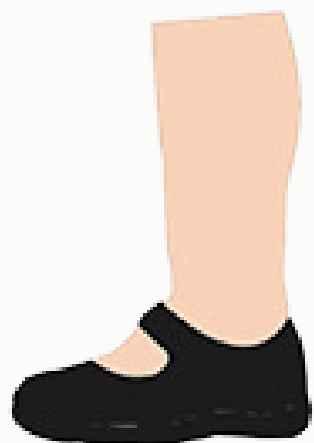

CHILD MARRIAGE A LOSING GAME



JUST STOP!

**A STUDY ON CHILD MARRIAGE
BASED ON 2020-2022 DATA
HOMELINK NETWORK
COIMBATORE HUB
INT PROVINCE**

Introduction

Child marriage is a threat to the lives and future of children, especially girls around the world. After the pandemic, it was expected that more than 100 million girls will be at risk of becoming child brides. Thus the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals call for global action to end this Human Rights Violation by 2030.

The National Crime Record Bureau (NCRB) 2020 statistics shows that 785 child marriage cases were registered under the Prohibition of Child Marriage Act, an increase from the previous year.

According to an article published in The New Indian Express on 17 Octoberth 2022, on an average at least 10 child marriage cases were reported across Tamil Nadu every day from January to August 2022.

Child Marriage - Fact Finding

INT hub made a study on Child Marriage with the available sample size of **354** data from the Child MISS web tool. With the three years data a qualitative and quantitative study was made to explore the evidence of the prevalence of child marriages in part of Tamil Nadu. It will help in identifying the causes, effects and impacts of child marriages, efforts to prevent child marriages and protecting children from violence.

Definition of Child Marriage

As defined by UNICEF, Child Marriage refers to any formal or informal union between a girl child under the age of 18 and a boy under the age of 21 or an adult.

Objective

The main objective of this research or study is to find out the

- Reasons for Child Marriage
- Impacts of Child Marriage
- Prevention of Child Marriage

Factors Influencing Child Marriage

- Gender inequality
- Poverty
- Insecurity among parents
- Pressure from relatives or guardians
- Love affair
- Laws



Data Analysis & Findings

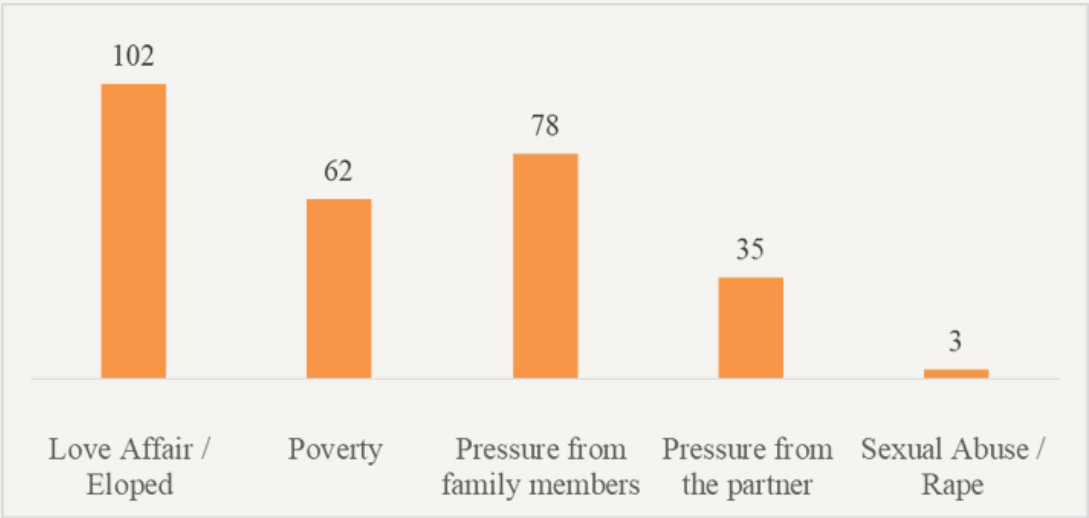
Gender Analysis

Child marriage involving boys is less common and boys do not face the adverse health effects. The data clearly shows that out of 354, 350 are females and only 4 are males who are vulnerable to child marriage issues. Girls who marry before 18 are more likely to experience domestic violence and less likely to remain in school.



Reasons for Child Marriage

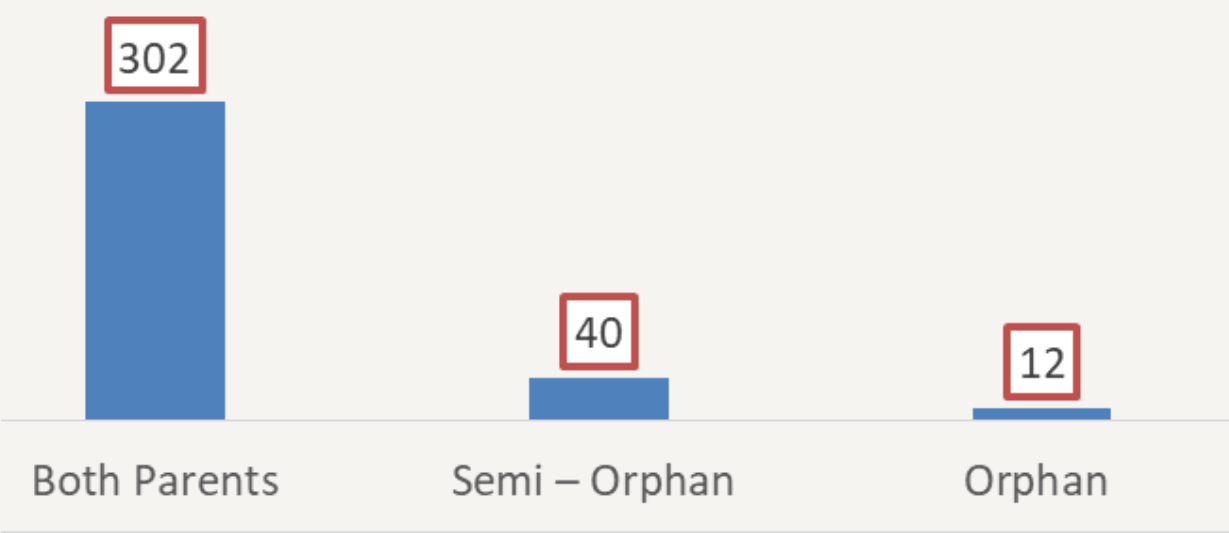
According to the available data, the main reason for child marriage is love affair among children. During this pandemic period, there is an increase in the usage of mobile phones for online classes. This mobile usage enables students to connect with their peer group or even people who are not a part of their friend circle, they are hooked on to it and spend a large part of their time even skipping their studies. Girls are more vulnerable to such relationships and decide to elope since their parents disapprove of their relationship or due to lack of parental care, followed by reasons like pressure from family members, poverty, pressure from partner and sexual abuse are the major reasons for child marriage.



Data Analysis & Findings

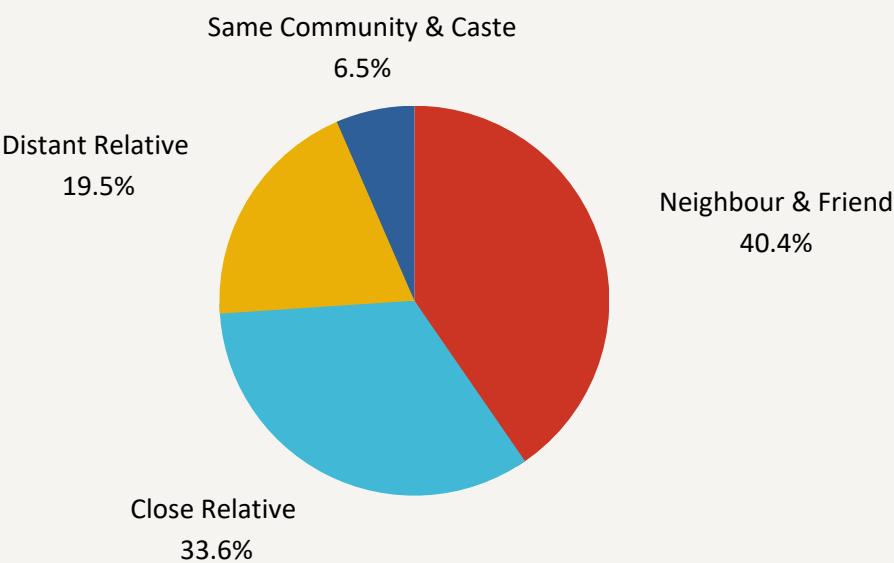
Parental Status

This chart on parental status reflects that the children with parents are mostly getting married due to poverty, feeling of insecurity, social norms and other reasons. The percentage of children having parents is very high compared to semi orphan and orphan children.



Relationship of Partners

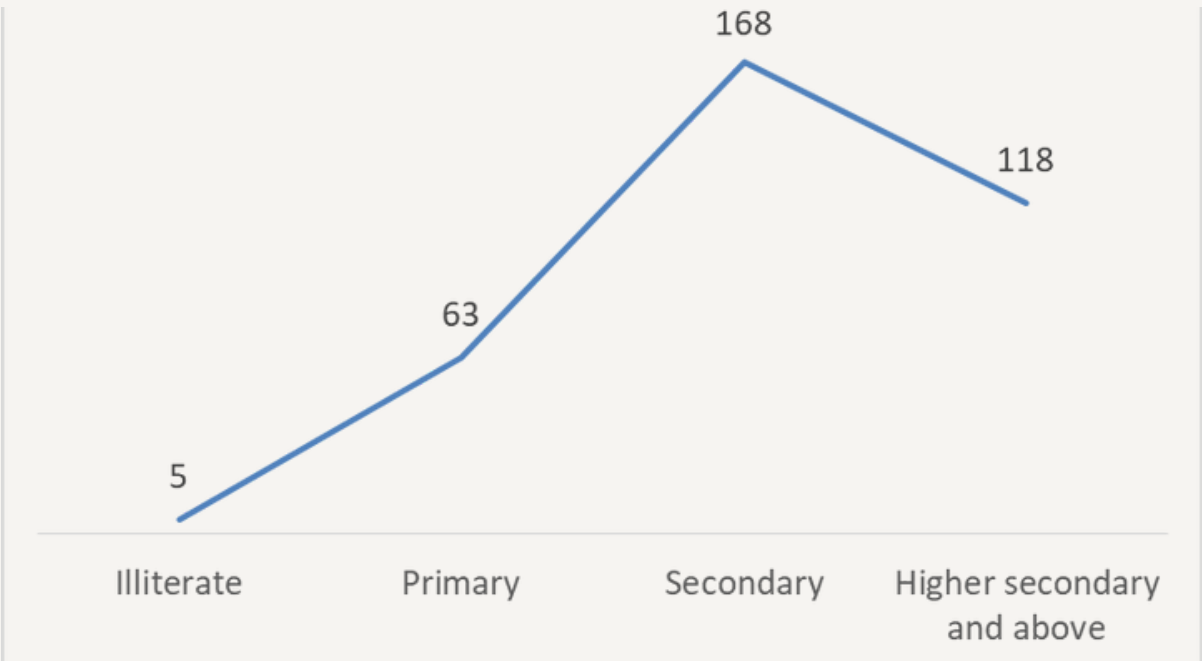
The pie chart analysis clearly shows that 34% of partners are from a close relationship, 19% from distant relatives, 7% from same community & caste and altogether around 60% of child marriages happen within relations.



Data Analysis & Findings

Education Status of Children

With this 3 years sample data, we could analyze, that around 47% of girls end their education in Secondary grade, 33% in Higher Secondary and above and 18% in Primary grade. Prioritising education for girls is necessary in order to prevent the child marriage.



Age difference between child & partner

	Partner's Age				
Girl Child's Age	16-18	18 -25	26-35	36-46	Grand Total
12-14	1	15	15	2	33
14-16	7	68	37	12	124
16-18	11	113	64	9	197
Grand Total	19	196	116	23	354

The analysis on the age difference between child and partner, shows that the most common ages at which girl children are married are between 12-14, 14-16 & 16-18. Comparing the partner’s age it is 56% of children in the age between 12 to 18 are married with partners in the age group of 18 to 25 and 33% with partners in the age group of 26-35. The age difference is one of the major cause of violence,as greater the age gap, the more likely children are to experience violence. Complications during pregnancy and child birth is the second most common cause.

Consequences of Child Marriage

Child Marriage - denies children the right to choose – with full and free consent and without fear – whom to marry and when.

Child brides are more likely to become pregnant before their bodies mature, increasing the health risk for both the child and young mother.

Children who are married off are also vulnerable to sexually transmitted infections like HIV.

Child brides are particularly vulnerable to violence and abuse. Girls are more likely to experience physical or sexual violence by their partners.

Mental illness is common among child brides.

Lack of education and empowerment also means girls are less able to advocate for the well-being of their children.

Laws Prohibiting Child Marriage

The Prohibition of Child Marriage Act, 2006

Punishments (sec. 9,10,11)

Imprisonment which may extend to two years or with a fine which may extend to one lakh rupees or with both

- for male adult marrying a child.
- for solemnizing a child marriage
- for promoting or permitting the solemnization of child marriages

Amendment Bill 2021

The prohibition of the Child Marriage Amendment Bill was introduced on 21st December 2021. It amends the Prohibition of Child Marriage Act 2006, increasing the age of marriage of girls from 18 to 21.

Bill also amended related marriage laws like the Hindu marriage act, Special marriage act, etc.



SDG & Child Marriage

The target to end child marriage compels governments to act and gives civil society a tool to hold them to account. The inclusion of child marriage will also help us to achieve many of the other Sustainable Development Goals.

Goal 1: No poverty

Goal 2: Zero hunger

Goal 3: Good health and well-being

Goal 4: Quality education

Goal 5: Gender equality

Goal 8: Economic growth

Goal 10: Reduced inequalities

Goal 16: Peace, justice and strong institutions

Recommendations

- Laws prohibiting child marriage need to be enacted, strengthened and enforced.
- Access to quality education for children.
- Empower adolescent girls and boys with information about their sexual and reproductive health.
- Improved access to health services and economic opportunities
- Educating parents is as important as educating children because education will broaden their mindset.
- Child Marriages can be prevented by simple interventions such as community awareness, providing educational materials for children and by developing the families economically, etc.

Way Forward

Children can play an important role in ending child marriage – when they know their rights and have access to the right information and opportunities. Making it happen will require commitment and action from ALL of us, working together – individual activists, civil society organizations, donors, governments, families, religious and community leaders, youth groups, children and elders themselves. If we work together to tackle child marriage, we can create a world where children and women are empowered, taking charge of their destinies, and able to live their lives free from violence.

Thanks to all for your support





CHILD MARRIAGE IS THE RAPE OF A CHILD!

HOMELINK NETWORK



Homelink Network is an ongoing initiative started by DB YaR Forum in 2002, to ensure appropriate, timely and real-time response to the needs of the young at risk, based on accurate documentation and data analysis supported by the best of technologies available today.

Supported by



Don Bosco National Forum for Young at Risk

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