A STUDY ON MARRIED GIRL STUDENTS IN SALEM, TAMIL NADU

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ABSTRACT

Marriage is a universal phenomenon. Every nation has its own legal age for male and female to conduct the marriage. The legal marital age prohibits the conduction of the child marriage. In India 47 percent of women aged 20-24 years are married before the legal age of 18 years. In some parts of India, the married girls are continuing their studies even after the marriage. The mean age at marriage for the respondents works out to 19.73 years whereas for their husbands it works out to 28.15 years. The present paper analyzes the factors which are force them to marry early.

KEYWORDS: Early Marriage, Married Girl Students and Factors Influencing

INTRODUCTION

Adolescence period is a crucial period for every individual because lot of physical, social and emotional development takes place. During adolescence period individuals move toward physical and psychological maturity and economic independence, and acquire their adult identity. According to the World Health Organization (WHO), adolescents are individuals aged 10-19, while the broader term "youth" refers to the 15-24 age groups. About one-fifth of India's population is in the adolescent age group of 10–19 years. Adolescents constitute perhaps the healthiest group in the population, having the lowest mortality and morbidity compared with other population age groups. However, the period of adolescence, beginning with the onset of puberty, is a crucial transition into adulthood. Most adolescents go through adolescence with little or no knowledge of the body's impending physical and physiological changes. On the one hand in Indian culture, talking about sex is taboo. Consequently, little information is provided to adolescents about sexual health. Instead, young people learn more about sexual and reproductive health from uninformed sources, which results in the perpetuation of myths and misconceptions about puberty, menstruation, secondary sex characteristics, physiological and body changes. On the other hand, Indian culture promotes universal marriage. Arranged marriages are believed to have initially risen to prominence in the Indian subcontinent when the historical Vedic religion gradually gave way to classical Hinduism (the ca. 500 BCE period), substantially displacing other alternatives that were once more prominent (Monger, 2004).

In the urban culture of modern India, the differentiation between arranged and love marriage is increasingly seen as a "false dichotomy" with the emergence of phenomena such as "self-arranged marriages" and free-choice on the part of the prospective spouses (Seymour, 1999 and Pauwels, 2008). In India, nearly half of young women (45 %) marry before the legal age of 18 years and this figure rises to 53 percent in rural areas (Moore et al., 2009). In Tamil Nadu, 24 per cent of women aged 20-24 are married before the legal age of 18 and in Salem it works out to 42.9 percent (UNICEF, 2012). In some parts of India, the female adolescents get marry when they are pursuing their studies and this marriage either arranged by their parents or love marriage without the consent of their parents or love-cum-arranged marriage. After marriage also, the female adolescents pursue their studies along with all difficulties. On the one hand they have to look after their family life and on the other hand they have to take their studies. These life situations also pose several

problems to them. Hence in order to understand the social conditions of the girl students, the present research study "A Sociological Study on Married Girl Students in Salem" has been carried out.

METHODOLOGY

The universe for the present study is the girl students who are married in Salem. Similarly the students must pursue their degree courses in the regular mode either in the college or in the university. From the universe, there are three educational institutions have selected based upon its convenience and time. The selected educational institutions are Government College for Women, Salem, Sir Sakthi Kailash College of Arts and Science, Salem and Periyar University, Salem. From these three educational institutions, there are 80 respondents have been selected by using snow-ball sampling method. A structure interview schedule has been used as a tool of data collection. The interview schedule contains personal profile of the respondents, family particulars, age at marriage, particulars of the husbands and problems experienced by the respondents. Before collecting the data, the researchers established a good rapport with the respondents as well as created confidence among the respondents. The researchers spent 20 minutes to 30 minutes for each and every respondent. For analyzing the simple table, the researcher has used the percentile score, mean and standard deviation. For analyzing the two-way table, the researcher has used the chi-square techniques.

RESULTS

The age of the respondents is concerned, 37. 5 per cent of the respondents are belonging to the age group of 20 – 22 years, each 25 per cent of the respondents are belonging to the age group of 18 – 20 years and 22 – 24 years respectively, and remaining 12.5 per cent of the respondents are belonging to the age group of 24 – 26 years. It is concluded that nearly two-fifth of the respondents are belonging to the age group of 20 – 22 years. The mean age of the respondents works out to 22.64 years with a standard deviation of 2.85.

With regard to respondents faculty, 50 per cent of the respondents are doing undergraduate degrees like B.A., B.Sc., B.Com., more than two-fifth of the respondents (42.5 %) are doing postgraduate degrees like M.A., M.Sc., M.Com, and remaining 7.5 per cent of the respondents are doing research degrees like M. Phil., and Ph.D.. When the analysis made with regard to faculty, the science faculty occupies the highest place (57.5 %) than other faculties.

While studying the respondents father's level of education, nearly half of the respondents fathers (48.75 %) are completed primary level of education, nearly one-third of the respondents fathers (30 %) are illiterates, one-sixth of the respondents fathers (15 %) are completed middle school level and remaining 6.25 per cent of the respondents fathers are completed high school level education. The mean years of schooling works out to 3.57 with a standard deviation 4.13.

As far as respondents mother's level of education, more than half of the respondents mothers (52.5 %) are illiterates, more than one-fourth of the respondents mothers (52.50 %) are illiterates, more than one-fourth of the respondents mothers (27.50 %) have completed primary level of schooling, 12.5 % of the respondents mothers have completed middle school education, and remaining 7. 5 % per cent of the respondents mothers have completed high school education. The mean years of schooling works out to 2.04 with a standard deviation of 2.85.

With regard to respondents age at marriage, 27.50 per cent of the respondents got marriage at the age of 19 years, 26.25 per cent of the respondents got marriage at the age of 20 years, 22.50 per cent of the respondents got marriage at the age of 18 years, 10 per cent of the respondents got marriage at the age 21 years, 7.5 per cent of the respondents got marriage at the age of 23 years and remaining 6.25 per cent of the respondents got marriage at the age of 22 years. The mean age at marriage works to 19.73 with a standard deviation of 1.47.

While analyzing the age at marriage of the respondents husband, more than one-fourth of the respondents (26.25 %) mentioned that their husbands age at marriage is 29 years, nearly one-fourth of the respondents (23.75 %) indicated that their husband age at marriage is 28 years, nearly one-fifth of the respondents (18.75 %) mentioned that their husbands age at marriage is 27 years, 15 per cent of the respondents revealed that their husbands age marriage is 26 years, 11.25 per cent of the respondents told that their husbands age at marriage is 30 years, and remaining 5 per cent of respondents pointed that their husbands age at marriage is 31 years. The mean age at marriage for husbands works out to 28.15 years with a standard deviation of 1.40.

With regard to compulsion of marriage, more than two-fifth of the respondents (42.50 %) mentioned that their mother compelled them for the marriage, nearly one-fourth of the respondents (23.75 %) revealed that their husband compelled them for the marriage, nearly one-fifth of the respondents (18.75 %) said that their father compelled them for the marriage, nearly one-tenth of the (8.75 %) indicated that their grandparents compelled them for the marriage and remaining 6.25 per cent of the respondents accepted that they compelled their lovers for the marriage.

Table 1: Relationship between Structural Variables and Age at Marriage

Variable	Early Marriage	Late Marriage	Total	Chi-Square Value
Nature of Relationship				
Blood Relationship	53	07	60	
No Blood Relationship	08	12	20	19.91*
Total	**61**	**19**	**80**	
Father's Educational Level				
Less Education	48	08	56	
More Education	13	11	24	9.21*
Total	**61**	**19**	**80**	
Mother's Education Level				
Less Education	46	06	52	
More Education	15	13	28	12.21*
Total	**61**	**19**	**80**	

* Significant 5 % level

The above table highlights the relationship between the respondents age at marriage and the blood relationship of the husband, father's educational level and mother's educational level. On the basis of mean age at marriage (19.73 years with a standard deviation of 1.47), the respondents have been divided into two groups. The respondents who got marriage between 18 years and 20 years, they were grouped as respondents with early marriage. Similarly the respondents who got marriage between 21 years and 23 years, they were grouped as respondents with late marriage. The chi-square value shows that there is significant relationship between the respondents age at marriage and the blood relationship of the husband. It means that the respondents who got marriage at early years with the blood relations either through father or mother than the respondents who got late marriage.

With regard to father's education, the mean years of schooling works out to 3.57 years with a standard deviation of 4.13. On the basis of father's level of education, the respondents have classified into two groups. The respondents fathers who have completed up to 4th standard they are categorized as less education achievers and the respondents father's who have completed above 4th standard they are categorized as more education achievers. The chi-square value indicates that there is significant relationship between the respondents father's education and the age at marriage. It means that the less education achievers arranged the respondents marriage at early years than the more education achievers.

While considering the mother's education, the mean years of schooling works out to 2.04 with a standard deviation of 2.85. On the basis of mother's level of education, the respondents have categorized into two groups.

The respondents mother's who have completed up to 2nd standard they are grouped as less education achievers and the respondents mother's who have completed above 2 standard they are grouped as more education achievers. The chi-square value reveals that there is significant relationship between the respondents mother's education and the age at marriage. It means that the more education achievers arranged the respondents marriage at late years than the less education achievers.

CONCLUSIONS

This paper highlights that three-fifth of the respondents (60 %) are living in the rural area and 53.75 per cent of the respondents mentioned that they are first child in their family. The respondents parents also low education achievers. All these factors influence their mother (42.50 %) and father (18.75 %) to compel the respondents to marry in the early age. Therefore it is concluded that counseling sections should also be arranged for parents and this counseling section mainly focused to arrange the girl children's marriage in the latter years when they are physically, mentally and morally strong. Such type of marriage also ensure good span of marital years, good health outcomes for offspring, low rates of maternal mortality and marital violence.

LIMITATIONS

The present study conducted only minimum number respondents. For making generalizations of the conclusion then it required a considerable number respondents.

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