7	4.3
Arunachal Pradesh	Tirap	9.5	9.7	8.6	3.3	3.3	3.3
Arunachal Pradesh	Lower Subansiri	9.8	9.6	11.0	3.6	3.6	3.6
Arunachal Pradesh	Kurung Kumey	10.3	10.2	16.6	2.9	2.9	4.5
Arunachal Pradesh	Dibang Valley	11.7	13.9	7.2	2.9	3.4	1.5

* Please read Andhra Pradesh here as undivided Andhra Pradesh

State	District	Girls (10-17)			Boys (10-20)		
		Total	Rural	Urban	Total	Rural	Urban
Arunachal Pradesh	Lower Dibang Valley	12.2	13.9	7.2	3.7	4.1	2.4
Arunachal Pradesh	Lohit	14.0	14.6	12.0	4.3	4.6	3.3
Arunachal Pradesh	Anjaw	13.7	14.6	3.3	4.1	4.4	0.9
Assam	Kokrajhar	20.2	20.5	14.8	4.6	4.7	3.2
Assam	Dhubri	26.8	27.8	17.8	5.0	5.2	3.0
Assam	Goalpara	22.4	22.6	21.0	4.4	4.5	4.1
Assam	Barpeta	20.9	21.5	13.1	3.8	3.9	2.4
Assam	Morigaon	19.6	19.9	15.5	4.3	4.4	3.6
Assam	Nagaon	18.4	18.9	14.7	3.6	3.7	2.9
Assam	Sonitpur	16.2	16.6	12.3	3.6	3.7	2.6
Assam	Lakhimpur	16.0	16.0	15.7	3.7	3.7	3.4
Assam	Dhemaji	14.3	14.5	12.2	3.6	3.7	2.7
Assam	Tinsukia	14.1	14.6	11.5	3.7	3.9	2.6
Assam	Dibrugarh	13.5	13.9	11.0	3.4	3.6	2.9
Assam	Sivasagar	14.1	14.2	12.0	3.1	3.2	2.3
Assam	Jorhat	14.5	14.7	13.5	3.6	3.7	3.4
Assam	Golaghat	14.7	14.9	12.4	3.3	3.4	2.8
Assam	Karbi Anglong	13.4	13.5	12.4	3.5	3.6	2.7
Assam	Dima Hasao	10.9	11.3	10.1	2.8	2.8	2.7
Assam	Cachar	12.6	12.8	11.2	2.5	2.5	2.3
Assam	Karimganj	15.1	15.4	10.6	2.6	2.6	2.2
Assam	Hailakandi	13.8	14.1	10.1	2.6	2.7	2.2
Assam	Bongaigaon	20.8	21.8	14.1	3.6	3.7	2.8
Assam	Chirang	18.0	18.2	16.3	3.9	3.9	3.6
Assam	Kamrup	15.9	16.4	10.9	3.2	3.3	2.6
Assam	Kamrup Metropolitan	13.1	15.6	12.4	3.3	3.4	3.3
Assam	Nalbari	13.6	14.0	9.7	2.9	3.0	2.8
Assam	Baksa	16.0	16.0	16.2	3.5	3.5	3.0
Assam	Darrang	20.8	21.3	13.0	4.1	4.2	2.4
Assam	Udalguri	14.8	14.8	13.7	3.4	3.4	3.0
Bihar	Pashchim Champaran	16.6	17.1	12.9	5.6	5.8	3.9
Bihar	Purba Champaran	17.7	18.0	14.7	5.5	5.6	4.4
Bihar	Sheohar	19.2	19.3	18.1	5.9	5.9	5.8
Bihar	Sitamarhi	18.6	18.7	15.4	5.2	5.3	4.6
Bihar	Madhubani	18.4	18.5	14.7	5.0	5.0	3.7
Bihar	Supaul	19.2	19.4	16.1	4.6	4.6	3.1
Bihar	Araria	19.0	19.3	15.5	4.4	4.4	3.8
Bihar	Kishanganj	11.7	11.6	13.0	2.8	2.7	3.6
Bihar	Purnia	17.5	17.8	15.1	4.0	4.0	3.7
Bihar	Katihar	17.7	18.1	13.5	3.7	3.8	3.0
Bihar	Madhepura	20.6	20.8	15.8	5.0	5.0	4.0
Bihar	Saharsa	21.1	21.7	15.4	4.9	5.1	3.6
Bihar	Darbhanga	17.3	17.7	13.0	4.2	4.3	2.8
Bihar	Muzaffarpur	16.0	16.3	12.6	4.5	4.6	3.6
Bihar	Gopalganj	12.6	12.7	10.7	4.3	4.4	3.6

State	District	Girls (10-17)			Boys (10-20)		
		Total	Rural	Urban	Total	Rural	Urban
Bihar	Siwan	10.6	10.7	8.7	3.3	3.4	2.9
Bihar	Saran	12.4	12.4	11.9	3.6	3.7	3.3
Bihar	Vaishali	18.0	18.2	15.4	4.4	4.4	4.0
Bihar	Samastipur	19.5	19.7	14.6	4.5	4.5	3.4
Bihar	Begusarai	20.1	20.7	17.4	4.9	5.0	4.3
Bihar	Khagaria	20.9	21.2	15.8	4.5	4.5	3.8
Bihar	Bhagalpur	16.6	17.8	12.3	3.2	3.4	2.3
Bihar	Banka	21.7	21.9	15.8	4.7	4.7	2.9
Bihar	Munger	17.2	18.5	13.9	3.4	3.6	3.1
Bihar	Lakhisarai	20.8	21.3	17.8	5.9	6.0	4.8
Bihar	Sheikhpura	20.9	21.8	16.6	7.4	8.0	4.7
Bihar	Nalanda	19.6	20.8	13.6	6.7	7.2	4.1
Bihar	Patna	16.8	19.5	13.2	6.0	7.2	4.5
Bihar	Bhojpur	16.9	17.6	12.7	6.0	6.3	4.2
Bihar	Buxar	16.6	17.0	12.6	5.7	5.9	4.0
Bihar	Kaimur (Bhabua)	19.8	20.1	12.9	6.9	7.0	3.7
Bihar	Rohtas	16.3	17.1	11.4	5.5	5.9	3.6
Bihar	Aurangabad	17.4	18.0	12.3	6.8	7.1	4.1
Bihar	Gaya	22.3	23.4	15.2	9.6	10.2	5.9
Bihar	Nawada	23.0	23.9	14.8	9.4	9.9	5.2
Bihar	Jamui	25.3	26.0	17.5	7.5	7.8	4.7
Bihar	Jehanabad	20.8	21.4	16.1	8.4	8.8	5.8
Bihar	Arwal	19.2	19.4	17.0	7.2	7.3	5.8
Chandigarh	Chandigarh	8.7	13.0	8.6	2.8	3.3	2.8
Chhattisgarh	Koriya	15.3	17.4	10.5	4.4	5.3	2.7
Chhattisgarh	Surguja	16.6	17.4	10.3	5.4	5.7	2.9
Chhattisgarh	Jashpur	12.3	12.8	8.4	3.5	3.6	2.2
Chhattisgarh	Raigarh	11.0	11.2	10.0	2.5	2.6	1.9
Chhattisgarh	Korba	13.0	13.7	11.7	3.5	3.8	3.0
Chhattisgarh	Janjgir - Champa	10.9	11.0	10.5	2.4	2.4	2.2
Chhattisgarh	Bilaspur	14.1	14.9	11.4	3.7	4.0	2.9
Chhattisgarh	Kabeerdham	20.1	20.6	15.3	8.0	8.4	5.0
Chhattisgarh	Rajnandgaon	11.6	11.9	9.6	3.4	3.5	3.0
Chhattisgarh	Durg	11.4	12.2	9.9	2.7	2.9	2.2
Chhattisgarh	Raipur	12.1	12.1	12.3	3.1	3.1	3.1
Chhattisgarh	Mahasamund	10.7	10.7	10.3	2.4	2.4	2.2
Chhattisgarh	Dhamtari	9.9	9.9	10.1	2.1	1.9	2.6
Chhattisgarh	Uttar Bastar Kanker	10.1	10.3	8.2	2.4	2.4	2.6
Chhattisgarh	Bastar	12.6	13.1	9.6	3.8	4.0	2.5
Chhattisgarh	Narayanpur	11.4	11.6	10.4	4.2	4.5	2.4
Chhattisgarh	Dakshin Bastar Dantewada	12.5	12.7	11.4	3.9	4.2	2.8
Chhattisgarh	Bijapur	14.9	15.2	12.2	4.6	4.8	3.1
Dadra & Nagar Haveli	Dadra & Nagar Haveli	17.4	16.7	18.7	6.0	6.2	5.6
Daman & Diu	Diu	6.4	5.5	7.7	1.1	0.9	1.3
Daman & Diu	Daman	20.5	14.8	22.3	7.0	4.2	7.5

State	District	Girls (10-17)			Boys (10-20)		
		Total	Rural	Urban	Total	Rural	Urban
Delhi	North West	9.5	11.6	9.4	2.3	2.6	2.3
Delhi	North	7.5	9.9	7.5	2.1	3.0	2.1
Delhi	North East	8.4	13.0	8.4	2.1	3.5	2.1
Delhi	East	7.8	7.0	7.8	2.1	2.8	2.1
Delhi	New Delhi	8.7	0.0	8.7	3.4	0.0	3.4
Delhi	Central	7.2	0.0	7.2	2.1	0.0	2.1
Delhi	West	9.1	11.8	9.1	2.5	2.7	2.5
Delhi	South West	9.8	11.8	9.7	2.9	2.9	2.9
Delhi	South	10.1	14.3	10.1	2.9	4.7	2.8
Goa	North Goa	10.9	10.1	11.4	4.1	3.8	4.3
Goa	South Goa	11.3	10.6	11.7	3.9	4.0	3.8
Gujarat	Kachchh	13.9	13.6	14.4	4.6	4.6	4.7
Gujarat	Banas Kantha	17.4	17.8	14.6	6.8	7.2	4.2
Gujarat	Patan	18.2	18.9	15.2	7.0	7.6	4.7
Gujarat	Maheana	18.5	19.2	16.3	7.1	7.5	5.8
Gujarat	Sabar Kantha	15.6	16.0	13.7	6.2	6.6	4.4
Gujarat	Gandhinagar	24.6	27.4	20.4	10.0	11.9	7.4
Gujarat	Ahmadabad	19.5	24.4	18.4	8.4	11.1	7.8
Gujarat	Surendranagar	13.6	14.2	11.8	5.3	5.9	3.7
Gujarat	Rajkot	14.0	14.4	13.6	5.3	5.8	4.9
Gujarat	Jamnagar	11.4	10.1	13.1	3.9	3.6	4.3
Gujarat	Porbandar	12.1	11.4	12.9	3.6	3.5	3.8
Gujarat	Junagadh	9.2	9.0	9.5	3.4	3.4	3.3
Gujarat	Amreli	10.2	10.1	10.5	4.1	4.2	3.9
Gujarat	Bhavnagar	12.4	11.8	13.4	5.1	5.0	5.2
Gujarat	Anand	21.3	22.8	17.8	8.3	9.1	6.4
Gujarat	Kheda	24.4	26.3	17.3	11.5	12.9	6.7
Gujarat	Panch Mahals	18.8	19.0	17.0	8.9	9.5	5.4
Gujarat	Dohad	16.9	16.9	16.0	9.9	10.2	6.1
Gujarat	Vadodara	17.8	20.8	14.3	7.1	8.8	5.3
Gujarat	Narmada	16.4	16.8	12.7	6.2	6.5	3.1
Gujarat	Bharuch	14.7	14.9	14.2	5.0	5.0	4.9
Gujarat	The Dangs	17.9	19.3	10.6	7.3	7.9	3.2
Gujarat	Navsari	15.1	15.1	15.2	5.1	5.2	5.0
Gujarat	Valsad	17.7	18.4	16.4	6.7	6.9	6.3
Gujarat	Surat	17.3	15.6	17.8	6.5	5.3	6.8
Gujarat	Tapi	16.7	16.7	17.0	6.2	6.3	5.1
Haryana	Panchkula	10.8	11.1	10.4	3.7	3.4	4.0
Haryana	Ambala	10.0	10.4	9.4	3.3	3.5	3.0
Haryana	Yamunanagar	9.7	9.8	9.4	3.1	3.3	3.0
Haryana	Kurukshetra	10.5	11.1	9.0	3.1	3.3	2.8
Haryana	Kaithal	13.2	13.7	11.3	3.7	3.8	3.1
Haryana	Karnal	12.7	13.0	11.8	3.9	4.0	3.7
Haryana	Panipat	14.0	15.3	12.5	4.2	4.7	3.5
Haryana	Sonipat	13.9	14.6	12.1	4.0	4.1	3.7

State	District	Girls (10-17)			Boys (10-20)		
		Total	Rural	Urban	Total	Rural	Urban
Haryana	Jind	15.1	15.7	13.1	4.7	4.8	4.2
Haryana	Fatehabad	13.7	14.3	11.3	5.3	5.5	4.2
Haryana	Sirsa	13.6	14.1	12.1	5.4	5.6	4.7
Haryana	Hisar	14.3	14.9	12.8	4.9	5.1	4.6
Haryana	Bhiwani	15.1	15.7	12.5	4.1	4.2	3.3
Haryana	Rohtak	13.2	14.8	10.7	3.9	4.1	3.5
Haryana	Jhajjar	15.2	15.9	13.2	4.2	4.3	4.1
Haryana	Mahendragarh	18.2	19.0	13.4	6.0	6.3	4.3
Haryana	Rewari	15.3	16.3	12.5	4.4	4.6	3.7
Haryana	Gurgaon	14.8	18.0	13.0	5.4	6.6	4.8
Haryana	Mewat	21.5	22.0	17.0	10.2	10.5	7.6
Haryana	Faridabad	14.6	18.6	13.3	5.1	6.8	4.5
Haryana	Palwal	18.1	19.3	13.8	6.6	7.1	4.8
Himachal Pradesh	Chamba	9.0	9.2	5.6	3.2	3.2	2.9
Himachal Pradesh	Kangra	6.3	6.3	6.9	1.7	1.7	1.6
Himachal Pradesh	Lahul & Spiti	6.8	6.8	0.0	3.7	3.7	0.0
Himachal Pradesh	Kullu	11.7	11.9	9.5	4.3	4.4	3.8
Himachal Pradesh	Mandi	11.3	11.5	9.1	3.5	3.6	3.3
Himachal Pradesh	Hamirpur	6.7	6.7	5.6	1.2	1.2	1.2
Himachal Pradesh	Una	5.7	5.6	6.7	1.3	1.2	2.0
Himachal Pradesh	Bilaspur	7.7	7.8	6.5	1.4	1.4	1.3
Himachal Pradesh	Solan	9.3	9.2	10.1	3.4	3.1	4.8
Himachal Pradesh	Sirmaur	8.4	8.5	7.9	2.3	2.2	2.6
Himachal Pradesh	Shimla	8.4	8.7	7.4	3.1	3.0	3.4
Himachal Pradesh	Kinnaur	12.1	12.1	0.0	5.5	5.5	0.0
Jharkhand	Garhwa	16.3	16.5	12.5	4.9	5.0	2.9
Jharkhand	Chatra	20.0	20.6	12.1	6.1	6.3	2.6
Jharkhand	Kodarma	23.1	24.3	18.2	4.6	4.8	3.5
Jharkhand	Giridih	24.9	25.9	15.1	6.7	7.0	3.5
Jharkhand	Deoghar	25.5	27.5	15.9	7.2	7.9	4.2
Jharkhand	Godda	22.9	23.3	15.8	5.5	5.6	4.4
Jharkhand	Sahibganj	21.5	22.1	17.7	6.1	6.4	4.4
Jharkhand	Pakur	22.8	23.2	17.6	7.7	7.9	6.2
Jharkhand	Dhanbad	15.8	17.6	14.5	4.9	5.0	4.8
Jharkhand	Bokaro	16.6	19.0	13.8	4.9	5.5	4.1
Jharkhand	Lohardaga	13.0	13.4	10.3	3.9	4.1	2.5
Jharkhand	Purbi Singhbhum	15.0	18.9	11.7	2.8	3.0	2.5
Jharkhand	Palamu	16.2	16.9	11.4	5.2	5.5	3.2
Jharkhand	Latehar	15.1	15.2	12.9	5.4	5.5	4.0
Jharkhand	Hazaribagh	17.7	19.0	10.7	4.2	4.5	2.4
Jharkhand	Ramgarh	14.7	16.0	13.0	3.5	3.7	3.2
Jharkhand	Dumka	24.9	25.5	16.1	7.4	7.7	4.5
Jharkhand	Jamtara	23.5	24.4	15.6	6.7	7.0	3.9
Jharkhand	Ranchi	12.7	13.7	11.3	3.6	3.8	3.3
Jharkhand	Khunti	14.0	14.2	12.3	4.0	4.1	3.4

State	District	Girls (10-17)			Boys (10-20)		
		Total	Rural	Urban	Total	Rural	Urban
Jharkhand	Gumla	12.4	12.6	9.1	3.7	3.8	2.5
Jharkhand	Simdega	9.4	9.4	9.4	2.6	2.7	1.8
Jharkhand	Pashchimi Singhbhum	14.4	14.9	11.1	3.8	4.0	2.8
Jharkhand	Saraikela-Kharsawan	17.0	16.9	17.4	4.1	4.1	4.0
Jammu & Kashmir	Kupwara	6.3	6.3	6.7	2.9	2.9	2.8
Jammu & Kashmir	Badgam	4.2	4.1	4.4	2.0	2.0	2.2
Jammu & Kashmir	Leh(Ladakh)	5.1	5.4	4.4	3.3	3.3	3.3
Jammu & Kashmir	Kargil	5.9	5.9	5.9	3.1	3.0	3.7
Jammu & Kashmir	Punch	11.9	12.1	8.6	3.9	4.1	2.1
Jammu & Kashmir	Rajouri	11.7	12.0	7.3	3.6	3.6	3.4
Jammu & Kashmir	Kathua	9.1	9.3	7.8	2.5	2.5	2.5
Jammu & Kashmir	Baramula	5.6	5.5	6.1	2.6	2.4	3.7
Jammu & Kashmir	Bandipore	5.9	6.0	5.3	2.7	2.8	2.7
Jammu & Kashmir	Srinagar	6.1	5.0	6.1	2.9	2.2	3.0
Jammu & Kashmir	Ganderbal	7.1	7.3	6.3	3.5	3.7	2.7
Jammu & Kashmir	Pulwama	5.9	6.0	5.2	2.9	2.9	2.8
Jammu & Kashmir	Shupiyan	7.0	7.1	4.6	3.4	3.5	2.3
Jammu & Kashmir	Anantnag	5.8	6.1	4.8	2.6	2.7	2.2
Jammu & Kashmir	Kulgam	6.4	6.5	6.0	3.0	3.0	2.9
Jammu & Kashmir	Doda	11.1	11.3	8.3	4.4	4.5	2.9
Jammu & Kashmir	Ramban	12.0	12.1	10.4	4.8	4.9	2.7
Jammu & Kashmir	Kishtwar	10.0	10.2	6.5	4.7	4.8	3.0
Jammu & Kashmir	Udhampur	11.3	11.7	9.2	3.1	3.1	3.4
Jammu & Kashmir	Reasi	11.7	11.9	9.4	4.1	4.2	3.1
Jammu & Kashmir	Jammu	8.6	8.7	8.6	2.8	2.6	3.0
Jammu & Kashmir	Samba	8.1	8.2	7.5	2.3	2.3	2.7
Karnataka	Belgaum	21.0	22.4	16.8	3.3	3.4	3.1
Karnataka	Bagalkot	24.4	26.3	20.3	4.2	4.4	3.7
Karnataka	Bijapur	22.3	23.5	18.4	3.9	3.9	3.7
Karnataka	Bidar	15.3	15.6	14.3	3.4	3.4	3.4
Karnataka	Raichur	20.1	21.2	16.8	4.3	4.6	3.7
Karnataka	Koppal	19.8	20.5	16.7	3.7	3.7	3.4
Karnataka	Gadag	16.8	17.8	15.1	2.4	2.4	2.4
Karnataka	Dharwad	15.5	18.1	13.4	2.2	2.0	2.3
Karnataka	Uttara Kannada	10.0	10.0	9.7	2.0	2.0	2.0
Karnataka	Haveri	13.5	14.1	11.6	2.0	2.0	2.0
Karnataka	Bellary	20.0	20.4	19.1	4.0	4.0	3.9
Karnataka	Chitradurga	17.3	17.7	15.5	3.4	3.4	3.6
Karnataka	Davanagere	17.3	17.0	17.9	3.8	3.6	4.3
Karnataka	Shimoga	11.3	11.0	11.8	2.2	2.1	2.5
Karnataka	Udupi	7.4	6.9	8.5	2.0	1.8	2.4
Karnataka	Chikmagalur	12.9	13.3	11.7	2.9	3.0	2.3
Karnataka	Tumkur	15.8	16.5	13.5	2.3	2.2	2.7
Karnataka	Bangalore	17.8	22.1	17.4	4.3	4.1	4.3
Karnataka	Mandya	19.2	20.0	15.8	3.2	3.3	2.7

State	District	Girls (10-17)			Boys (10-20)		
		Total	Rural	Urban	Total	Rural	Urban
Karnataka	Hassan	14.6	15.4	12.1	3.3	3.4	2.9
Karnataka	Dakshina Kannada	7.9	8.1	7.8	1.7	1.7	1.7
Karnataka	Kodagu	11.5	11.7	10.5	2.2	2.2	2.4
Karnataka	Mysore	18.6	20.9	15.4	3.0	2.9	3.2
Karnataka	Channarayana	21.9	23.2	16.0	3.0	3.0	2.8
Karnataka	Gulbarga	16.8	17.6	15.2	3.6	3.6	3.7
Karnataka	Yadgir	20.2	21.4	15.2	4.7	4.9	3.5
Karnataka	Kolar	16.6	17.5	14.9	3.2	3.3	3.2
Karnataka	Chikkaballapura	19.2	19.9	17.1	3.8	3.9	3.2
Karnataka	Bangalore Rural	17.3	17.5	16.9	2.7	2.7	2.9
Karnataka	Ramanagara	16.7	17.3	14.9	2.4	2.1	3.3
Kerala	Kasaragod	9.1	8.5	10.2	1.0	1.0	1.1
Kerala	Kannur	9.6	9.2	9.9	1.3	1.3	1.3
Kerala	Wayanad	10.4	10.4	10.7	1.5	1.5	1.4
Kerala	Kozhikode	11.1	12.3	10.5	1.1	1.2	1.1
Kerala	Malappuram	17.9	18.8	16.8	1.4	1.3	1.4
Kerala	Palakkad	14.0	14.2	13.4	1.3	1.3	1.1
Kerala	Thrissur	8.0	8.7	7.7	1.0	1.1	1.0
Kerala	Emakulam	5.8	4.9	6.3	1.2	1.0	1.3
Kerala	Idukki	6.8	6.8	7.0	1.4	1.4	1.3
Kerala	Kottayam	4.6	4.5	4.9	1.3	1.2	1.4
Kerala	Alappuzha	6.9	6.6	7.1	1.6	1.6	1.6
Kerala	Pathanamthitta	6.1	6.2	5.6	1.8	1.8	1.7
Kerala	Kollam	8.4	8.5	8.4	1.5	1.6	1.4
Kerala	Thiruvananthapuram	8.8	9.5	8.1	1.6	1.6	1.6
Lakshadweep	Lakshadweep	6.8	7.3	6.6	1.5	1.6	1.5
Maharashtra	Nandurbar	17.2	17.7	14.2	6.0	6.7	3.3
Maharashtra	Dhule	19.4	20.9	15.6	7.0	7.7	5.3
Maharashtra	Jalgaon	20.1	21.0	18.2	5.7	5.6	6.0
Maharashtra	Buldana	18.5	19.3	15.5	3.7	3.8	3.3
Maharashtra	Akola	13.7	14.7	12.1	3.6	3.9	3.2
Maharashtra	Washim	16.6	17.0	14.8	3.5	3.4	4.0
Maharashtra	Amravati	10.3	10.7	9.5	3.0	2.9	3.0
Maharashtra	Wardha	8.4	8.7	7.6	1.4	1.4	1.5
Maharashtra	Nagpur	11.3	12.2	10.9	4.1	4.1	4.1
Maharashtra	Bhandara	10.6	10.8	9.4	4.8	4.9	4.4
Maharashtra	Gondiya	10.0	10.1	9.6	3.7	3.6	3.7
Maharashtra	Gadchiroli	12.8	13.2	9.5	3.4	3.5	2.7
Maharashtra	Chandrapur	12.2	12.3	12.2	4.4	4.1	5.0
Maharashtra	Yavatmal	14.6	15.4	11.9	3.3	3.3	3.1
Maharashtra	Nanded	19.5	20.4	17.0	5.4	5.5	4.9
Maharashtra	Hingoli	21.5	22.3	17.8	5.1	5.3	4.1
Maharashtra	Parbhani	20.9	21.8	19.0	6.2	6.1	6.3
Maharashtra	Jalna	24.4	25.3	21.1	7.5	7.6	7.2
Maharashtra	Aurangabad	21.9	23.1	20.5	4.4	4.3	4.5

State	District	Girls (10-17)			Boys (10-20)		
		Total	Rural	Urban	Total	Rural	Urban
Maharashtra	Nashik	18.3	20.1	15.6	4.5	4.9	3.8
Maharashtra	Thane	16.7	18.2	16.2	6.6	5.9	6.8
Maharashtra	Mumbai Suburban	12.6	0.0	12.6	5.3	0.0	5.3
Maharashtra	Mumbai	12.0	0.0	12.0	5.9	0.0	5.9
Maharashtra	Raigarh	15.4	15.4	15.5	5.3	5.3	5.2
Maharashtra	Pune	19.4	20.8	18.4	5.4	4.9	5.8
Maharashtra	Ahmadnagar	21.8	22.5	18.8	5.4	5.6	4.6
Maharashtra	Bid	21.1	21.8	18.7	3.8	3.9	3.6
Maharashtra	Latur	19.7	20.2	18.6	6.6	6.6	6.5
Maharashtra	Osmanabad	18.3	18.7	16.3	3.7	3.7	3.6
Maharashtra	Solapur	20.9	22.7	17.3	4.0	4.0	3.8
Maharashtra	Satara	18.2	18.7	16.2	6.0	6.1	5.3
Maharashtra	Ratnagiri	6.3	5.9	8.4	1.6	1.5	2.5
Maharashtra	Sindhudurg	9.0	8.7	10.7	4.1	4.2	3.9
Maharashtra	Kolhapur	19.6	19.9	19.0	5.8	5.9	5.6
Maharashtra	Sangli	20.9	20.8	21.2	5.5	5.0	7.1
Manipur	Senapati	5.8	5.8	8.4	2.0	2.0	2.9
Manipur	Tamenglong	7.5	7.5	7.7	3.0	3.1	2.4
Manipur	Churachandpur	9.3	9.2	9.9	3.0	3.0	3.6
Manipur	Bishnupur	9.0	8.6	9.7	3.4	3.3	3.6
Manipur	Thoubal	9.6	10.0	8.9	3.1	3.2	2.9
Manipur	Imphal West	9.2	9.5	8.9	3.5	3.5	3.6
Manipur	Imphal East	9.8	10.1	9.2	3.1	3.1	3.2
Manipur	Ukhrul	6.5	6.5	6.0	2.3	2.3	2.5
Manipur	Chandel	8.7	8.4	11.1	3.1	3.2	2.8
Meghalaya	West Garo Hills	15.2	16.0	10.2	4.0	4.1	3.3
Meghalaya	East Garo Hills	13.1	13.9	9.2	3.7	3.8	2.9
Meghalaya	South Garo Hills	13.4	13.7	11.1	3.5	3.6	2.8
Meghalaya	West Khasi Hills	13.5	14.1	9.6	3.4	3.5	2.6
Meghalaya	Ribhoi	12.5	12.8	9.4	3.1	3.1	2.5
Meghalaya	East Khasi Hills	9.6	11.4	7.4	2.8	3.1	2.4
Meghalaya	Jaintia Hills	15.3	15.8	9.1	4.5	4.7	2.6
Mizoram	Mamit	12.6	13.2	9.9	3.4	3.7	2.2
Mizoram	Kolasib	10.5	12.3	9.0	3.6	3.9	3.2
Mizoram	Aizawl	7.5	8.5	7.3	2.6	2.6	2.6
Mizoram	Champhai	10.5	11.4	9.1	3.4	3.6	3.0
Mizoram	Serchhip	7.4	7.9	6.9	2.7	2.6	2.8
Mizoram	Lunglei	10.5	12.1	8.3	3.3	3.7	2.8
Mizoram	Lawngtlai	14.5	16.1	7.3	5.9	6.6	2.3
Mizoram	Saiha	10.7	12.4	8.7	3.6	3.6	3.6
Madhya Pradesh	Sheopur	20.8	21.9	15.2	8.3	8.9	4.7
Madhya Pradesh	Morena	17.2	17.8	15.0	5.7	6.0	4.7
Madhya Pradesh	Bhind	17.0	17.6	15.2	5.3	5.5	4.8
Madhya Pradesh	Gwalior	13.9	17.2	11.7	4.4	5.6	3.5
Madhya Pradesh	Datia	16.5	17.9	12.0	4.8	5.3	3.2

State	District	Girls (10-17)			Boys (10-20)		
		Total	Rural	Urban	Total	Rural	Urban
Madhya Pradesh	Shivpuri	19.5	20.8	13.1	6.9	7.4	4.2
Madhya Pradesh	Tikamgarh	21.1	22.4	15.1	9.3	10.0	5.8
Madhya Pradesh	Chhatarpur	17.4	18.9	12.2	6.6	7.2	4.2
Madhya Pradesh	Panna	14.1	14.6	10.6	4.6	4.9	2.8
Madhya Pradesh	Sagar	14.8	16.5	10.7	4.3	4.9	2.8
Madhya Pradesh	Damoh	17.2	18.5	12.1	5.6	6.1	3.5
Madhya Pradesh	Satna	14.4	15.1	11.7	5.6	5.9	4.4
Madhya Pradesh	Rewa	14.6	15.2	11.3	5.4	5.7	4.0
Madhya Pradesh	Umaria	16.8	18.0	10.9	6.5	7.2	3.5
Madhya Pradesh	Neemuch	23.7	27.0	15.3	10.9	13.0	5.8
Madhya Pradesh	Mandsaur	24.3	26.7	14.6	10.2	11.4	5.2
Madhya Pradesh	Ratlam	21.2	24.2	13.4	9.2	11.2	4.1
Madhya Pradesh	Ujjain	22.9	28.0	14.2	8.5	11.2	4.0
Madhya Pradesh	Shajapur	24.9	27.0	15.8	10.2	11.4	5.0
Madhya Pradesh	Dewas	19.0	20.3	15.7	6.7	7.5	4.6
Madhya Pradesh	Dhar	18.1	18.5	16.3	7.8	8.5	5.2
Madhya Pradesh	Indore	17.7	23.7	15.2	5.9	8.5	4.9
Madhya Pradesh	Khargone (West Nimar)	15.3	16.0	11.5	6.0	6.6	3.2
Madhya Pradesh	Barwani	20.0	21.1	13.0	10.3	11.5	3.7
Madhya Pradesh	Rajgarh	24.6	26.6	15.6	10.0	11.1	5.2
Madhya Pradesh	Vidisha	15.1	15.8	12.6	4.6	4.8	4.0
Madhya Pradesh	Bhopal	14.5	16.6	13.9	4.9	5.7	4.7
Madhya Pradesh	Sehore	17.6	18.8	12.1	5.8	6.3	3.4
Madhya Pradesh	Raisen	13.8	14.3	12.0	3.7	3.9	3.1
Madhya Pradesh	Betul	11.4	11.9	9.1	3.6	3.8	2.6
Madhya Pradesh	Harda	14.6	15.9	9.7	3.7	4.0	2.6
Madhya Pradesh	Hoshangabad	11.8	12.7	9.4	3.3	3.4	3.0
Madhya Pradesh	Katni	15.8	17.0	10.6	5.8	6.3	3.4
Madhya Pradesh	Jabalpur	12.9	15.1	11.2	4.2	4.4	4.0
Madhya Pradesh	Narsimhapur	15.3	16.4	10.7	4.0	4.2	2.9
Madhya Pradesh	Dindori	16.8	17.0	13.4	5.9	6.0	4.0
Madhya Pradesh	Mandla	14.0	14.9	7.9	4.9	5.3	2.0
Madhya Pradesh	Chhindwara	10.6	11.3	8.1	3.2	3.4	2.7
Madhya Pradesh	Seoni	10.5	10.8	7.9	2.8	2.9	2.1
Madhya Pradesh	Balaghat	8.9	9.1	7.8	2.8	2.9	2.4
Madhya Pradesh	Guna	20.1	21.9	14.7	7.8	8.9	4.5
Madhya Pradesh	Ashoknagar	18.7	19.9	13.3	7.0	7.7	4.0
Madhya Pradesh	Shahdol	18.1	20.0	10.6	7.2	8.2	3.4
Madhya Pradesh	Anuppur	16.0	17.8	11.4	5.5	6.5	3.3
Madhya Pradesh	Sidhi	17.3	17.8	11.9	6.5	6.7	3.6
Madhya Pradesh	Singrauli	18.5	19.7	13.4	7.8	8.4	5.3
Madhya Pradesh	Jhabua	19.6	20.1	13.9	11.0	11.7	4.4
Madhya Pradesh	Alirajpur	13.7	13.8	11.9	7.7	8.0	4.0
Madhya Pradesh	Khandwa (East Nimar)	14.3	15.1	11.0	4.0	4.3	2.6
Madhya Pradesh	Burhanpur	16.1	17.7	12.9	3.9	4.5	2.5

State	District	Girls (10-17)			Boys (10-20)		
		Total	Rural	Urban	Total	Rural	Urban
Nagaland	Mon	6.6	6.6	6.8	2.1	2.1	2.0
Nagaland	Mokokchung	5.6	5.5	5.9	1.8	1.8	1.7
Nagaland	Zunheboto	5.4	5.8	4.1	1.9	2.1	1.3
Nagaland	Wokha	5.8	5.9	5.4	1.7	1.8	1.5
Nagaland	Dimapur	10.0	9.7	10.3	2.6	2.6	2.7
Nagaland	Phek	7.5	7.5	7.2	2.4	2.5	1.6
Nagaland	Tuensang	7.9	7.8	8.4	2.6	2.4	3.4
Nagaland	Longleng	9.5	10.0	7.1	3.3	3.6	1.9
Nagaland	Kiphire	11.6	12.6	8.5	3.8	4.4	2.0
Nagaland	Kohima	6.3	6.6	5.9	2.2	2.4	1.9
Nagaland	Peren	9.1	9.1	9.5	2.8	2.8	3.1
Odisha	Bargarh	11.4	11.3	12.2	2.2	2.2	2.4
Odisha	Jharsuguda	9.6	8.6	11.3	2.4	2.2	2.8
Odisha	Sambalpur	10.5	9.9	12.1	2.5	2.3	3.0
Odisha	Debagarh	11.6	11.7	11.1	2.3	2.3	2.0
Odisha	Sundargarh	10.8	10.6	11.1	2.9	2.9	2.9
Odisha	Kendujhar	13.2	13.4	12.5	3.2	3.3	2.7
Odisha	Mayurbhanj	17.0	17.4	12.2	3.5	3.6	2.2
Odisha	Baleshwar	14.1	14.2	13.0	2.3	2.3	2.3
Odisha	Bhadrak	7.9	7.6	10.0	1.9	1.8	2.2
Odisha	Kendrapara	7.1	7.1	6.6	1.9	1.9	1.9
Odisha	Jagatsinghapur	7.1	6.7	9.6	1.9	1.9	1.9
Odisha	Cuttack	10.1	10.3	9.6	2.1	1.9	2.7
Odisha	Jajapur	8.2	8.0	10.0	2.3	2.3	2.4
Odisha	Dhenkanal	13.2	13.5	10.1	2.4	2.5	2.1
Odisha	Anugul	14.6	14.9	13.2	3.0	3.1	2.7
Odisha	Nayagarh	16.6	16.8	13.9	2.3	2.3	2.6
Odisha	Khordha	11.0	10.9	11.1	2.4	2.2	2.7
Odisha	Puri	7.7	7.2	10.3	2.0	1.9	2.6
Odisha	Ganjam	14.7	15.2	12.7	2.1	2.1	2.1
Odisha	Gajapati	14.6	14.9	13.1	3.4	3.6	2.0
Odisha	Kandhamal	13.0	13.3	10.7	3.5	3.6	2.4
Odisha	Baudh	13.6	13.8	9.3	2.5	2.6	1.7
Odisha	Subarnapur	11.1	11.1	11.3	2.1	2.1	2.3
Odisha	Balangir	12.0	12.0	11.5	3.1	3.0	3.5
Odisha	Nuapada	12.9	12.9	12.6	3.4	3.5	3.4
Odisha	Kalahandi	13.0	13.3	10.3	3.5	3.6	2.5
Odisha	Rayagada	16.7	17.1	14.7	4.8	5.1	3.2
Odisha	Nabarangapur	19.4	19.8	14.6	6.7	6.9	3.8
Odisha	Koraput	20.2	21.4	13.9	7.9	8.7	3.7
Odisha	Malkangiri	19.7	20.0	16.0	6.3	6.4	4.3
Puducherry	Yanam	14.2	0.0	14.2	1.5	0.0	1.5
Puducherry	Puducherry	9.7	11.0	9.1	2.1	2.1	2.2
Puducherry	Mahe	7.2	0.0	7.2	1.8	0.0	1.8
Puducherry	Karaikal	8.7	8.3	9.2	1.9	1.9	2.0

State	District	Girls (10-17)			Boys (10-20)		
		Total	Rural	Urban	Total	Rural	Urban
Punjab	Gurdaspur	9.0	9.1	8.7	3.3	3.3	3.2
Punjab	Kapurthala	9.3	9.2	9.3	3.8	3.9	3.7
Punjab	Jalandhar	9.1	8.1	10.0	3.6	3.2	4.0
Punjab	Hoshiarpur	8.0	7.9	8.7	2.9	2.9	3.2
Punjab	Shahid Bhagat Singh Nagar	7.5	7.1	8.9	2.5	2.4	3.0
Punjab	Fatehgarh Sahib	9.4	9.3	9.7	3.7	3.5	4.2
Punjab	Ludhiana	9.9	9.0	10.5	3.7	3.3	4.0
Punjab	Moga	9.9	9.9	10.2	3.4	3.3	3.4
Punjab	Firozpur	11.2	11.5	10.4	4.2	4.3	4.0
Punjab	Muktsar	10.6	10.8	10.1	3.6	3.7	3.2
Punjab	Faridkot	11.2	11.2	11.1	3.8	3.9	3.7
Punjab	Bathinda	11.4	11.2	11.8	4.4	4.5	4.2
Punjab	Mansa	11.4	11.6	10.7	4.7	4.7	4.6
Punjab	Patiala	10.9	11.5	10.0	4.1	4.4	3.7
Punjab	Amritsar	10.8	11.2	10.3	3.9	4.1	3.6
Punjab	Tarn Taran	11.7	11.9	10.8	4.5	4.5	4.2
Punjab	Rupnagar	9.3	9.3	9.2	3.6	3.6	3.6
Punjab	Sahibzada Ajit Singh Nagar	10.3	10.9	9.8	4.0	4.2	3.9
Punjab	Sangrur	10.7	11.3	9.5	4.0	4.3	3.6
Punjab	Barnala	10.8	10.6	11.2	4.6	4.4	5.0
Rajasthan	Ganganagar	13.1	13.7	11.5	4.0	4.3	3.1
Rajasthan	Hanumangarh	16.1	16.6	13.7	5.7	6.1	4.2
Rajasthan	Bikaner	21.9	24.1	16.9	8.3	9.6	5.3
Rajasthan	Churu	20.8	22.1	17.6	7.6	8.3	5.7
Rajasthan	Jhunjhunun	16.8	17.6	13.9	4.8	5.1	3.9
Rajasthan	Alwar	22.3	23.7	14.9	9.9	10.8	5.4
Rajasthan	Bharatpur	20.0	21.4	14.5	8.3	9.0	5.4
Rajasthan	Dhaulpur	18.4	19.5	14.1	6.4	6.9	4.5
Rajasthan	Karauli	24.0	24.7	19.8	9.8	10.1	7.5
Rajasthan	Sawai Madhopur	24.0	25.7	17.0	9.6	10.4	5.9
Rajasthan	Dausa	22.5	23.4	15.6	10.1	10.7	5.9
Rajasthan	Jaipur	19.3	24.5	13.6	8.1	11.3	4.7
Rajasthan	Sikar	18.4	19.1	16.0	6.7	7.0	5.5
Rajasthan	Nagaur	22.1	23.2	17.5	9.1	9.9	6.1
Rajasthan	Jodhpur	20.6	22.8	15.7	7.7	9.0	5.0
Rajasthan	Jaisalmer	20.6	21.0	17.9	5.4	5.5	4.6
Rajasthan	Barmer	19.4	19.6	16.6	6.4	6.5	4.2
Rajasthan	Jalor	17.2	17.5	14.1	5.6	5.8	3.8
Rajasthan	Sirohi	15.4	16.3	11.2	4.2	4.7	2.3
Rajasthan	Pali	18.1	19.0	14.5	5.8	6.3	3.9
Rajasthan	Ajmer	28.2	34.7	16.7	13.5	17.8	6.0
Rajasthan	Tonk	28.6	32.8	15.4	13.4	15.5	5.8
Rajasthan	Bundi	26.4	28.9	15.5	10.7	12.1	4.5
Rajasthan	Bhilwara	36.9	40.0	24.4	20.2	22.8	10.5
Rajasthan	Rajsamand	29.9	31.8	19.2	12.7	13.9	6.7

State	District	Girls (10-17)			Boys (10-20)		
		Total	Rural	Urban	Total	Rural	Urban
Rajasthan	Dungarpur	15.9	15.9	15.3	5.6	5.7	4.5
Rajasthan	Banswara	19.3	18.9	24.6	8.1	8.1	7.6
Rajasthan	Chittaurgarh	35.1	38.4	19.7	17.5	20.0	6.8
Rajasthan	Kota	17.1	20.2	14.8	5.3	6.8	4.3
Rajasthan	Baran	20.6	21.8	15.7	6.6	7.2	4.4
Rajasthan	Jhalawar	29.7	32.0	16.8	12.4	13.9	4.5
Rajasthan	Udaipur	21.0	22.4	14.0	7.9	8.7	3.9
Rajasthan	Pratapgarh	20.7	21.1	15.5	8.4	8.7	4.5
Sikkim	North District	11.2	11.6	8.5	3.8	4.0	1.9
Sikkim	West District	13.0	13.2	8.1	4.5	4.6	2.7
Sikkim	South District	12.9	13.4	9.6	4.1	4.3	3.0
Sikkim	East District	12.0	12.7	10.9	3.9	4.0	3.8
Tamil Nadu	Thiruvallur	14.7	16.2	13.8	3.2	3.1	3.2
Tamil Nadu	Chennai	12.9	0.0	12.9	3.2	0.0	3.2
Tamil Nadu	Kancheepuram	12.8	12.7	12.9	2.8	2.6	2.9
Tamil Nadu	Vellore	14.1	15.4	12.3	2.2	2.1	2.3
Tamil Nadu	Tiruvannamalai	14.3	14.7	12.3	2.3	2.3	2.3
Tamil Nadu	Viluppuram	14.2	14.6	12.2	2.3	2.3	2.2
Tamil Nadu	Salem	16.0	18.2	13.9	2.0	2.0	1.9
Tamil Nadu	Namakkal	13.1	13.8	12.1	2.0	2.1	1.9
Tamil Nadu	Erode	13.9	15.5	12.5	2.3	2.4	2.2
Tamil Nadu	The Nilgiris	11.8	12.7	11.1	2.3	2.5	2.1
Tamil Nadu	Dindigul	14.7	15.9	12.5	2.7	2.9	2.3
Tamil Nadu	Karur	12.5	13.5	11.0	1.8	1.8	1.8
Tamil Nadu	Tiruchirappalli	10.7	11.6	9.8	1.8	1.7	1.9
Tamil Nadu	Perambalur	14.6	15.0	12.2	2.3	2.4	2.1
Tamil Nadu	Ariyalur	11.4	11.6	9.4	2.0	2.0	2.1
Tamil Nadu	Cuddalore	12.3	13.0	10.8	2.2	2.2	2.2
Tamil Nadu	Nagapattinam	9.0	8.9	9.3	1.8	1.8	2.0
Tamil Nadu	Thiruvallur	8.6	8.3	9.9	2.3	2.3	2.3
Tamil Nadu	Thanjavur	8.8	8.5	9.4	1.8	1.7	1.9
Tamil Nadu	Pudukkottai	9.3	9.0	10.2	1.6	1.6	1.7
Tamil Nadu	Sivaganga	11.5	11.7	10.9	2.2	2.2	2.3
Tamil Nadu	Madurai	13.3	15.2	12.1	2.4	2.5	2.3
Tamil Nadu	Theni	15.0	16.5	13.8	2.4	2.5	2.3
Tamil Nadu	Virudhunagar	11.2	12.1	10.4	2.1	2.2	1.9
Tamil Nadu	Ramanathapuram	12.8	12.9	12.6	2.6	2.6	2.6
Tamil Nadu	Thoothukkudi	8.2	8.9	7.5	1.6	1.7	1.6
Tamil Nadu	Tirunelveli	9.6	9.4	9.8	1.9	1.8	1.9
Tamil Nadu	Kanniyakumari	7.3	8.4	7.0	2.0	2.3	1.9
Tamil Nadu	Dharmapuri	17.8	18.5	14.4	2.3	2.3	2.1
Tamil Nadu	Krishnagiri	17.8	18.5	15.1	2.5	2.6	2.5
Tamil Nadu	Coimbatore	12.2	13.3	11.8	2.4	2.5	2.4
Tamil Nadu	Tiruppur	14.4	13.4	14.9	2.7	2.5	2.8
Tripura	West Tripura	19.4	20.3	17.8	3.9	4.3	3.1

State	District	Girls (10-17)			Boys (10-20)		
		Total	Rural	Urban	Total	Rural	Urban
Tripura	South Tripura	21.8	21.9	21.1	4.9	5.1	3.4
Tripura	Dhalai	19.3	19.4	18.2	5.1	5.3	2.7
Tripura	North Tripura	16.1	16.8	12.6	3.4	3.6	2.3
Uttar Pradesh	Saharanpur	9.1	9.4	8.6	2.8	2.9	2.5
Uttar Pradesh	Muzaffarnagar	9.8	10.2	8.9	3.1	3.3	2.6
Uttar Pradesh	Bijnor	8.9	9.3	7.6	2.8	2.9	2.4
Uttar Pradesh	Moradabad	10.8	11.7	8.9	4.0	4.4	3.0
Uttar Pradesh	Rampur	9.5	10.1	7.7	3.1	3.4	2.2
Uttar Pradesh	Jyotiba Phule Nagar	11.6	12.1	9.9	3.8	4.0	2.9
Uttar Pradesh	Meerut	11.7	12.5	11.0	3.9	4.1	3.7
Uttar Pradesh	Baghpat	12.0	12.5	10.1	3.8	4.0	3.1
Uttar Pradesh	Ghaziabad	13.2	13.3	13.2	5.1	4.9	5.2
Uttar Pradesh	Gautam Buddha Nagar	16.1	18.2	14.4	5.7	6.7	4.9
Uttar Pradesh	Bulandshahr	12.4	12.9	10.7	3.8	3.9	3.4
Uttar Pradesh	Aligarh	14.9	16.2	12.4	5.2	5.6	4.2
Uttar Pradesh	Mahamaya Nagar	14.5	15.1	12.1	4.8	5.1	3.9
Uttar Pradesh	Mathura	18.4	19.7	14.9	6.8	7.4	5.2
Uttar Pradesh	Agra	15.3	17.5	12.6	5.9	6.8	4.8
Uttar Pradesh	Firozabad	14.1	14.4	13.4	4.9	5.0	4.7
Uttar Pradesh	Mainpuri	13.3	13.6	11.9	4.4	4.5	4.0
Uttar Pradesh	Budaun	16.9	18.1	11.5	7.2	7.8	4.1
Uttar Pradesh	Bareilly	13.3	13.9	12.1	5.0	5.4	4.3
Uttar Pradesh	Pilibhit	11.5	12.0	9.1	4.1	4.3	3.1
Uttar Pradesh	Shahjahanpur	14.9	16.1	10.1	5.7	6.2	3.5
Uttar Pradesh	Kheri	14.1	14.5	11.3	5.1	5.3	3.8
Uttar Pradesh	Sitapur	14.1	14.6	10.1	5.3	5.5	3.6
Uttar Pradesh	Hardoi	13.7	14.1	11.1	4.7	4.9	3.7
Uttar Pradesh	Unnao	11.0	11.0	10.9	3.7	3.7	3.7
Uttar Pradesh	Lucknow	11.3	12.4	10.7	3.9	4.3	3.6
Uttar Pradesh	Rae Bareli	11.1	11.2	9.2	3.7	3.8	2.8
Uttar Pradesh	Farrukhabad	13.3	13.9	10.8	4.5	4.8	3.4
Uttar Pradesh	Kannauj	10.5	10.7	9.1	3.3	3.4	2.9
Uttar Pradesh	Etawah	13.3	13.9	11.1	3.9	4.0	3.4
Uttar Pradesh	Auraiya	11.1	11.2	10.4	3.1	3.1	3.0
Uttar Pradesh	Kanpur Dehat	10.4	10.5	9.9	3.3	3.3	3.1
Uttar Pradesh	Kanpur Nagar	9.5	9.4	9.6	3.3	2.8	3.6
Uttar Pradesh	Jalaun	14.2	15.2	11.5	4.2	4.5	3.2
Uttar Pradesh	Jhansi	16.8	19.6	12.8	5.5	6.7	3.7
Uttar Pradesh	Lalitpur	25.5	27.2	15.1	10.9	11.9	4.6
Uttar Pradesh	Hamirpur	12.2	12.6	10.6	3.3	3.4	2.8
Uttar Pradesh	Mahoba	14.8	15.6	12.0	4.8	5.1	3.6
Uttar Pradesh	Banda	12.8	13.3	10.3	3.3	3.4	2.4
Uttar Pradesh	Chitrakoot	13.4	13.7	10.5	3.8	4.0	2.7
Uttar Pradesh	Fatehpur	9.9	10.0	9.6	2.9	2.9	2.7
Uttar Pradesh	Pratapgarh	13.1	13.1	12.5	5.7	5.7	5.6

State	District	Girls (10-17)			Boys (10-20)		
		Total	Rural	Urban	Total	Rural	Urban
Uttar Pradesh	Kaushambi	11.5	11.7	9.7	4.0	4.0	3.3
Uttar Pradesh	Allahabad	14.0	14.9	10.9	5.3	5.7	4.0
Uttar Pradesh	Bara Banki	14.5	15.0	10.4	5.9	6.1	3.8
Uttar Pradesh	Faizabad	14.5	15.0	10.9	5.9	6.2	3.9
Uttar Pradesh	Ambedkar Nagar	11.7	12.1	8.6	4.6	4.8	3.2
Uttar Pradesh	Sultanpur	14.3	14.5	10.2	5.5	5.7	3.4
Uttar Pradesh	Bahraich	18.9	19.5	13.1	7.8	8.1	4.6
Uttar Pradesh	Shrawasti	25.5	25.9	14.7	11.2	11.4	5.5
Uttar Pradesh	Balrampur	17.5	18.2	10.0	7.9	8.2	3.7
Uttar Pradesh	Gonda	18.6	19.2	11.0	8.9	9.3	3.8
Uttar Pradesh	Siddharthnagar	16.7	17.0	12.5	7.4	7.6	4.5
Uttar Pradesh	Basti	13.6	13.8	9.5	5.3	5.4	3.1
Uttar Pradesh	Sant Kabir Nagar	12.0	12.2	9.7	4.3	4.4	3.5
Uttar Pradesh	Mahrajganj	17.1	17.4	11.9	7.2	7.3	4.6
Uttar Pradesh	Gorakhpur	13.5	14.0	11.5	5.1	5.3	4.5
Uttar Pradesh	Kushinagar	13.9	14.0	11.3	5.5	5.5	4.4
Uttar Pradesh	Deoria	12.2	12.3	10.9	4.5	4.5	4.0
Uttar Pradesh	Azamgarh	11.3	11.6	8.3	3.6	3.7	2.7
Uttar Pradesh	Mau	10.4	11.2	7.9	3.5	3.8	2.6
Uttar Pradesh	Ballia	13.7	13.9	12.1	5.3	5.4	4.6
Uttar Pradesh	Jaunpur	14.3	14.6	10.4	4.8	4.9	3.4
Uttar Pradesh	Ghazipur	14.1	14.4	10.7	4.7	4.8	3.2
Uttar Pradesh	Chandauli	17.7	18.4	12.5	5.8	6.1	3.7
Uttar Pradesh	Varanasi	13.6	16.0	10.4	4.1	4.7	3.3
Uttar Pradesh	Sant Ravidas Nagar (Bhadohi)	16.4	17.3	11.5	5.9	6.2	4.0
Uttar Pradesh	Mirzapur	16.6	17.2	12.5	5.4	5.7	4.0
Uttar Pradesh	Sonbhadra	16.4	17.5	10.9	5.2	5.6	3.4
Uttar Pradesh	Etah	14.2	14.6	11.7	4.9	5.1	3.8
Uttar Pradesh	Kanshiram Nagar	14.2	14.9	11.8	4.8	5.0	3.7
Uttarakhand	Uttarkashi	10.7	10.9	7.8	3.4	3.5	2.6
Uttarakhand	Chamoli	8.9	9.0	7.9	2.1	1.9	2.7
Uttarakhand	Rudraprayag	9.6	9.7	8.0	1.9	1.9	3.1
Uttarakhand	Tehri Garhwal	9.3	9.5	6.7	2.1	2.0	2.3
Uttarakhand	Dehradun	8.6	8.9	8.3	2.4	2.4	2.5
Uttarakhand	Garhwal	8.4	8.8	6.3	1.5	1.5	1.5
Uttarakhand	Pithoragarh	14.0	14.8	8.8	2.6	2.6	2.7
Uttarakhand	Bageshwar	12.2	12.4	7.9	1.9	2.0	1.4
Uttarakhand	Almora	8.5	8.8	5.5	1.2	1.1	1.8
Uttarakhand	Champawat	10.3	10.7	7.9	1.4	1.4	1.4
Uttarakhand	Nainital	8.9	9.3	8.2	2.2	2.1	2.4
Uttarakhand	Udham Singh Nagar	10.0	10.2	9.4	2.6	2.7	2.5
Uttarakhand	Hardwar	9.4	9.8	8.7	2.6	2.8	2.3
West Bengal	Darjiling	13.8	14.4	12.8	3.9	4.3	3.3
West Bengal	Jalpaiguri	15.8	15.6	16.4	3.6	3.6	3.5

State	District	Girls (10-17)			Boys (10-20)		
		Total	Rural	Urban	Total	Rural	Urban
West Bengal	Koch Bihar	21.7	22.2	16.7	4.1	4.2	3.4
West Bengal	Uttar Dinajpur	15.9	16.1	14.5	3.5	3.5	3.1
West Bengal	Dakshin Dinajpur	23.1	23.7	18.5	4.5	4.6	3.9
West Bengal	Maldah	22.7	22.9	21.1	4.9	5.0	4.3
West Bengal	Murshidabad	25.1	26.4	19.8	5.8	6.0	4.9
West Bengal	Birbhum	24.6	25.0	21.8	5.1	5.1	4.5
West Bengal	Bardhaman	21.9	24.7	17.5	4.5	4.8	4.0
West Bengal	Nadia	23.5	24.7	19.7	4.1	4.3	3.5
West Bengal	North Twenty Four Parganas	21.1	25.9	16.4	4.8	5.4	4.2
West Bengal	Hugli	19.5	21.2	16.3	3.9	4.0	3.8
West Bengal	Bankura	21.4	21.6	18.0	3.7	3.7	3.7
West Bengal	Puruliya	19.4	19.9	16.1	4.2	4.3	3.8
West Bengal	Haora	18.1	21.0	16.3	4.3	4.5	4.1
West Bengal	Kolkata	13.6	0.0	13.6	4.6	0.0	4.6
West Bengal	South Twenty Four Parganas	23.9	24.7	21.2	5.9	6.1	5.3
West Bengal	Paschim Medinipur	23.9	24.6	18.4	4.6	4.6	4.7
West Bengal	Purba Medinipur	23.9	24.3	20.9	3.9	3.9	3.5

Table A2: List of 70 districts with high incidence of child marriage out of total 640 districts in India (Census 2011)

State	Districts
Andhra Pradesh	Hyderabad
Andhra Pradesh	Rangareddy
Arunachal Pradesh	Lower Subansiri
Arunachal Pradesh	Kurung Kumey
Arunachal Pradesh	Changlang
Assam	Dhubri
Assam	Goalpara
Bihar	Nawada
Bihar	Jamui
Bihar	Gaya
Bihar	Arwal
Bihar	Sheohar
Bihar	Jehanabad
Gujarat	Ahmadabad
Gujarat	Anand
Gujarat	Dohad
Gujarat	Kheda
Gujarat	Valsad
Gujarat	Gandhinagar
Haryana	Mewat
Jharkhand	Pakur
Jharkhand	Deoghar
Jharkhand	Giridih
Karnataka	Davanagere
Karnataka	Bagalkot
Madhya Pradesh	Barwani
Madhya Pradesh	Jhabua
Madhya Pradesh	Mandsaur
Madhya Pradesh	Neemuch
Madhya Pradesh	Rajgarh
Madhya Pradesh	Ratlam
Madhya Pradesh	Shajapur
Madhya Pradesh	Tikamgarh
Madhya Pradesh	Ujjain
Maharashtra	Ahmadnagar
Maharashtra	Bhandara
Maharashtra	Chandrapur
Maharashtra	Dhule
Maharashtra	Jaigaon
Maharashtra	Jalna
Maharashtra	Kolhapur
Maharashtra	Latur
Maharashtra	Mumbai
Maharashtra	Mumbai Suburban

State	Districts
Maharashtra	Parbhani
Maharashtra	Pune
Maharashtra	Sangli
Maharashtra	Satara
Maharashtra	Sindhudurg
Maharashtra	Thane
Rajasthan	Ajmer
Rajasthan	Banswara
Rajasthan	Bhilwara
Rajasthan	Bundi
Rajasthan	Chittaurgarh
Rajasthan	Dausa
Rajasthan	Jaipur
Rajasthan	Jhalawar
Rajasthan	Karauli
Rajasthan	Nagaur
Rajasthan	Rajsamand
Rajasthan	Sawai Madhopur
Rajasthan	Tonk
Uttar Pradesh	Pratapgarh
Uttar Pradesh	Ghaziabad
Uttar Pradesh	Lalitpur
Uttar Pradesh	Shrawasti
West Bengal	Maldah
West Bengal	Dakshin Dinajpur
West Bengal	Birbhum

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