



 Research Article

GENDER ASPECT OF THE PROBLEM OF CHILD MARRIAGES IN THE WORLD AND UZBEKISTAN

Submission Date: May 09, 2023, **Accepted Date:** May 14, 2023,

Published Date: May 19, 2023

Crossref doi: <https://doi.org/10.37547/history-crjh-04-05-03>

Journal Website:
<https://masterjournals.com/index.php/crjh>

Copyright: Original content from this work may be used under the terms of the creative commons attributes 4.0 licence.

Faniya Avzalovna Akhmedshina

Doctor Of Historical Sciences, Professor Jizzakh State Pedagogical University, Jizzakh, Uzbekistan

ABSTRACT

The problems of child marriages in the modern world are becoming more and more relevant. In the article, based on numerous data from many countries, as well as for Uzbekistan, the problems of early marriages, early childbirth, their negative impact on the health of young mothers and their children are considered. Child marriage is considered a form of forced marriage, provided that both parties have not expressed full, free and informed consent to the marriage and are under 18 years of age, widely accepted as the age at which a person becomes an adult and receives full civil rights.

KEYWORDS

Child marriage, forced marriage, patriarchal family norms, poverty, lack of education, local traditions, "Elders", "Girls are not brides," survey.

INTRODUCTION

Acquaintance with the situation of rooting and preservation of early marriages on a global scale shows that this is a very complex problem, which for centuries has been and continues to be influenced by socio-economic conditions, cultural, social and religious views on the gender role of men and women. Early, forced and forced marriages are certainly the result of

entrenched gender inequalities. Globally, the prevalence of child marriage among boys is only one sixth of that among girls [7]. The leading factors in the early marriages of underage girls are gender discrimination, social exclusion, poverty, lack of education, security, stability of traditional gender roles, patriarchal family norms, the belief that marriage



and childbearing are the lot and the main goal in a woman's life.

In UN declarations and conventions, child marriage and/or related phenomena are considered a violation of human rights. International documents: the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the Declaration of the Rights of the Child, the Declaration on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women, the “Convention on Consent to Marriage, Age of Marriage and Registration of Marriage”, oblige the acceding states to legally establish a minimum marriageable age and prevent marriage before this age, except for serious reasons and in the interests of those who marry, and also not to allow forced marriages. Article 16, paragraph 2, of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women recognizes marriage and/or betrothal to a child as legally invalid. Paragraph 3 of Article 24 of the Convention on the Rights of the Child obliges states to “take all effective and necessary measures to abolish traditional practices that adversely affect the health of children” [14].

One of the main goals of the UN agency in 2011 World Day of the Girl was to draw the attention of the world community to the problem of early or child marriage, which is still prevalent in developing countries. In 2013, the Human Rights Council adopted its first resolution against child, early and forced marriage; it recognized child marriage as a violation of human rights. The importance of preventing early marriages was also noted in the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) under target No. 5.3: “eliminate all harmful practices such as child, early and forced marriages” [20]. In its resolution (A/HRC/RES/35/16, July 2021), the Human Rights Council noted that the incidence and risk of child, early and forced marriages are increasing dramatically in humanitarian situations due to various factors, including poverty, insecurity, gender

inequality, increased risk of sexual and gender-based violence, undermining the rule of law and state power, lack of access to education.

As the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights points out, one of the main causes of early and forced marriages is the problem of economic insecurity and high levels of poverty. As a consequence, the practice of early marriage is widespread, especially in the poorest areas of developing countries. According to a study conducted by UNICEF, a girl from the poorest household is three times more likely to marry than a girl from the richest household [9b]. For example, a study by the United Nations Population Fund shows that in Nigeria, 80% of the poorest girls are married before the age of 18, compared to 22% for the richest girls. Often in conditions of extreme poverty, girls are married off to reduce the financial burden on the family.

Presentation of the main material of the study.

Despite increased efforts to eliminate child, early and forced marriage before the age of 18 at the international, regional and national levels, the scale of this phenomenon is still high.

In many countries, the age of marriage is set by religion and local traditions. So, according to 2004 data in Yemen, Qatar, Oman, Nigeria and Kenya, a girl could become a wife at 9 years old, or even earlier. In Venezuela and Colombia, grooms become at 14, and brides at 12. In Egypt and Algeria, a man can marry at 18, a woman at 16. In England, it is allowed to get married and marry at 16, in France the bride must not be less than 15 years old, and the groom - 18. In Japan, you can get married at 18 years old, and get married at 16. In China, it is not allowed to become a husband before 22 years old, and girls can become legal wives at 20 years old [4].



According to the data of the human rights organization Save children (“Save the children”), published in mid-2016, more than 650 million women worldwide were married as children. Up to 20% of such marriages are with girls under the age of 12 [9a]. Every year, 12 million girls are married before the age of 18. That's 23 girls every minute, almost 1 every 3 seconds [18]. According to UNICEF, published on March 8, 2021, the COVID-19 pandemic has significantly complicated the work to prevent child marriage. In conditions of isolation and the deterioration of the economic situation of low-income families, cases of forced marriage of young daughters have become more frequent. Additional factors are ingrained concepts of gender inequality and discrimination, harmful gender stereotypes, beliefs and cultural norms. According to Plan International, early marriage is especially common among low-educated girls who grew up in an environment of gender discrimination. In societies where men traditionally dominate women, early marriage is driven by family members' stereotypical views of the "lower" position of girls in society to justify physical and psychological violence against women and girls. Often families give away their daughters because they are unable to feed all the children [15].

According to a report by the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA, July 2022), almost a third of women in developing countries give birth to their first child before they turn 19, and in half of all cases of early pregnancy, the expectant mother is not even 17. According to statistics, three-quarters of 14-year-old women in childbirth become mothers again before their 19th birthday, and forty percent of them give birth to a third child before they reach adulthood [25]. According to the human rights organization Girls not brides (“Girls are not brides”), there are now about 700 million women married by children in the world, if the situation does not change, by 2050 their number could reach 1.2 billion [19].

As world practice shows, parents often treat their daughter's marriage as a financial transaction. For example, in Tanzania, brides are most often sold in rural areas where the poorest people live. According to statistics, in Tanzania, bride price is paid in 81% of cases. On average, grooms give the bride's parents \$77. The younger the bride, the more expensive she is. In the RTD documentary "How Much Does a Bride Cost?" a father who sold his thirteen-year-old daughter says that men want to marry girls aged 12-14. According to him, at this age, brides quickly adapt to a new family. When a girl has no education, you can get more cows for her. The father of thirteen-year-old Christina says: “I didn't do anything wrong. Everyone does it! Cows are more useful than girls. When a daughter gets married, she leaves the family. But the cows, on the contrary, remain.” “My first child was forced into marriage at a very young age. She was 14. She was taken away from school when the cows were handed over to her father. ...If a man wants to marry a girl, he can simply hand her over to her husband. Women don't have the power to disagree with men.” Grace Masanja, whose father facilitated her abduction, was married for 11 months. She returned to her parents' house after the death of her husband. In an interview with Al Jazeera, Grace said: “Bitterness still fills my heart when I look at them [cows]. But given what I've been through, sometimes I wish I was born a cow.”

In 2008, 10-year-old Najud from Yemen was married to a 30-year-old courier, in 2009 in Saudi Arabia, an 8-year-old girl was married to a 60-year-old man [3]. In Afghanistan, they consider it acceptable to improve the economic situation at the expense of the kalym, which is due for a young bride, so almost every fifth girl is married before the age of 15. In August 2016, in Afghanistan, a 6-year-old girl was "sold into marriage" by her father in exchange for a goat, rice, tea, sugar and some butter. In the same Afghanistan, in the summer of 2016, another six-year-old girl was given to



a clergyman as a “religious offering.” In the last two cases, after the fact of the marriage deal was revealed, the girls' fathers and husbands were arrested [15].

About 40% of child marriages in the world take place in India, although marriages with minors are prohibited by law: anyone involved in organizing or conducting such a wedding - even as a guest, even if he does not know the age of the bride and groom - faces a fine of 100 thousand rupees (about \$2,000) and two years in prison. "I hate this government because it is trying to build obstacles for us," complained the grandfather of young brides.

A study conducted by UNICEF in Nepal showed that child marriage contributes to the deterioration of the population's health, productivity, poverty, and that if all girls marry no earlier than 20 years old, their total income will increase by an amount equal to 3.87% of GDP countries. Early marriage in developing countries will cause a cumulative economic loss of several trillion dollars by 2030, according to a joint report by the World Bank and the International Foundation for Research on Women (ICRW). Married at 13 years of age, on average, give birth to 26% more children than in the case of marriages after 18 years of age. According to the authors of the report, the rejection of early marriages in 15 developing countries will reduce fertility rates by an average of 11%, which will increase the total profit of their economies by 500 billion US dollars per year [5]. In Uganda, reduced fertility will add \$2.4 billion per year to GDP, and in Nepal, almost \$1 billion [28].

Anju Malhotra, lead expert on child marriage at the International Center for Women's Studies, says: "There is a correlation between having child marriage and really bad developmental outcomes - for health, maternal mortality, education, poverty, intergenerational transmission of poverty." Mozambican social and political activist and member of

the Council of Elders Graça Machel notes that “There is no religion whose fundamental principles and values would encourage child marriage.” As for traditions, they are “created by us and we can decide to change them”[13].

Abandoning the practice of early marriages will have a positive impact on the level of education and health of women, increase their incomes and the well-being of their families in general. “Priority brides are often deprived of their rights to security and protection, to health and education, to their own choices and decisions about their lives,” said child marriage author Quentin Wodon. “Early marriage hinders efforts to end poverty and ensure economic growth and equity.”[28] If we compare women in labor younger than 18 and older than 19, then the former have 60% higher infant mortality, and 40-50% more premature babies are born. Disenfranchised young wives are more likely to become victims of domestic violence, and the lack of social support often leads unfortunate women to deep depression and suicide attempts [8].

Research has shown that the most effective way to prevent child marriage is through material support for girls from low-income families. So, in Malawi, in certain regions of India, Ethiopia, parents received an allowance on the condition that all their daughters continue their education at school and remain unmarried during the first two years of participation in the program. The program turned out to be effective: two years after its start, in the families participating in the program, the proportion of students in the school of girls was three times higher, and the proportion of minors married was ten times less than in non-participating families [9]. The Indian authorities offer parents of girls a special cash allowance if they agree to let their daughter complete her education and do not marry her for a certain time (usually until the end of high school)[8]. In 2020, the largest and longest



universal basic income experiment in the world began in Kenya [1].

An important role in carrying out targeted work to eradicate child marriage is played by the International NGO Elders, which brought together public figures known as high-ranking statesmen, peace activists and human rights defenders by the Nobel Peace Prize winner and former President of South Africa Nelson Mandela in 2007 [24]. In 2011, The Elders launched Girls Not Brides (Global Partnership to End Child Marriage) to bring the issue of early marriage to the attention of the world community, bringing together civil society organizations from around the world who are working to solve this burning issue. , support activists fighting for change at the grassroots level, make ending child marriage an international priority [6]. In September 2011, the well-known public figure of South Africa, Archbishop Desmond Tutu, speaking at the presentation of the global initiative Girls Not Brides, called child marriage "a practice that deprives millions of girls of their childhood, rights and dignity"[12].

Mabel van Oranje, Chair of Girls Not Brides: A Global Partnership to End Child Marriage, said: "We cannot achieve gender equality unless we end the harmful practice of child marriage that affects 15 million girls a year. Despite the progress made There is still more to be done. First, everyone has a role to play: this requires a multisectoral approach that includes health, education, and economic sectors. Second, we must address the root causes of child marriage—poverty, conflict, and gender inequality. B- third, we need to work with civil society organizations that understand the situation in the country and have strong relationships in the communities"[11]. As of 2017, over 700 organizations from over 85 countries were members of the Girls Not Brides partnership [6].

A new report from the UN Children's Fund UNICEF (May 2023) notes that of the estimated 640 million

women who were married off as children, almost half live in South Asia (290 million), 127 million (20%) in Africa, South from the Sahara, 95 million (15%) in East Asia and the Pacific, 58 million (9%) in Latin America and the Caribbean, 20 million in Eastern Europe and Central Asia [29]. By 2023, there were 216.6 million girls and women in India, 41.6 million child brides in Bangladesh, 19.4 million in Pakistan, 5.3 million in Nepal and 4.0 million in Afghanistan who were first married or in the union under 18 [21]. UNICEF, in a report, stated that the current rate of reduction in child marriage is insufficient to meet the goal of its complete elimination by 2030: "In fact, at the current rate, it will take another 300 years until child marriage is eliminated [globally]." According to UNICEF goals, the rate of decline would need to be at least 20 times higher in order to eradicate child marriage[29].

The average age of women living in the CIS at their first marriage in 2019 ranged from 22.1 years in Tajikistan and 22.6 years in Uzbekistan to 26.6 years in Armenia. In addition to Armenia, it exceeded 26 years in Belarus, approaching this value - in Ukraine, Moldova and Russia. In Kazakhstan, the average age of women at first marriage is approaching 25 years; in Kyrgyzstan and Azerbaijan, it is about 24.5 years. Compared to 2000, the largest increase in the average age at first marriage for women was observed in Armenia and Moldova (by 3.5 years), somewhat less in Ukraine (3.4), Belarus (3.3) and Russia (by 3.5 years). , 3 years for 1995-2016). In Azerbaijan and Uzbekistan it increased by about 1 year, while in Tajikistan it decreased by 0.2 years. The proportion of brides under 30 who got married in 2019 ranged from 56.0% in Russia to 90.9% in Uzbekistan. It also exceeded 85% in Tajikistan and Kyrgyzstan [16].

Problems of child marriages in Uzbekistan

According to the State Statistics Committee, 88 cases of early marriages were recorded in 2020, which is 97.0



percent less than the previous year. One of the main reasons for the reduction is the establishment of the same age of marriage for men and women of 18 years from September 1, 2019. Now, according to the law, civil registration departments register marriages with a reduction in the marriageable age by one year only with the permission of the khokim of the district or city. However, in practice, it is difficult to keep reliable statistics of early marriages, since 15-16-year-old brides are not registered in the registry office, limiting themselves to the religious form of registration of the marriage ceremony. Only after the birth of a child, parents come to the registry office to issue a birth certificate. Analyzes showed that most early marriages were recorded in Urgut, Samarkand, Pastdargom, Kattakurgan, Denau, Shakhrikhan regions, in the cities of Samarkand and Andijan. Of the 1044 cases of early births, 43.1 percent are in the Samarkand and Kashkadarya regions [22].

A survey by the Public Opinion Research Center "Izhtimoiy Fikr" (May 2021) "Opinion of Uzbeks about early marriages, their causes and consequences" showed an average level of awareness of respondents that 18 years is the legal age of marriage for both men and women .

One of the reasons for early marriages, according to 33.9% of respondents in 2002, was the desire of parents to protect their children from the influence of the negative aspects of the life of modern society, in 2004 - 29.1%. 27.8% explain this phenomenon by the influence of ethnic, tribal and local customs, and 18.4% - by the material difficulties experienced by the family [27]. In the course of the survey in 2021, among the reasons for early marriages, the desire of parents to quickly arrange the family life of their children (48.1%), the lack of proper education and illiteracy of young people in matters of reproductive health (25.9%), the desire to improve their financial situation due to advantageous

marriage (22.5%), unplanned pregnancy (15.2%). As negative consequences of early marriages, Uzbeks point to possible divorces (49.6%), the negative impact on women's reproductive health and children's health (44.8%), possible family violence (19.5%) and the negative impact on the opportunities for implementation in various spheres of life (17.5%) [23].

79.9% of respondents expressed a negative attitude towards such marriages, however, almost one in ten (9.5%) is loyal to them, which indicates a sufficient influence of traditional views and attitudes on the formation of a family of a considerable part of the republic's inhabitants. A third of the respondents see the reason for consanguineous marriages primarily in the insufficient medical literacy of the population, in ignorance of the negative consequences of such marriages for the health of future children. Every fourth respondent explains this by the influence of ethnic, tribal and local customs, almost every sixth - by the desire of parents to protect children, especially girls, from the influence of the negative aspects of the life of modern society, the same number - by material difficulties. According to 5% of respondents, such marriages help to strengthen kinship. More than 50% of marriages in our country are concluded under the pressure of parents, without their own choice and any feelings for their future spouse [2]. As emphasized by the Deputy Director of the Research Institute of Mahalla and Family for June 2021, in 70% of cases, the cause of early marriages are parents. At the same time, young spouses marry for love in 26% of cases, and because of early pregnancy in 4%. Early marriages often occur between family members under pressure from relatives and are often associated with underestimation of the importance of education for girls. In some families, early marriage is also justified by material wealth [17].



Uzbeks believe that 21-25 years is the best age to start a family for both girls and boys. According to respondents, a more delayed age for marriage makes it possible for young people to get an education or a profession, to become financially independent [10].

Every year in Uzbekistan the number of divorces reaches about 30 thousand. Approximately 70% of newlyweds divorce through the fault of third parties (mother-in-law, mother-in-law, other relatives). In addition, various surveys show that 57% of young people want to marry wealthy girls in order to live without financial difficulties [2].

During the survey, the attitude of 88.8% of respondents to early marriages (concluded at the age of 15-17 years) was found out, regardless of gender and place of residence, negative. The most positive attitude towards early marriages are people of older age groups (51-60 years old - 10.0%, 61-70 years old - 10.1%, over 71 years old - 17.5%) and those with primary education (15.9%) [27].

CONCLUSIONS

Looking at both the global and national situation of early, forced and forced marriage shows that despite progress, girls still do not get the same opportunities as boys. Addressing and eradicating deep prejudices, traditional laws against women and girls that discriminate against them is important for all countries and societies. Early marriages greatly affect a girl's chances of reaching her full potential and realizing her rights. Inequalities between boys and girls in different countries, especially poor regions of the world, urban/rural areas, different marital status and wealth levels lead to vulnerability of girls, which is reflected in their life outcomes.

Reducing the number of child marriages, providing girls with education remains one of the most pressing

social problems of our time. When girls are educated, there is a reduction in infant mortality, improved child and maternal health, fewer child marriages, and faster economic growth. Consequently, the task of further activities aimed at the abolition of the traditional practice of early marriages (which negatively affects the health of children), strengthening systemic work in this direction both at the global and national levels does not lose its relevance.

REFERENCES

1. Unconditional Basic Income
https://ru.wikipedia.org/wiki/Unconditional_Basic_Income#cite_note-2
2. Marriage under pressure from parents
<https://upl.uz/misli/10041-news.html>
3. Which countries marry little girls
4. At what age can one become a legal wife in different countries of the world
<https://rg.ru/2015/05/17/svadba-site.html>
5. The World Bank predicted trillion losses in the global economy due to early marriages
<https://www.interfax.ru/business/568254>
6. Girls are not brides
https://wblog.wiki/en/Girls_Not_Brides
7. Child marriage
<https://www.unicef.org/protection/child-marriage#:~:text=Child%20marriage%20is%20often%20the,threatens%20their%20lives%20and%20health.>
8. Child marriages: get married instead of school
https://medaboutme.ru/articles/detskie_braki_za_muzh_vmesto_shkoly/
9. Child marriage
https://ru.wikipedia.org/wiki/Child_marriage
10. 9a. Proven wife
<https://iz.ru/656849/evgeniia-priemskaja/zhenane-pogodam/Z.RU/656849/EVGENIIA-PRIEMSKAIA/ZHENA-NE-PO-GODAMIR>



11. Family Institute: role and place in modern society
https://uza.uz/ru/posts/institut-semi-rol-i-mesto-v-sovremennom-obschestve_267443
12. How can the world improve the lives of women and girls by 2030?
https://translated.turbopages.org/proxy_u/en-ru.ru.8df09ec7-64571631-98a8713e-74722d776562/https/www.yahoo.com/news/world-improve-lives-women-girls-2030-120258492.html
13. What is it like to get married at six?
https://www.bbc.com/russian/society/2011/10/111004_child_brides_asia
14. What is it like to get married at six?
https://www.bbc.com/russian/society/2011/10/111004_child_brides_asia
15. The Girls Not Brides campaign aims to end child marriage within a generation
<https://slate.com/human-interest/2011/09/clinton-global-initiative-girls-not-brides-campaign-aims-to-end-child-marriage.html>
16. Convention on the Rights of the Child. Adopted by General Assembly resolution 44/25 of November 20, 1989
https://www.un.org/ru/documents/decl_conv/conventions/childcon.shtml
17. Little wife: about the practice of child marriages in the world
<https://vk.com/@tigede-malenkaya-zhena-o-praktike-detskih-brakov-v-mire>
18. Youth of the CIS, demographic strokes of the statistical portrait of 2021
<http://www.demoscope.ru/weekly/2022/0969/baromo2.php>
19. The main reasons for early marriages among Uzbeks are named
<https://nova24.uz/lastnews/nazvany-glavnye-prichiny-rannix-brakov-sredi-uzbekistantsev/June3,2021>
20. 1618..8About child marriage
<https://www.girlsnotbrides.org/about-child-marriage/#sources>
21. On October 19, the world celebrates the World Day of the Girl.
<https://web-dialog.com/threads/11-oktjabrja-vsemirnyj-den-devochek-grustnoe.7473/>
22. 20.UN. URL:
<https://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/ru/gender-equality/>
23. Almost half of the child brides in the world are in South Asia
<https://rossaprimavera.ru/news/78f30d05>
24. Almost half of early births in Uzbekistan were recorded in two regions
25. Early marriages, divorces, conflicts and violence. Sociologists conducted a study of the main problems of family life in Uzbekistan
26. Elders (organization)
[https://translated.turbopages.org/proxy_u/en-ru.ru.4d4c3a37-644ea53f-ab3f7268-74722d776562/https/en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Elders_\(organization\)](https://translated.turbopages.org/proxy_u/en-ru.ru.4d4c3a37-644ea53f-ab3f7268-74722d776562/https/en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Elders_(organization))
27. One third of women in developing countries give birth in their teens
<https://news.un.org/en/story/2022/07/1427232>
28. 3 countries where brides are still sold
<https://burninghut.ru/prodazha-nevest/>
29. Ubaydullaeva R. A. Family in Uzbekistan: traditions and modern trends
<https://cyberleninka.ru/article/n/semya-v-uzbekistane-traditsii-i-sovremennye-tendentsii>
30. The world economy will lose trillions of dollars by 2030 due to early marriages
<https://mmgp.ru/showthread.php?t=523063>
31. UNICEF: "It will take 300 years to completely eradicate child marriage"