



#MoreThanJustBrides

EARLY CHILD MARRIAGES IN HARYANA

Pilot Study conducted in Sonipat and Panipat

Submitted by:

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**Setting the
Context**

“Premature pregnancy and motherhood are an inevitable consequence of child marriage. Girls under 15 are five times more likely to die during pregnancy and childbirth than women in their twenties.”

-State of the World’s Children 2007, UNICEF

According to UNICEF, child marriage is defined as a formal or informal union before the age of 18 years. Child marriage is one of the biggest setbacks to development in today’s world. It has

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been estimated that worldwide, more than 700 million women alive today were married as children. More than 1 in 3 – or some 250 million girls were married before the age of 15. Girls who marry before they turn 18 are less likely to remain in school and more likely to experience domestic violence. Young teenage girls are more likely to die due to complications in pregnancy and childbirth than women in their 20s; their infants are more likely to be stillborn or die in the first month of life.

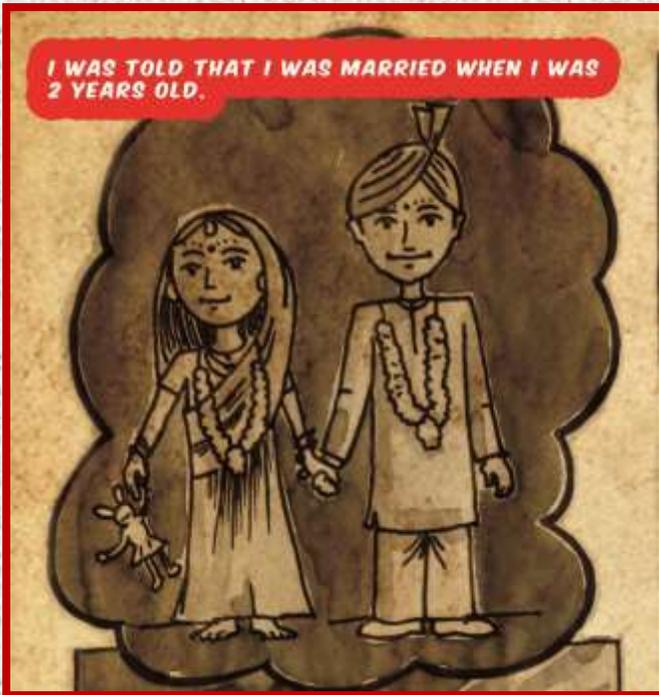
In India, child marriage has been practiced for centuries. The problem of child marriages in India is a complex one because of the interplay of religious traditions, social practices, economic factors and blind beliefs. There are varied estimates of the data on the extent and scale of child marriages. The International Center for Research on Women-UNICEF publications have estimated India's child marriage rate to be 47% from small sample surveys of 1998, while the United Nations reports it to be 30% in 2005.

In India, The Prohibition of Child Marriage Act of 2006 defines "child marriage" to mean a marriage, or a marriage about to be solemnized, to which either of the contracting parties is, a child; and *child* for purposes of marriage is defined based on the gender of the person. For a male, it is 21 years of age, and for a female, 18 years of age.

Haryana is already suffering due to skewed sex ratio which has forced many families to purchase brides from states like Bihar and West Bengal. Besides this, Haryana is now also witnessing a rise in child marriages. Prohibition officers¹ of Sonipat and Panipat have confirmed an increase in the prevalence of child marriages in these districts. A study conducted by Tata Institute of Social Sciences stated that as many as 278 complaints of child marriage were received in the State from October 2014 to December 2015. During this period, 129 child marriages were prevented with counselling and 30 through injunction orders. The remaining complaints were either referred to police for necessary action or applications were given for nullity under Section 3 of the Child Marriage prohibition Act. Haryana Government has now sought a status report from various departments on the action taken by them to prevent child marriages.²

¹ Officers appointed under the "The Prohibition of Child Marriage Act, 2006" by the state having jurisdiction over a specified area working on prevention and prohibition of child marriage

² "Haryana Govt Seeks Status Report on Child Marriages in State," *The Pioneer on the web* 19 January 2016, < <http://www.dailypioneer.com/state-editions/haryana-govt-seeks-status-report-on-child-marriages-in-state.html>> (20 February 2016)



2

Married Girls



Priyanka's Story

Priyanka. 19 years old. Age of marriage: 16 years. Village: Jharothi, Sonipat.

My father was a poor man. He was often very sick. We are two sisters. I am the younger one. Our father was always worried about our marriage and the costs that would be incurred for two marriages. Our father found a family with two eligible boys. Both my elder sister and I got married on the same day to two brothers. I got married to my brother in laws younger brother. And my father was able to save on future expenses of my marriage.

Education was very important for me. I loved my school. I was made to drop out from school by the time I reached puberty. I begged my parents to send me back to school but they did not relent. My parents were scared for my safety. The biggest threat for them at that time was that they had heard stories of boys of upper caste who abducted girls from their homes. Our father would have been helpless in front of these boys from upper caste if I was also abducted. So I dropped out from school out of concern for my safety. Then I got married.

The first few days of my married life was an extremely difficult period for me. I worked without any rest from early morning till late into the night, the nights with my husband was more frightening for me. It's a status symbol you know, if the daughter in law can do all the household work and does not disturb the mother in law at all. I worked from 4am in the morning to 8 pm at night. There was no end to the work. If I rested, my mother in law would scream at me. Many people came to see me when I was newly married. I have lost count of how many legs I massaged. Massaging legs of elders is a show of respect for the elders.

Priyanka's case is not in isolation. Many of the girls who were interviewed have had similar stories to share. According to Protection Officer of Sonipat, Ms. Bhanu Gaur, an average of 50 cases are reported every month by anonymous individuals while many still go unreported.

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Age of Marriage

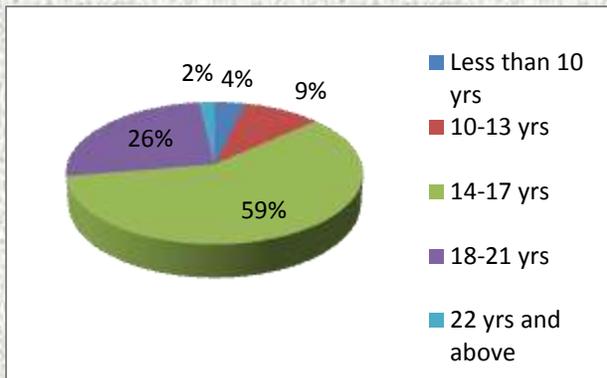


Figure 2.1: Respondent's age at the time of marriage

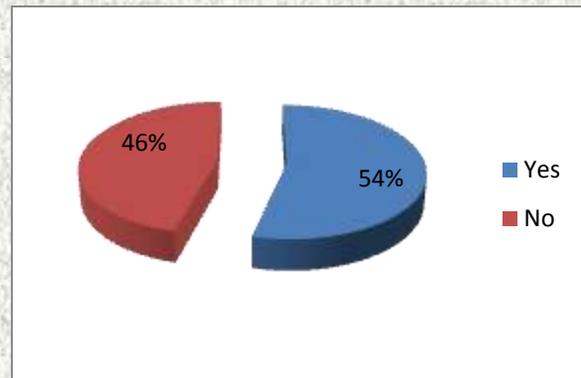


Figure 2.2: Respondents forced into marriages

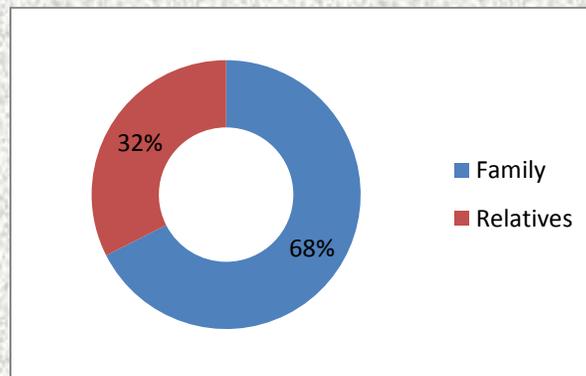


Figure 2.3: Individuals who forced respondents to marry

72% of the girls who were interviewed reported having been married before the age of 18 years (Figure 2.1). In the Bawariya community in Panipat districts, girls were married as early as 2-3 months of age. It is believed that the marriage of a daughter will ward off any evils that befall

Bawariya Community

The word Bawariya is said to mean people 'who roam' in Hindi. They are a semi-nomadic group scattered over North India. The **Bawariya** is a community of people and not a caste although the caste system of India puts them in caste category, but they still retain their original nomadic lifestyle and keep away from the main caste systems as practiced by many people in India. The government of Haryana has currently put them under the Schedule Caste category. The *Bawariya* settled in Panipat are now mainly a community of rag pickers marginal farmers. Some have also started rearing milk cattle and other animals. Most of them do not have a steady income hence poverty is a major concern in this hamlet. As a Dalit community, they often suffer from societal discrimination. Most of the girls in this community are married off as soon as they are born and sent to their husband's house as soon as she has had her first menstruation. Hence they start reproducing as early as 13-14 years. Most of these young women interviewed have no count of the number of miscarriages they have had. Malnourishment has resulted in many still births. Illiteracy, poverty and old traditional beliefs are taking its toll of these young women.

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the family – such as a death in the family.

54% of the girls who were interviewed said that they were forced to get married (Figure 2.2). Of these, 61% did not want to leave their parents so soon and the rest wanted to continue their studies.

Proposals and pressure for marriage came through various sources, (Figure 2.3) and the reasons were many. While it is the tradition for girls living in these communities to be married off as soon as they reach puberty, there were other overarching reasons that were discussed that attributed largely to the early marriage of girls.

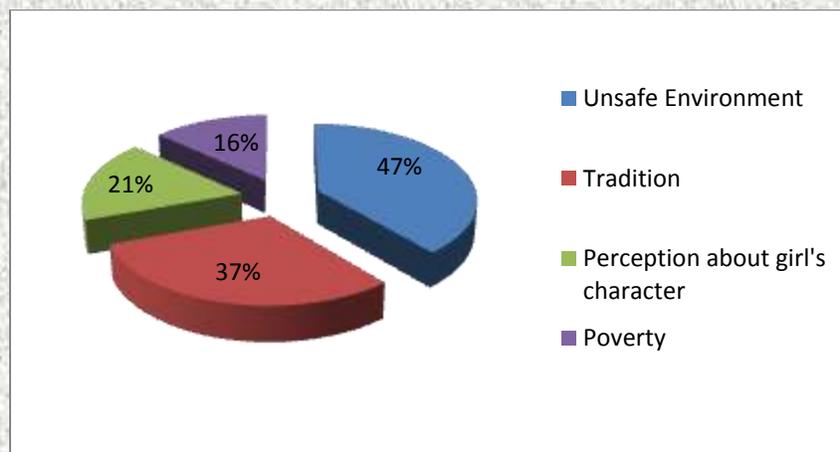


Figure 2.4: Reasons for child marriages

The interplay of caste dynamics and the very real threats of violence and sexual abuse of girls played a large role in decision making in this regard. 47% of the girls who were interviewed were married due to the threat of violence and sexual abuse and the general environment of the village which was known to be extremely unsafe for girls and women.

“When families heard about a girl being kidnapped and raped in my village, many parents decided to marry off their daughters. Mass marriages took place in a month’s time with many girls as young as 12-14 years got married and I was one of them.” (Meenu. She was part of a mass wedding)

“We are from a lower caste and in our village boys from the upper caste are known to pick up any girls they feel like. The fear of something like this happening to me was the motivating factor for my parents to start seeking a marriage arrangement for me. My father is a poor lower caste farmer; he would have been helpless at a time like this.” (Priyanka)

The marriage of a daughter is an expensive event and it is customary to invite the entire village for the feasting. All efforts are therefore made to cut costs at every opportunity. Marrying off all the daughters, sometimes even three, at the same ceremony was a common phenomenon in all the locations. In such situations the younger siblings remain in their parental home until they attain puberty.

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Late marriage of a girl will only mean one thing, that there is a problem with her. Late marriages are frowned upon in the community. A mother of one of the girls who had resisted marrying off her daughter at an early age, had to finally succumb to the pressures of the community.

“Community members started talking and spreading rumors about my daughter as she was 17 years old. After hearing all the rumors being spread about her, we got scared and immediately looked for a groom and married her off within a month’s time. At the ceremony, though we did invite our entire village for the wedding as is the custom, we did not tell them where we are sending our daughter. We didn’t want the rumors to spread to her husband’s village too. It’s not new for the girl’s family to hide where she is going after marriage.” (a mother who resisted her daughters early marriage)

Life before becoming a bride

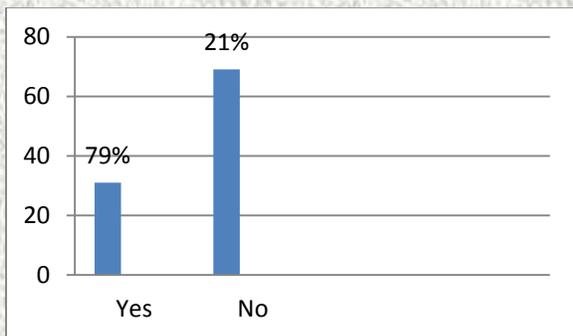


Figure 2.5: Respondents studying at the time of marriage

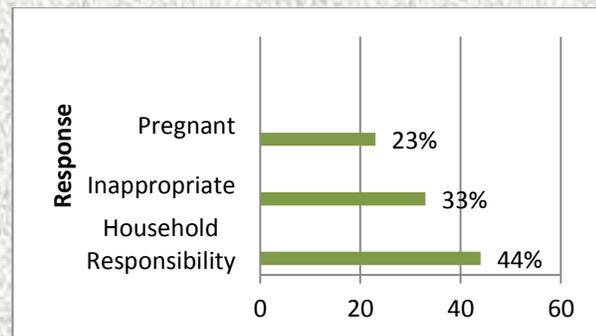


Fig 2.6: Reasons for leaving school post marriage

Like Priyanka, 79% of the other girls were studying at the time that their marriages were fixed (Figure 2.5). They loved their school. Going to school gave them a sense of freedom. They were disappointed when their marriages were fixed but took consolation in the hope that they might be able to continue their education once they went to their new homes. After marriage, each of these girls saw their dreams crumble when household responsibilities (44%), pregnancy (23%) and not getting permission from their in laws kept the girls away from continuing their education.

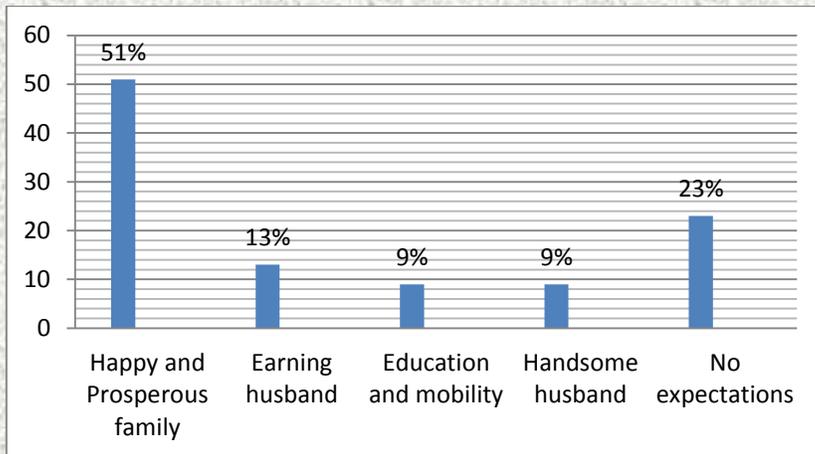


Figure 2.7: Expectations from marriage

“While growing up, one sees so many problems around you, poverty, domestic violence, alcoholism and many more which is not in our hands. With marriage, we expect more happiness.” (Meera)

More than half the girls, at 51% said that they had seen so much of poverty in their lives that after marriage they expected to live a happy and prosperous family life, with a husband who was earning well and who would support her and her children with his steady income (13%). A small 9% of girls, dreamt of a good looking husband,

“Just like a film hero!” (Kala).

Some girls dreamt of a husband who would be kind and gentle and would support them to continue with their studies. They also expected that they would be allowed to go to college. With education, they dreamt of the freedom of mobility and empowerment. (Figure 2.7)

But 23% of the girls reminisced that their marriages were so sudden that they did not even have time to think of the life after marriage. Many of these girls were married within one or two weeks after their marriages were fixed. Many were so young that it meant to be married. All they had seen so far was their friends getting married wearing beautiful clothes and jewelry and leaving for their husband’s house.



The Life after – meeting expectations

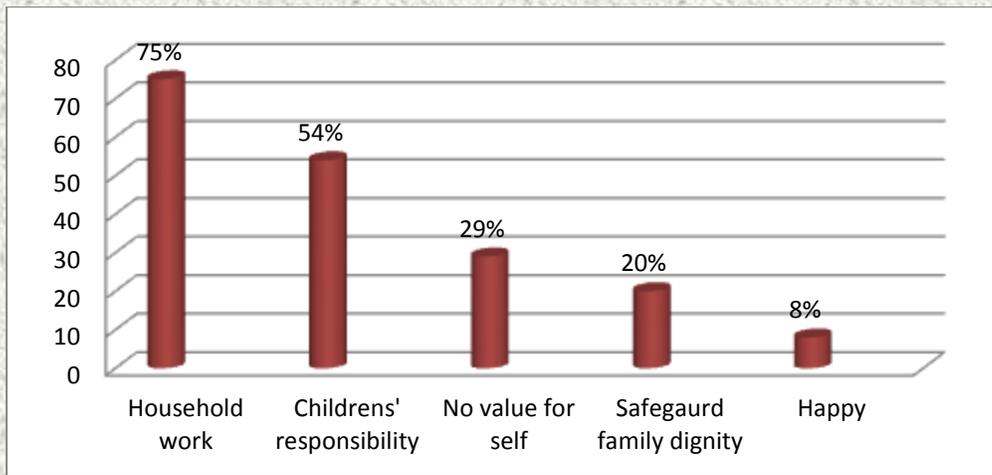


Figure 2.8: Life after marriage

Only 8% of the girls who were interviewed shared that they were happy after their marriage. (Figure 2.8), for majority, the reality was quite the opposite of what they had dreamt of and expected from their marriages.

“Marriage was a rude shock for me. When I was getting married, I was excited about getting new clothes and jewelry. In the excitement I did not realise that I would be leaving my home and my parents forever. As soon as I reached my new home, I was taken to a place where a very large pile of dirty dishes were waiting to be washed. My life now is a never ending routine of drudgery. I wake up at 4am in the morning and work till 9-10pm at night.” Radha

For these young brides, their lives revolved around household work, looking after children, either theirs or their sister in laws.(Figure 2.8) Most of the girls who were interviewed had more than one child, and at the age of 23 years, found herself a mother of 2 sometimes 3 children with several miscarriages in between. The pressure of upholding the burden of safeguarding the honour and dignity of the family in the village was sometimes too large a burden for the tiny shoulders of these young girls to bear. This came at a cost. Obedience, silence, efficiency, fasting for the goodwill of the family are upheld as good qualities of a daughter in law. The once carefree girls were no longer heard or seen, like machines with vacant eyes they learned to live their lives in silence, devoid of laughter never leaving the home except on errands. 29% of the girls expressed a deep sense of a loss of their dignity and self-respect after their marriage.

Geeta's story

Geeta. 23 years. Mother of 3 children

I was 15 years when I got my first period. My aunt told me that my father was waiting for me to get my first period. She told me that he would be extremely happy to hear this news. I was confused and wondered why. It was not long before I knew it. Within a month of my first period, I was married off to a man who was 12 years older than me. When I reached my new home little was I know what was in store for me. I remember the first night of my marriage very clearly. I remember that when I learned that I had to share a room with my husband, I ran to my mother in law and asked her if I could sleep with her as I didn't want to sleep with a strange man. She looked at me and told me that from today, my husband's room and his bed are where my life is. I was taken back to his room. I don't remember very clearly what happened that night. I think I must have even lost consciousness at some point. All I remember is the excruciating pain I experienced. I could barely walk the next day.

Within 6 months, I got pregnant and gave birth to my first child – it was a girl. The village dai³ and my mother in law helped me deliver my baby. I got pregnant every two years after that. I had not heard of family planning methods, till the birth of my second child. The Asha worker in the village shared it with me. She told me about copper T. But I was scared and my husband was also not in its favor. I did not want some metal to be inserted into my body. What if it pierces my body? Another one year down, I became pregnant with my third baby. This time, I had severe complications and the doctor had to advise me and my husband to go for a permanent sterilisation. Obviously my husband did not choose to steralise himself. It was not even discussed. Everyone looked at me to find solution for this problem. I could have delayed my pregnancy. But yes, it is not in my hands, it is in the hands of my husband.

That first night

Nearly one out of four men in a United Nations study of 10,000 men in Asia admitted to having committed rape. Marital rape was by far the most common type of rape, followed by the rape of an intimate partner (Rukmini, 2013). The UN Population Fund states that more than 2/3rds of married women in India, aged between 15 to 49 years have been beaten, raped or forced to provide sex. Studies also indicate that between 10 and 14% of married women are raped by

³ Midwife from the community

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their husbands: the incidents of marital rape soar to 1/3rd to ½ among clinical samples of battered women. Sexual assault by one's spouse accounts for approximately 25% of rapes committed. (Rath)

There are many Geeta's in the villages. The horrors of that first night are imprinted in the little minds of these young girls. The girls shared painful stories of how they were forced to have sexual intercourse with their husbands on the first night of their marriage. (Figure 3.1) Unprepared, vulnerable, and scared, these young girls saw most of their dreams crumble before their eyes amidst the horrors of the first night that was filled with violence and aggression.

Their resistance was met with physical violence their cries for help went unheard; just like Geeta who was sent back to the room when she ran to her mother in law for help. Data generated from this study indicates that 70% of the girls were forced to have sexual intercourse on their first night with their husbands.

It did not help that more than 60% of the girls were married to men who were more than 6 years older than them, out of these, 14% of them were married to men who were 10 years their senior. These young girls found that they were no match for their much older and more experienced husbands and gave in in fear of the brutal force and violence that followed the resistance.

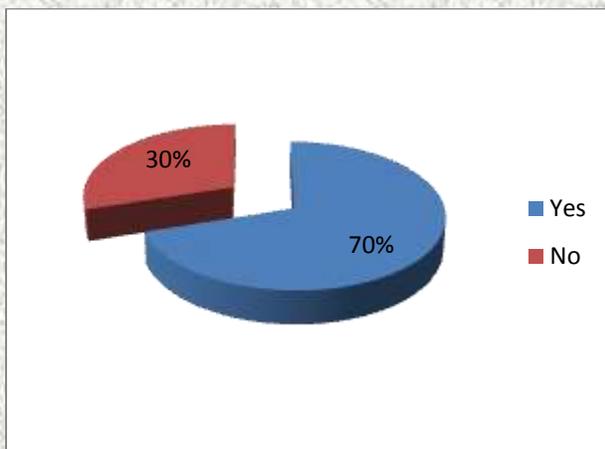


Figure 3.1 Forced sexual intercourse on first night

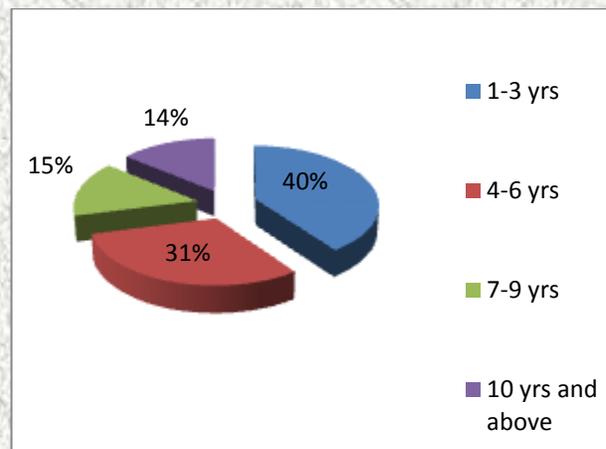


Figure 3.2: Age gap between respondents and spouses

Sexual violence and control over women's sexual rights is seen as one of the most pervasive forms of discrimination and assertion over women.

First tryst with Motherhood

“The girls usually miss their first period after getting married. We know they will get pregnant. If the girl does not get pregnant within 4-5 months of marriage, then only we have to worry. There are many girls in the community who are having difficulty conceiving. It might be because of prolonged use of various family planning methods which are very dangerous. The girls should start trying soon so that if they do not conceive, they can seek help at the earliest before the age goes against them” Mother in law of one the girls

The pressure to get pregnant begins for these child brides soon after they are married, usually with the first 3 months of marriage. If they do not get pregnant by 6 months of getting married, it becomes worrisome for the family. The girl is taken to a doctor to be checked up.

“We need to know if she is having any problems – it’s better that they try at the earliest.”
Mother in law of a girl

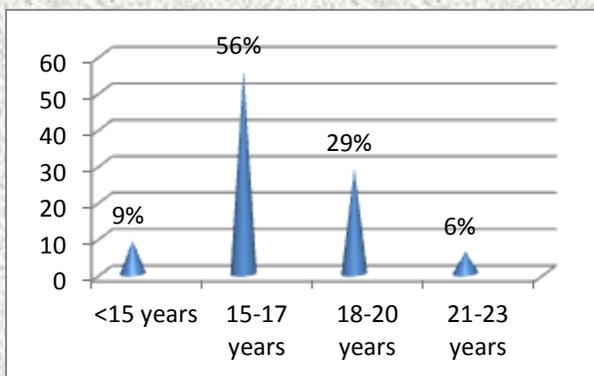


Figure 3.7: Age at first pregnancy

Motherhood has meant different things for different women across the world. Most experiences of the first tryst with motherhood have been filled with stories of love, excitement and joy. But these were women who had planned and prepared for this new entrant into their lives.

When the mother is herself a child, just coming to terms with her first year of menstruation, the experiences were quite the opposite. 9% of the girls who participated in this study became mothers before the age of 15 years. Children themselves, even before they were able to understand the phenomena of menstruation, they found themselves pregnant with children of their own. Most of these child brides did not even recognise when they had conceived. Most of the girls, being of such a tender age and their bodies being weak due to the lack of nutrition and proper rest, miscarried their first child. And it was only when they had had miscarried and began bleeding profusely that they were they informed that they had been pregnant and had miscarried. Only 6% of the girls who were interviewed had their first child between the ages of 21 and 23 years. (Figure 3.7) 56% of the girls were mothers between the ages of 15 and 17 years.

“I became pregnant 4 months after my marriage. My labour pains began in the beginning of the ninth month of my pregnancy, late one night. I started having contractions around 1am at night. My husband was tense and started looking for auto rickshaws to take me to the hospital.

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My mother in law was confident that I can give birth at home. After almost two hours of labour pain, I delivered my daughter. Though I was very happy that my daughter was healthy, I was also relieved that this pregnancy was over. But my pregnancy was a difficult one. My daughter was fed honey and was given to me to feed. My mother in law then explained that for the next one week she will be giving me massages from the place where my baby came out. My baby was given to a neighbour and my sister in law opened my legs wide and cleaned me. After that, my mother in law stood on top of me and started pushing my uterus back into my body with her feet. She told me she was pushing it in so that my uterus doesn't come out. She continued doing this for the next one week. I felt very uncomfortable and the pain was unbearable. But it was explained to me that it is required as there are many girls who have a prolapsed uterus."

Shanta.

More than half the girls (58%) had home births (Figure 3.10). No professional medical help was sought and the services of the mid wife were preferred over the services of a doctor in a hospital. One reason for the unwillingness of the family to spend money to cover the medical expenses of a daughter in law; the other reason could be that many of the girls were below the age group of 18 years and visiting a doctor would mean revealing the actual age of the mother, which could lead to serious legal repercussions for the family. The services of the village Dai or mid wife or female members of the family were therefore sought as a preferred choice for carrying through the delivery process even at the cost of sometimes questionable practices such as in the case of Shanta.

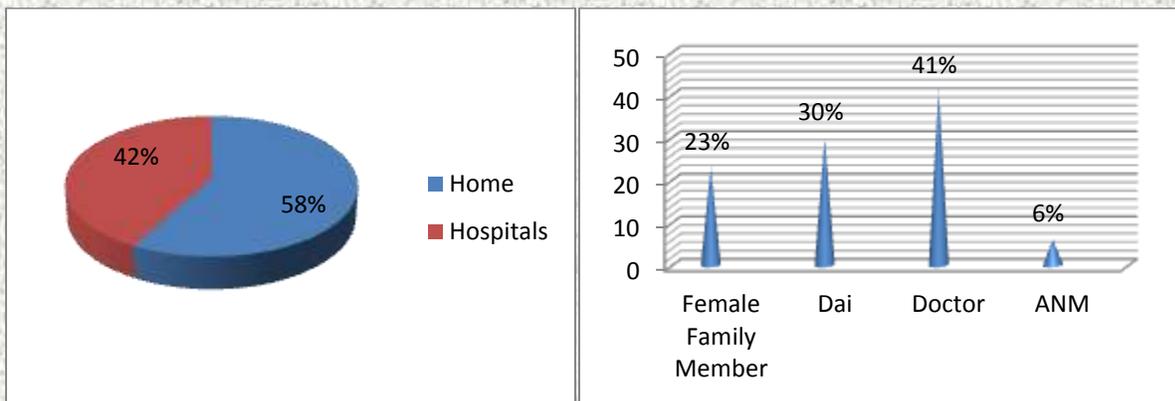


Figure 3.10: First delivery

Figure 3.11: Assisted at the time of birth

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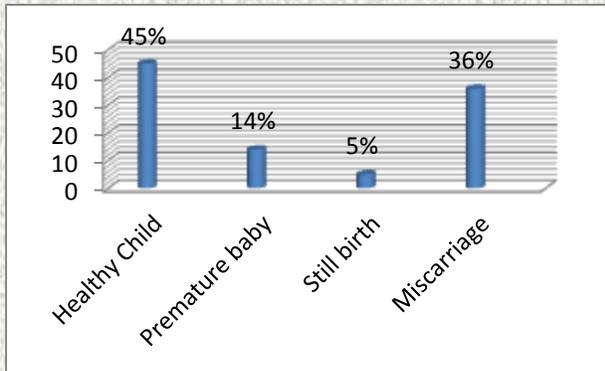


Figure 3.12: Outcome of first pregnancy

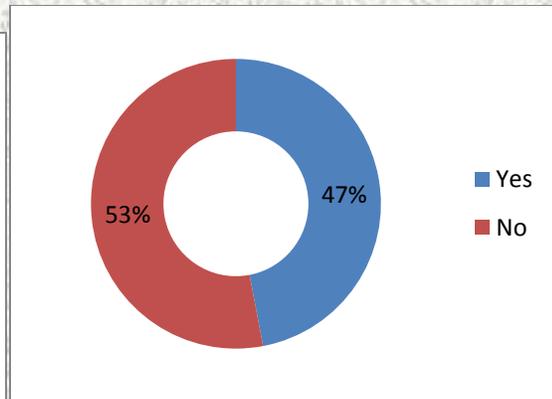


Figure 3.13: Problems after first child birth

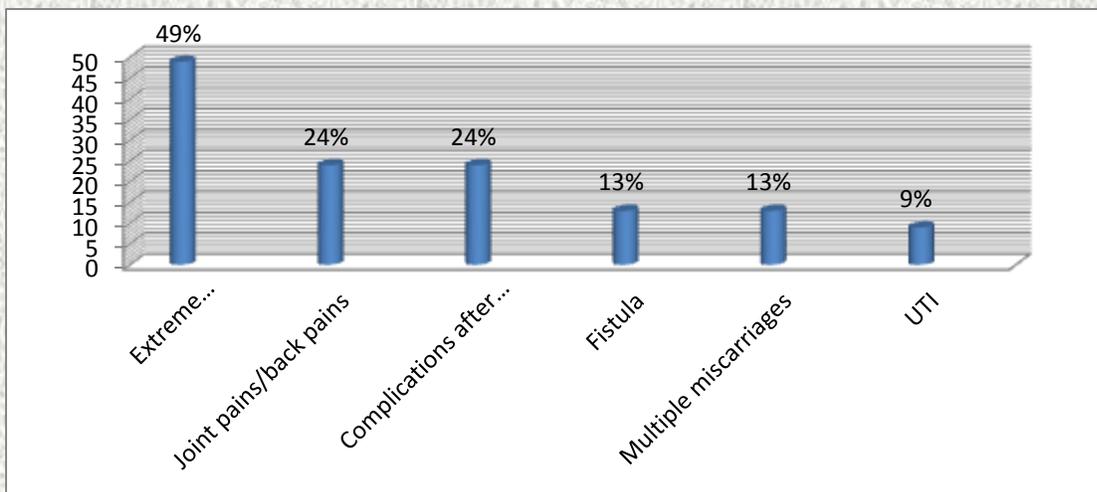


Figure 3.14: Complications after first delivery

47% of the girls reported several complications at the time of their first delivery, some fatal for the mother and the child. 36% of the first pregnancies of the girls ended in a miscarriage and 5% of the births were stillborn. 13% of the girls reported having suffered multiple miscarriages. Often, soon after the miscarriage, the girls found that they had conceived once again within the next 3-4 months. 13% shared that they had obstetric fistula⁴ while delivering their child.

“Many girls in my village have died after their first delivery” Rani

Almost half the girls shared that they experienced extreme weakness or were anemic. One of the major factors contributing to this is that the respondents were conceiving at a very young age even before they are physically fit to be mothers and at shorter intervals. The girls reported having problems of severe back aches, joint pains, infection, swelling etc. This is due to the fact

⁴ Obstetric fistula is a hole between the vagina and rectum or bladder that is caused by prolonged obstructed labor, leaving a woman incontinent of urine or feces or both.

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that the respondents were conceiving at a very young age. Becoming a mother at such a young age brings with it a large number of risks to the health and wellbeing of the new born and of the mother, herself a child.



Like Geeta, 88% of the girls had not heard of family planning (Figure 3.3) when they got married. 47% learnt about it from their husbands after their marriage or from whispered conversations with their sisters in laws, other women in the community. 40% of the girls shared that they got to know about the family planning methods from the hospital/village midwife after the birth of their first child. Some of the girls however only got to know about some of these methods after giving birth to 2-3 children. At the time of interview, 8% of the girls (Figure 3.4) were still unaware.

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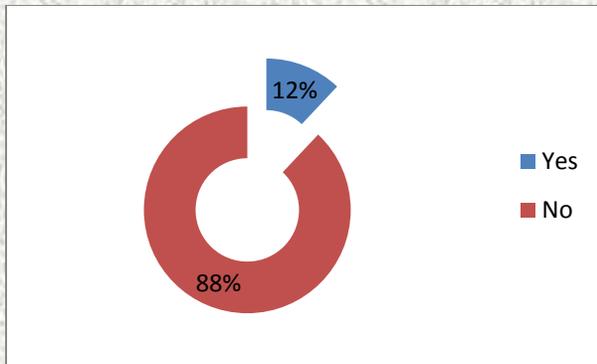


Figure 3.3: Aware of family planning during marriage

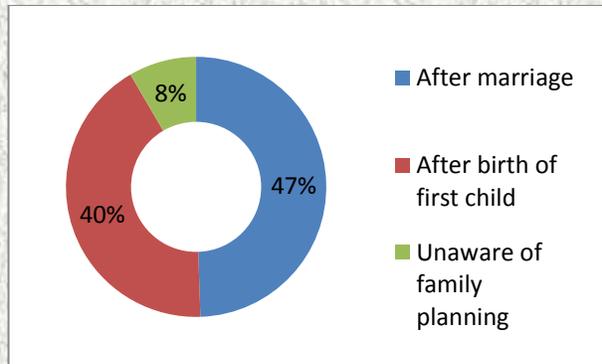


Figure 3.4: When became aware of family planning

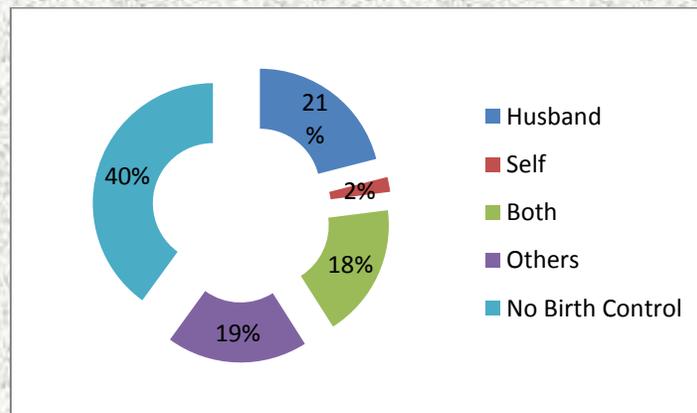


Figure 3.5: Decision maker on family planning method

The fear of not having any grandsons is real and the pressure for the newly wed mother to conceive and produce a grandson is intense. So the choice of using or not using any contraception is largely a decision that is made by the husband and other elders in the family. 40% of the girls were following the advice of others including their husband, the mid wife or/and Aanganwadi workers⁵. While another 40% of the girls did not follow any birth control methods, only 2% of the girls shared that this decision was made jointly by both the husband and the wife.

⁵ Aanganwadi worker is a community based worker of the ICDS programme

Rozy's Story

24 years. Age of marriage: 11 years.

My father passed away when I was 10 years old and the sole burden of the family was on my brother and mother. Due to financial difficulties, relatives suggested that I should stop my studies. I stopped my studies in class 6. My community members suggested that I should get married. They got me married to a man who was more than 10 year my senior. I remember the first day very clearly. My mother in law was commenting and lamenting on the poor financial status of my family. My husband didn't say much. I was petrified at night. My husband forced himself on me. He was a big man and I couldn't even push him away. I bled profusely and cried the entire night. My husband didn't even say anything. The next day I was in shock about what happened the previous night. I was so scared and petrified that I couldn't even do any house work. My mother in law hit me and sent me back to my house. My mother sent me back to her after scolding me. I was not very good at doing all the household work which my mother in law never appreciated. This to and fro continued for months. Whenever I was at my husband's house, I was raped every night; my mother in law and my sister in law beat me up during the day. There were days when I would come to my house bleeding and bruised and my family would take me to the doctors. I got pregnant when I was 14 years old. As soon as I got pregnant I was sent off to my mother's house. I was very sure I didn't want to return but after my daughter was born, I was taken back by my husband. I faced a lot of violence because I had given birth to a daughter. The beating continued and I had many miscarriages in between. My sister in law use to heat an iron rod and burn my hands and arms. I still have the scars on my arms. I finally left my husband's house when I got pregnant with my second child. I told my family that I will not go back and they were supportive as they have seen the violence I faced. We got divorced in front of the Panchayat. After the birth of my second daughter, I started working as a domestic worker in other people's homes and started cooking for them. I have put my children in school and will continue giving them education as much as they want. My life's aim is to take care of my children. I will never marry them off till they are mature enough to marry and are standing on their own feet."

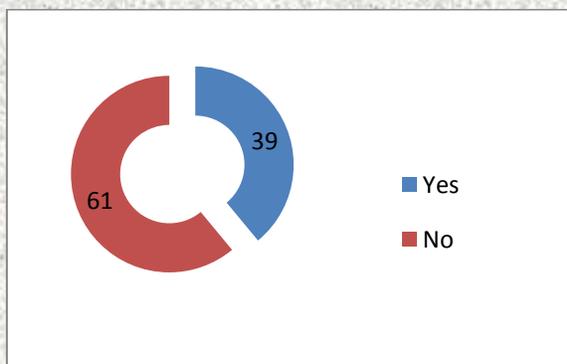


Figure 4.1 Violence in marriage

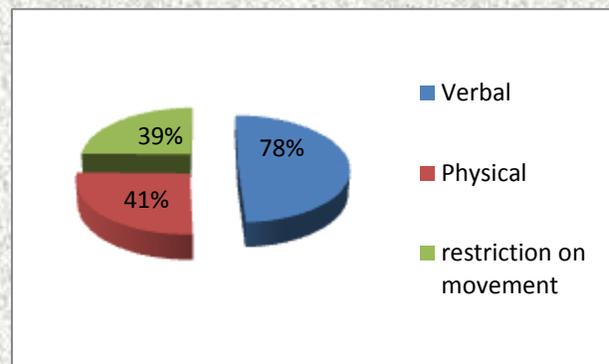


Figure 4.2: Various forms of violence

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39% of the girls who were interviewed reported violence in their marriage. (Figure 4.1). Violence came in different forms, from verbal abuse (78%), physical violence (41%) or restrictions on mobility (39%). Just like Rozy, some of the violence has been so extreme that the girls still have the scars on their bodies. It was ironic that even when the girls were brave enough to run away to their parent's house, they would usually be sent back as it is considered shameful for the family to have their married daughter living with their parents.

Violence against women is a worldwide yet still hidden problem. Freedom from the threat of harassment, battering, and sexual assault is something that most of women have a hard time imagining because violence is such a deep rooted part of their cultures and lives

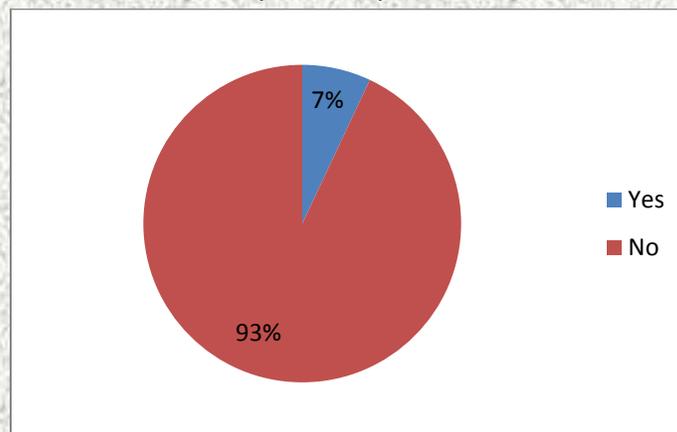


Figure 4.3: Violence justified in marriage

Violence against women is sustained by a culture of silence and denial of the seriousness of the abuse, its consequences on the personal and social level, and its use as a tool of domination. The reasons so many cases go unreported are both personal (embarrassment, fear of retaliation, economic dependency) and societal (imbalanced power relations for men and women in society, privacy of the family, victim blaming attitudes). This challenge is even greater in cultures where violence against women is seen as a natural phenomenon based in deep rooted beliefs and attitudes. (Gracia, 2004)

It is woven so intricately into the fabric of their lives that those who are victimized feel that they are at fault. Many who perpetrate violence feel justified by strong societal messages that say that rape, battering, sexual harassment, child abuse, and other forms of violence are acceptable.

According to a survey conducted by the Centre of Research on Women, US, and Instituto Promundon in Brazil, more than 65% of Indian men believe that women should tolerate violence in order to keep the family together, and women sometimes deserved to be beaten. (Open Source, 2011)

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It is heartening to see that 93% of the girls who were interviewed during the course of this study did not justify the violence in their married lives.

While the mindsets of the younger generation is changing, it is evident that a lot more work has to be done to bring about gender equality in such a patriarchal society as a lot of the behaviour stems from patriarchal mindsets and attitudes. Infact, these are so deeply entrenched in the psyche of boys and girls, men and women that rituals, behaviour and social cultures and traditions are accepted as the norm without question from any person.

There is a law that prohibits early marriage

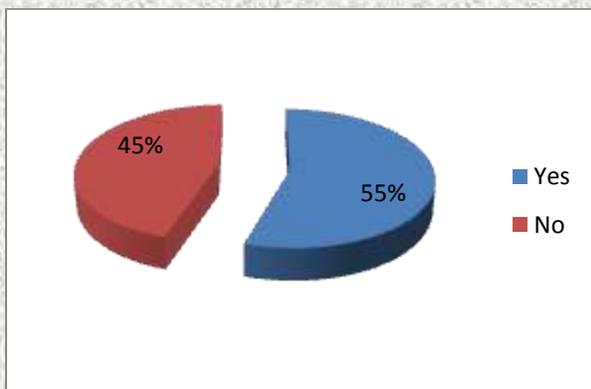


Figure 4.4: Aware of Prohibition of Child Marriage

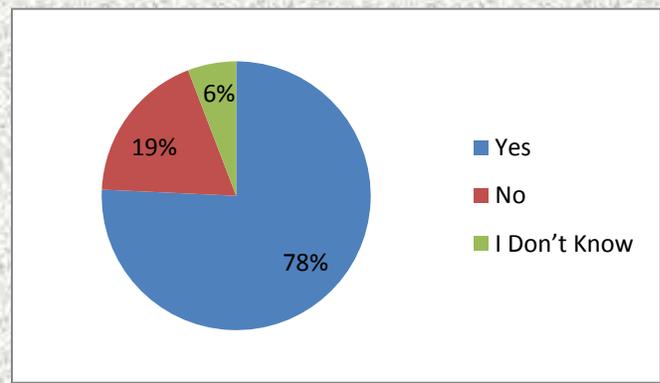


Figure 4.5: Is there a legal age for marriage

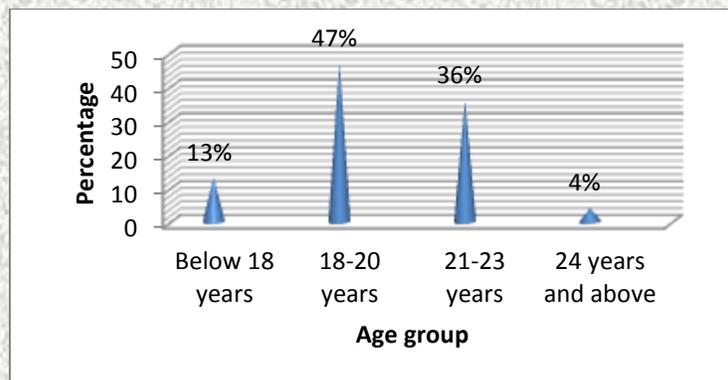


Figure 4.6: Ideal age for marriage

45% respondents shared that they were not aware of the Prohibition of Child Marriage Act, 2006 while the remaining respondents shared that they had heard of the act. Those who heard of the act, 50% shared that they were unaware of the consequences of violating the act while the others shared that they knew that parents and husband's family would be imprisoned if child marriage happens. Moreover, more than one fourth of the girls were not aware of existence of a legal age for marriage for both boys and girls. But having gone through a

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traumatic marriage, they were quick to opine that the ideal age of marriage for a girl should be between 18-23 years.

Preparing for marriage

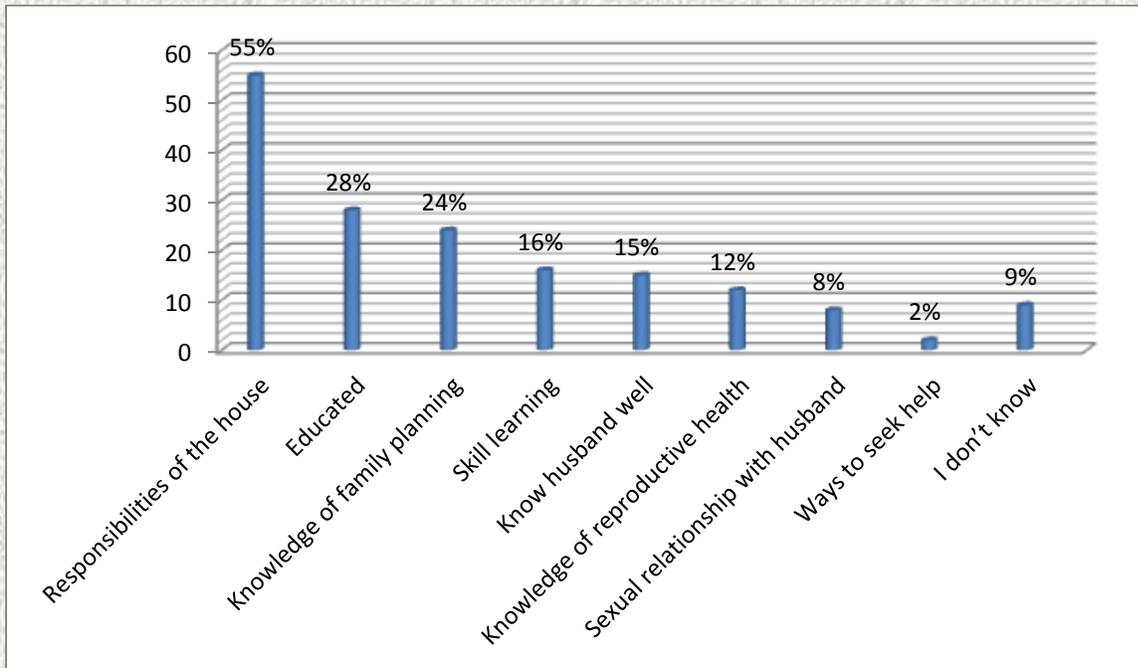


Figure 4.7: How should a girl be prepared before marriage

Since many of the girls had faced a large number of difficulties during their marriage; when they were asked about how a girl should be prepared before getting married, 55% of the girls felt that they need to learn the responsibilities of the house. 28% felt that girls should be educated before marriage. It is important as it would help them support their children in education and also make things easier for them when it comes to doing work outside their homes. 24% felt that the girls should be aware of various forms of family planning methods. If given a chance, majority of the respondents would not have had children within a few months of marriage. Lack of knowledge on family planning also led to small gaps between their children.

16% of the girls felt however that it's important for a girl to learn some form of a skill so that they can start earning. They recognized the importance of contributing to the family monetarily as one person's income will be limited. They also shared that earning gives them more freedom and respect.

15% of the girls felt that the girls should know the person they are marrying before they are married. It will help them in building a better relationship. It will also help them avoid marrying alcoholics, drug addicts or violent men. 12% shared that the girls should have good knowledge about their reproductive health and how to take care of themselves during pregnancy. These

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will help the girls to avoid a lot of problems. 8% felt that it is important for the girls to know about sexual relationship between the husband and wife. It should not be a shock for the girl on the first night as it can be very traumatic. 2% shared that girls should know various means through which they should seek help in situations like abandonment, domestic violence etc.

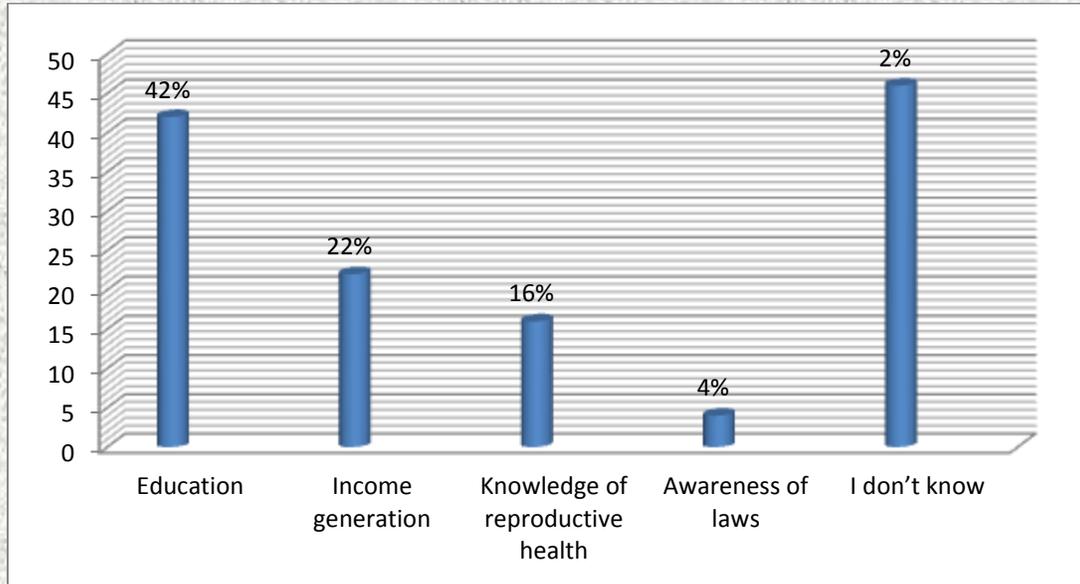


Figure 4.8: Solutions to their problem

When the girls were asked for a solution to their current problems, 46% shared that they did not know how to move ahead. They were taking each day as it came. 42% shared that education is very important. They want to continue their education and it helps them in gaining knowledge about other things including health, nutrition etc. 22% shared that they would like to work in order to gain back their self-respect and value in society. 16% shared that due to lack of knowledge of reproductive health, they faced a lot of hardship. Knowledge of the same will help them in help themselves and also others. 4% shared that awareness of laws is important to them so that when violated they can seek help.



3

Married Girls

Jyoti's Story

16 years old. Unmarried.

I live with my father, grand mother and siblings. I have studied till class four and was made to discontinue my studies when my mother passed away while giving birth to my baby brother.

Since I am the eldest of three siblings, I was given the responsibility to look after the three siblings. I cried every morning when I saw my friends going to school while I was left behind. My grandmother would see me crying and she would say that this is a girl's fate. When I turned 15 years, I had my first period. My grandmother became tensed as seeing the unsafe environment around. She started putting pressure on me to get married. My relatives added to my dilemma. I do not want to leave my father and siblings alone. My sisters are dependent on me. But my grandmother says that if I leave the house, my father's burden will decrease."

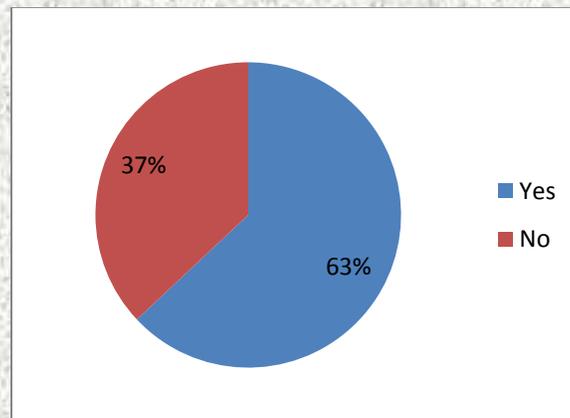


Figure 5.1: Pressure to get married

37% of the unmarried girls who were interviewed are under pressure to marry, of these, almost 30% were below the age of 18 years. Pinky is 16 years old and unmarried, she shares, "My parents never mention about marriage to me, but whenever my paternal aunt comes home, all she does is talk about getting me married. She tells my mother how unsafe the surroundings have become and it is better to marry me off as I am of right age. Just because I am a little healthy does not mean I have to be married!"

There is a legal age for marriage

34% of the girls were unaware of the Prevention of child marriage Act, 2006. Ms. Rajini, the protection officer of Panipat shared that she and her team make frequent visits to schools to share information about the act with the children and also tell them how to report child marriages. Many children in the schools have not heard of the act. Such informative classes make the girls vigilant. The data that was collected during the study shows that 34% of the girls were unaware of the Act. 85% of the girls who said that they were aware of the law did not know that 18 years was the legal age for girls to get married.

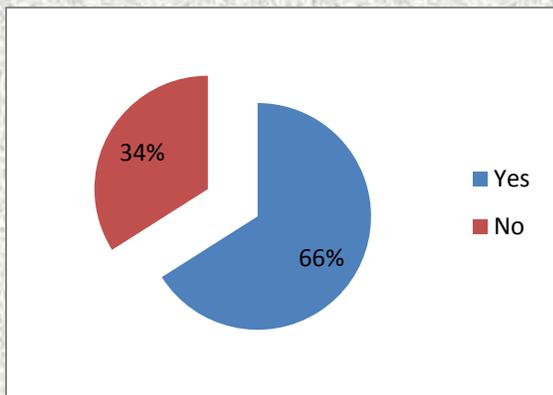


Figure 6.4: Aware of Prevention of Child marriage Act, 2006

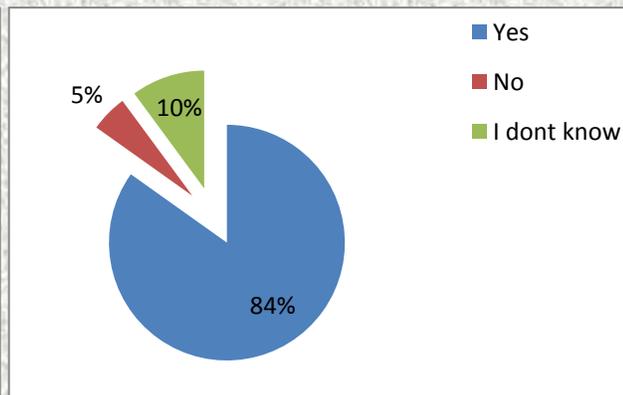


Figure 5.2: Legal age for marriage

Child marriage exists

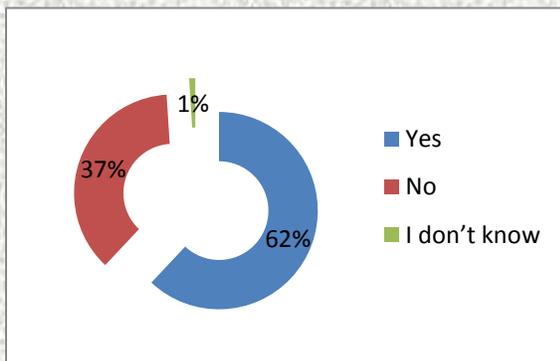


Figure 5.3: Child marriage in their villages

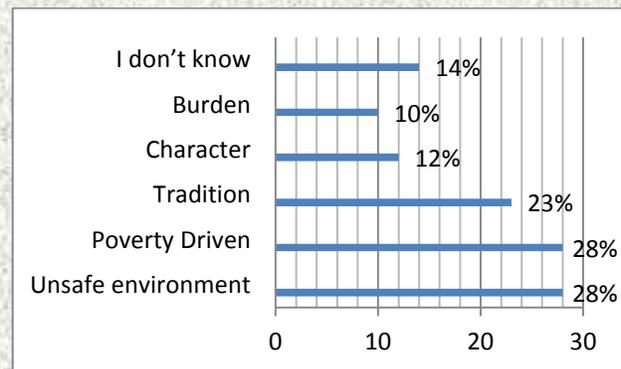


Figure 5.5: Reasons for child marriage

During the interview with the unmarried girls, 62% of the girls shared that they were aware of the existence of child marriages in their village. They mentioned that information of such marriages are not shared outside and sometimes in rare occasions these girls continue their education even after marriage and we get to know them from school.

The unmarried girls gave similar reasons for child marriage as were given by the married girls. 28% of them shared that child marriages happen because of unsafe environment for girls in the

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village. Sometimes venturing outside alone in the village becomes risky because of the boys and men who are drunk and pass comments. Parents get scared regarding their safety when they see reports of rape and molestation. In many cases, if the school is outside the village premises, parents do not continue their daughter's education fearing their safety and prefer to marry the girls off. The girls shared that poverty is another major cause of child marriage and all the respondents mentioned about group weddings. 23% of the girls shared that tradition is the major cause of child marriage in their community. 12% shared that the fear of having people point fingers at their daughter forces the parents to marry their daughter off at an early age. 10% shared that the assumption that having girls in the family is a burden and they are "*paraya dhan*" (someone else's property so it is a waste to invest on them. Hence girls get married early.

Consequences of early marriage

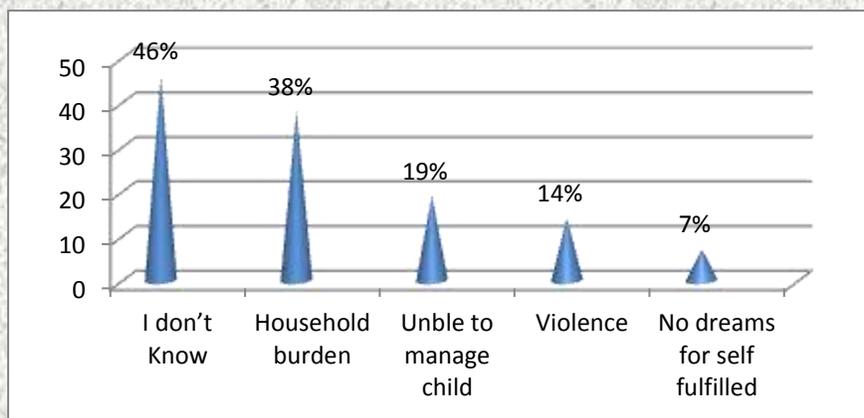


Figure 5.5: Consequences of child marriage

38% of the girls opined that because of the tender age of the girls themselves, they will not be able to manage the household work. In the villages, work begins early in the morning and carries on until late into the night, girls so young will not be able to manage work. Some of them shared that they have seen child brides being scolded and beaten for not completing their work on time. 19% shared that since the girls were themselves little children, they will not be able to manage their own child. She might neglect her baby or would not know how to provide good care. She would need the support of her in laws, which might be a difficult task. 14% shared that these girls will face a lot of violence, because they are still children and they will end up doing something wrong and will end up getting beaten by the husband and parents. 7% respondents shared that marrying at such an early age would kill all the dreams the girl had for herself. She will never be able to fulfill them as she will be submerged in household work.

Expectations from marriage

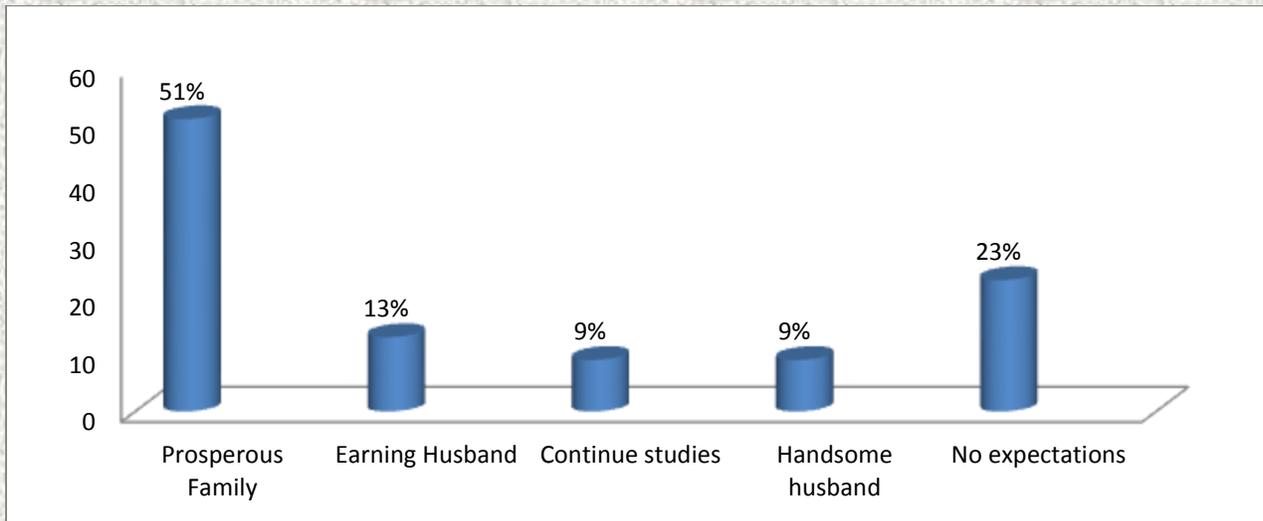


Figure 5.6: Expectations from marriage

Financial stability was a major expectation that the unmarried girls had from their marriages. 63% of the girls dreamt to be married into a prosperous family where their husbands would be earning and stable. While 23% shared that they have not dreamt of marriage nor did they have any expectations from the same; 9% shared that they would be getting married soon, but since they were still in school/college, they hoped that their husbands would allow them to continue their education.

What do you think your roles will be once you get married?

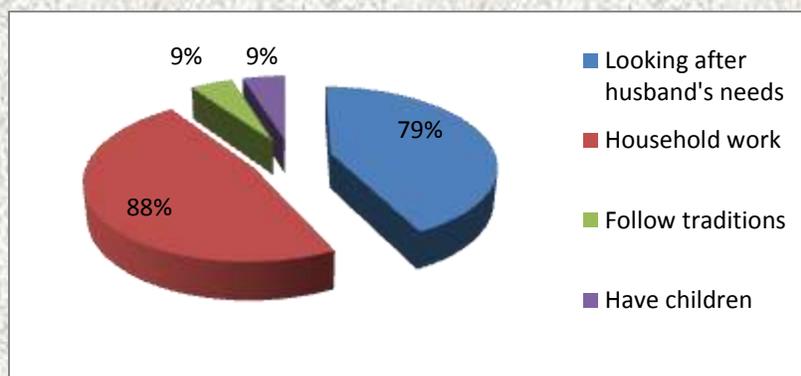


Figure 5.7: Role of women in marriage

88% of the girls felt that the major role of women after marriage is doing household work. They said that once a new bride comes into the house, she is taught about all the rules and regulations of the house and has to take over from the mother in law. Unable to manage all the

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work is disrespectful to the mother in law. Another 79% shared that looking after husband's needs is another major responsibility of the wife. She has to take care of his materialistic and physical needs. Husbands are supposed to be a God for a wife hence it is expected from the girl to always look after him. 9% of the girls shared that another major role of a woman in marriage is to give birth to babies. This will take the family ahead. If she gives birth to a son, it is better for her. Another 9% shared that following traditions is another role of a married woman.

Asha's Story

16 years old. Unmarried.

I will become a teacher just like my school teacher. I have big dreams for myself. But past one year has been very difficult for me. I was just enrolled in class 11 when my aunt came with a marriage proposal for me. The boy was my aunt's relative and she wanted me to come to her family. My mother liked the boy and since then has been forcing me to get married. The boy's family came to see me and liked me. They have fixed the marriage. But I told my mother I wanted to finish college before I get married. My mother is fine with it but not my father. He feels that girls are supposed to sit home and look after the household. My aunt slapped me when she came to know that I had refused to get married. With a little support from my mother, I have been able to postpone the wedding till I finish school. I hope I can postpone the wedding for another three years till I can finish my college but I know I am asking for too much.

Not many girls are as lucky as Asha to have managed to at least stay unmarried till she finishes school. She realizes the importance of education and dreams of a job but many girls are married off even before they start dreaming of a life for themselves.

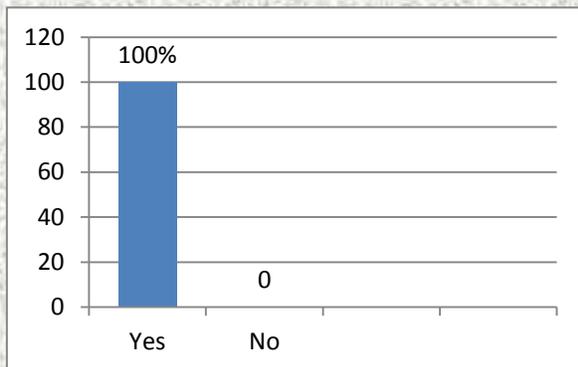


Figure 6.1: Education important for girls

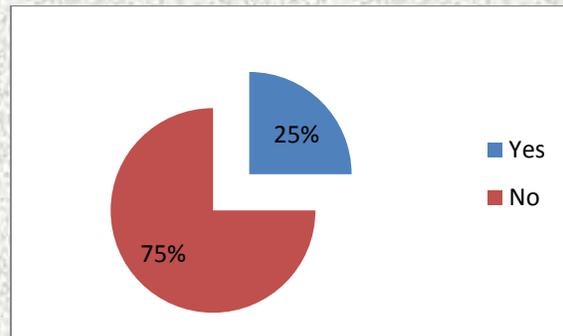


Figure 6.2: Should girls discontinue studying after marriage

For all the girls, education was an important factor (Figure 6.1) in order for them to get knowledge about various issues, to manage outside work such as going to the bank etc. and also teaching their own children in the future. When asked if girls should discontinue education after marriage, 25% felt that they should discontinue the studies while 75% said they should not (Figure 6.2). Once again the girls felt that after marriage, the in laws will not consider it to be appropriate for the girls to get married. Also, the burden of household will be such that balancing both education and household duties will become difficult.

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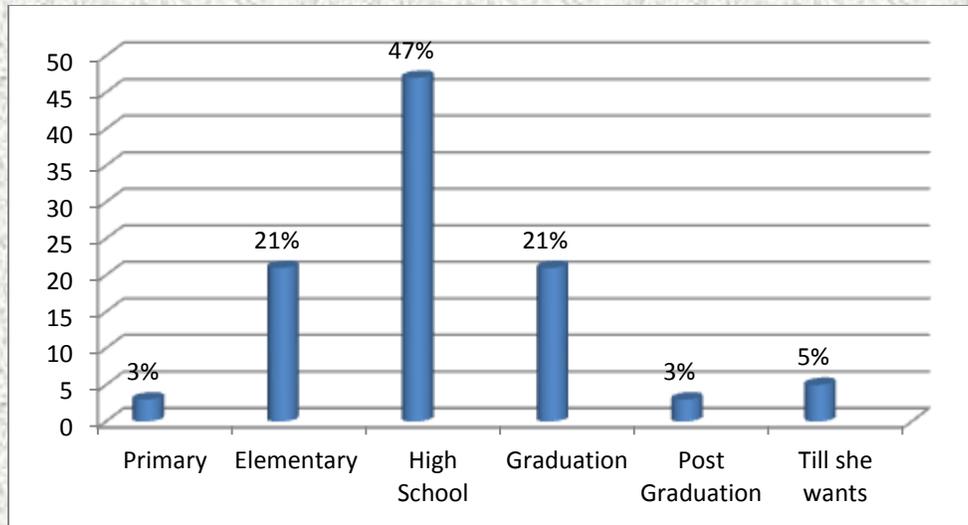


Figure 6.3: Appropriate education for girls before marriage

47% of the girls felt that they should finish at least high school before getting married. They felt that finishing high school will help the girls get a basic knowledge about everything. They will be empowered enough to take their own decisions and not depend on others. 21% felt that girls should have finished at least a graduation before their marriage. This will help the girls to get a job if they want to earn a living while another 21% shared that elementary education is enough for girls before marriage. 3% felt however, that girls should be educated till post-graduation or primary school. 5% however felt that the girls should study as much as they want.

Support system

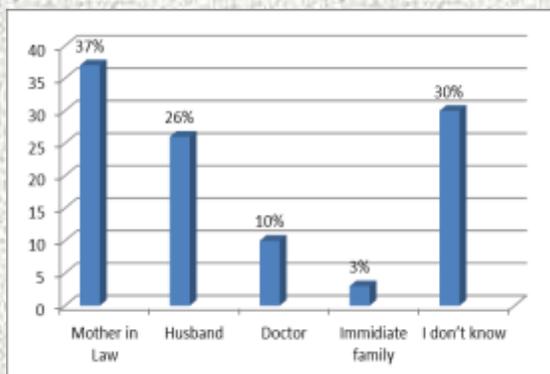


Figure 6.5: First contact after pregnancy

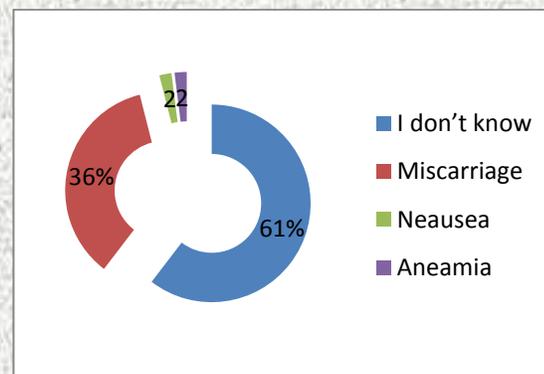


Figure 6.6: Problems faced by pregnant adolescents

More than half the girl (61%) were not aware that there could be any complications arising out of an adolescent pregnancy. 36% girls shared that adolescent pregnant girls have multiple miscarriages 30% of the girls were not aware of who they should go to for help. 37% shared that they will go to their mother in law as they are the only adult female support in the family.

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26% shared that the girls will go to their husband as they would feel shy to talk about this to any other individual and only 3% shared that they will tell their own family which is inclusive of their own parents.

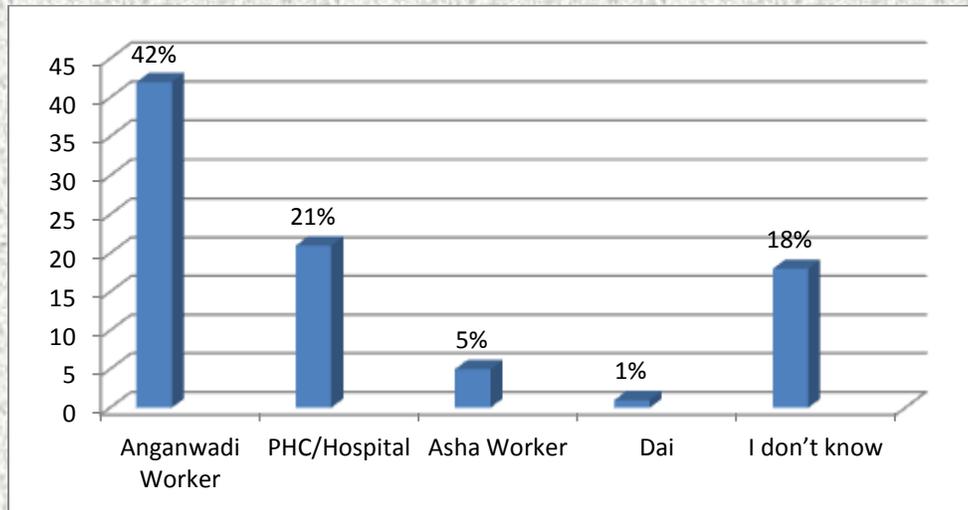


Figure 6.8: Services available in their community for pregnant women

42% shared that Anganwadi worker provides health services to pregnant women while 5% respondents shared that it was the Asha worker who provided the services. There was confusion among the respondents as they knew that services such as vaccinations, capsules etc are provided in the Anganwadi. They had seen their own family members or neighbours going to Anganwadi to avail the same. 21% of the girls shared that these women go to the hospital in their village. These respondents were girls from Mahra village. Being a big village in terms of population, a Primary Health Centre is opened in the village. 1% of the girls share that these girls go to the village midwife. Almost 18% of the girls were unaware about the services that were available for married women.

Violence in marriages

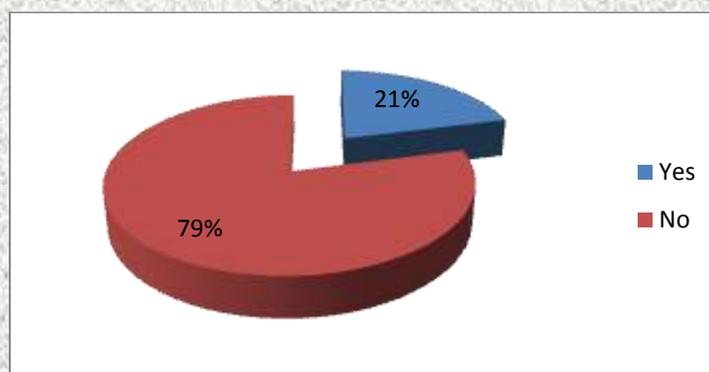


Figure 6.9: Violence part of marriage

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It is not surprising that 21% of the girls who were interviewed felt that violence was part of marriage. Such opinions once again point out the deeply rooted patriarchal perceptions in the minds of these girls that justifies all forms of violence against women and girls. Yet there were 79% like Rekha who believed that violence should not be a part of marriage,

, “If given a chance, I will never want to marry. You look into any marriage; there is so much of violence. The women are beaten up or verbally abused every single day. Nobody comes to help you as everyone accepts that violence is part of the marriage. I have not seen a marriage which is free of violence. The main causes of this are alcoholism and poverty.” (Rekha)

Prepare for marriage

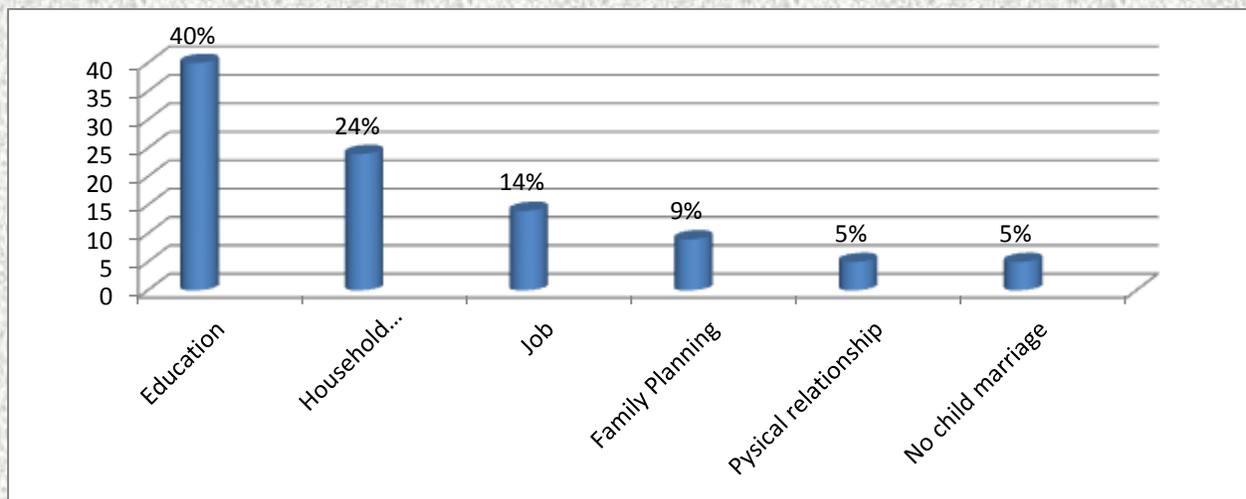


Figure 6.13: Girl prepared before marriage

Education and work were two priority areas that were identified by the girls during the interviews. A large 40% of the girls felt that having a good education would be the best way to be prepared for their marriage. They felt that being educated would provide the girls with skills. 14% share that it is important for the girl to get a job before marriage. Doing so, she will be able to contribute to the family expenses and also will not be dependent on her husband or husband's family. If later in life, she leaves the husband, she will be able to take care of herself and her children.

24% of the girls however, shared that the girls should be aware of household responsibilities before getting married. As most of the girls would end up taking care of the family, it is important that girls know how to manage their household and children.

Knowledge about sexual and reproductive rights are important factors that girls identified as important information that all new brides should be armed with. 5% shared that knowledge of physical relationship with the husband is important and the others felt strongly that girls should make sure that they should not get married before the age of 18 years as saving themselves from child marriage means they can have healthier lives.



5

Conclusions

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This study shows that child marriages are very much a reality in both these districts. Child marriage not only steals the childhood and innocence away from these girls but also puts them in grave danger physically, mentally and psychologically. Child marriage is a complete defilement of human rights, which leaves physical, psychological and emotional scars for life. These children become sexually active soon after marriage which leads to pregnancy and childbirth at an early age which further can lead to maternal as well as infant mortality.

This study also reiterates the reality that women and girls have lost faith in their ability to understand their world, leave alone transform it. They suffer from low self-esteem and lack self confidence in themselves and those around them. Women through decades of consistent neglect, hardship and subjugation doubt the system and think that it can never be changed. They mistrust their own capacities to change their situation. Their aspirations are bound by low self-concept and feelings of dependency, vulnerability and their tendency to stay submissive and voiceless.

- A large number of the girls were married before 18 years of age. Various social groups such as Bawariyas follow traditional practices without questioning its relevance in the present day. Girls as young as 2-3 months get married over some religious beliefs which are centuries old. They are illiterate and not aware of the ill effects of child marriage. They are scared to go against the traditional practices which might question them or ostracize them from the community.
- Majority of the married and unmarried girls shared that the main reason for child marriage in their communities is unsafe environment for girls. It has been felt that a married girl is considered better protected and less prone to sexual assaults as compared to her unmarried counterparts. If an unmarried girl is a victim of any form of assault, the society will not accept her. This attitude towards women has to change.
- Child marriages are also a result of the poor economic status of the family. Both daughters in most cases were married off in the same ceremony when a suitable match was found.
- Poor networking is seen between the schools and the police/judiciary. The school teachers are the first ones to know if any girl is getting married in the communities, but there is no communication of the same with the law enforcement agencies.
- A large number of respondents shared that they were forced into having sexual relationship on the first night of the marriage. When young girls get married, they are

not informed or little informed about their situation. Unpreparedness also creates helplessness and fear when they are forced into sexual activities on the first night itself. This is even before they understand their husband. Most of the husbands are fully grown men while these girls are adolescents. When young girls face such situations, they are unable to cope up.

- Majority of the girls were not aware of family planning methods before they got married. This is not surprising as many of the young girls were below 17 years when they got married. This is again validated by the response of unmarried girls regarding awareness of family planning method. Due to this, they get pregnant within the first few months of their marriage. Many of them are not even aware of family planning methods till the birth of their second or third child. This shows that there is a total lack of institutional mechanism in place. The Asha workers in the communities are supposed to provide information regarding the same to the young mothers but that is not happening. Many births still take place at homes which are either assisted by the mother in law or the Dai. Hence these young mothers are not provided with any information about family planning methods.
- Giving birth at home can be dangerous. These births don't have the advantage of a hospital delivery where immediate critical care can be provided. Since the adolescent girl's body is not prepared or strong enough for giving birth, the process can be prolonged. This can lead to ruptured uterus which if not given immediate attention can lead to death of the baby and the mother.
- There is still a huge gap in the state mechanism as there are many pregnant women who are not availing any anti natal services for the same. This includes regular checkups, multi vitamins, vaccinations etc. Not doing so can also cause a raise in infant mortality rate.
- It is disturbing to see that unmarried girls believe violence is part of marriages. They shared that they have seen women facing violence in almost all the marriages. It is the same in their own houses. They are apprehensive about getting married and fear that the same experiences await them.



6

Recommendations

Eradicating child marriage is a long and continuous process. Multiple sustainable efforts are required in this front. Changes have to come from the communities itself. Some of the recommendations for preventing child marriages are as follows:

1. Educating and Empowering young girls

Girls in the communities should be educated and encouraged to learn various life skills such as health and hygiene, communication skills, family planning, leadership qualities etc. They should be made aware of their rights. They have to learn how to handle money which will help them become independent. They should be encouraged to form collectives and learn from each other.

2. Bring attitudinal changes within the families and communities

Awareness generation programmes should be held at regular intervals in the communities which talks about marriages and its impact on the young girls. Programmes like meetings, campaigns, street plays, public announcements at regular intervals will help instigate changes on the families. Traditions have to be challenged and ill effects of it have to be clearly made visible in front of them.

3. Providing resource centres in communities

Setting up of resource centres with the help of NGOs is another way of dealing with child marriages. These will be youth friendly centres, especially for young girls. These centres will act as a safe space to talk about issues at their homes or in their neighborhood. These centres will provide information on various issues such as health, hygiene, menstruation etc.

4. Involve boys and men in addressing child marriage

It is very important that boys and men are involved in addressing the issue of child marriage as they are the perpetrators of violence. They have to be made aware of the ill effects of child marriage and how they can contribute in dealing with this issue.

5. Linking Adolescent pregnant mothers to health system

It is very important to link adolescent mothers to the existing health systems. They should have increased access to health services. They should be aware various health benefits, schemes available for them. They should be well informed about various forms of family planning methods and how to take care of new born infants.

6. Income generation programmes for families of young girls

Poverty is one of the main causes of child marriages in the rural areas. Parents marry off their daughters together to save money without realizing the ill effects of child marriage. Income generation programmes should be mobilized which enhances the economic security of poor households which aid in curbing child marriages.

7. Educational Institutions to be actively involved in keeping a watch on child marriages

School teachers are the first ones who know if any girl is getting married in their school. It's very important that they are linked with the police or prohibition officers who can support them in rescuing girls going into child marriage. Schools should organize awareness programmes for adolescent girls.

8. Awareness programmes with Police force

Complaints of child marriage come to the police initially. In many cases, the police avoids arresting the persons involved seeing the poverty of the family or other circumstances. They fail to empathize with the young girls who are married off without realizing what future holds for them. Police personals have to understand the impact of child marriage on these girls.

9. Robust legal framework

Cases of child marriages should be taken up immediately and culprits should be punished under the law. The prohibition of Child Marriage Act, 2006 states that it is not only the parents of the groom that are to be arrested, but individuals involved in marrying the couple, guests who have witnessed this union and so on. When arrests are made in such a large number, people will fear the system.

10. Political Will

The role of people's representatives such as Members of Parliament, Legislative Assemblies and local bodies is crucial as they interact with people regularly. They should be educated on the need for advocacy against child marriage. Politicians should be vigilant about the Human Rights Conventions like CRC, CEDAW and other related treaties and whether they are being fully implemented at the state level.

Annexure (i)

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

CEDAW	Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women
CRC	Convention on the Rights of a Child
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
OBC	Other Backward Class
SC	Schedule Caste
UNICEF	United Nations Children’s Emergency Fund

Annexure (ii)

HOW DID WE DO IT?

A baseline survey was conducted in the districts of Sonipat and Panipat, Haryana focusing on the community's response to the question of child marriage, knowledge and practice of reproductive health and practices among young girls of marriageable age and young married women.

Universe

1. Three villages of Sonipat namely Jharoti, Rehmana and Mahra
2. One ward of Sonipat namely Ward 5
3. Two villages of Panipat namely Namunda and Manana

Sample sizes

- Total of 57 unmarried young girls in the age group 14- 25
- Total of 105 married women in the age group 14-25.

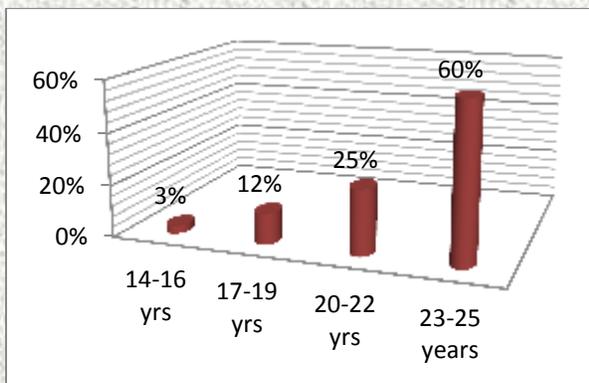


Figure 1.1: Age of married respondents

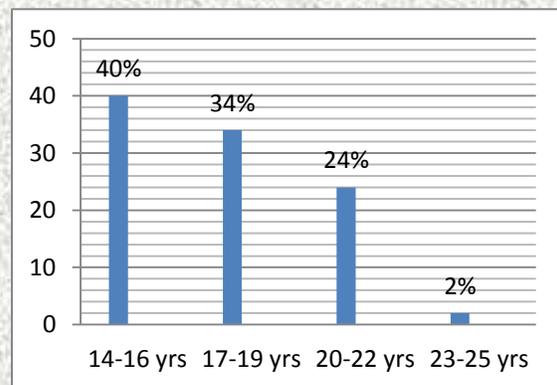


Figure 2.2: Age of unmarried respondents

Methodology

Participatory research methodology was largely relied upon for conducting this study. Participatory Research is a data collection system that is useful when there is a need to quickly

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understand the reality of the community. It places emphasis on the empowerment of the community by collecting data from their point of view. In short, the views of the people are given priority in this methodology. It is an empowering process simply because the external team is not considered as the ones that holds and gives all the knowledge during the exercise. It is empowering because in this approach, the participants of the study “own” the process and results of the exercise. Power is a central theme in this type of research and determines the extent to which people participate in determining their own futures.

If we stop to think for a minute, we find that unequal gender systems are systematically perpetuated and reinforced all around us, at home, in society, at work, in organisations, and across nations throughout the world. Power and control rests in the hands of a few (mostly men), who use their powers to advance their own economic and political interests, usually at the cost of the interest of others who are less powerful (usually women). The powerless that are mostly women ultimately come to believe in and accept the systems of inequality and injustice, as the natural order of things, without question or analysis. Socialisation from infancy further instils values and attitudes which make all of society; both men and women take these systems for granted as those aspects of reality which cannot be changed. (PRIA & ILO, 2013) The resultant patriarchal systems, norms and processes find men dominant in social, economic and political spheres – the productive roles. Women on the other hand are left with roles that are deemed secondary to those of men, the reproductive roles, including cooking, cleaning and taking care of the young, the sick and the aged. These fairly watertight compartments are socially deemed to be natural and do not allow either of the sexes to cross over and explore their potential to the fullest.

Such a social order gives rises to various forms of discrimination, of which the most prevalent is violence. Violence against women is globally one of the most tolerated forms of human rights violation. No communities are immune to its impact. Socially constructed ideas of what it means to be a woman, man, girl, or boy are based on dominant one-dimensional ideas of femininity and masculinity and intersect with age, class, caste, race, ability, and geographic location. All of these factors influence a woman’s experience with violence. This violence both reflects and reinforces inequalities between men and women, and compromises the health, dignity, security, and autonomy of its victims. The effects of violence against women on communities and societies are not just devastating, but they also result in reduced productivity, and in perpetuation of cultures of silence and impunity in respect of violence against women. (Tandon & Priesler, 2014)

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And in the absence of systems of mutual support, these women tend to stay submissive and voiceless. Their aspirations are bound by a feeling of subjugation, low self-concept and feelings of dependency and vulnerability.

Participatory research is an educational intervention in this direction. It gives inspiration to do something about this helplessness, submissiveness and feeling of inferiority that has made women accept control and injustice. It serves the interests of the oppressed, those who are dispossessed, unorganised and powerless. It seeks to prove that girls and women are capable of bringing about change.

Thus, the importance of participatory research is based on the fact that it:

- Is aimed at creating an experience of personal and collective change, thus strengthening people's understanding that change is possible, within one's self and at the level of the group.
- Encourages participants to question what they have always accepted, to critically examine their own experiences and to derive insights through analysis. This process enables them to discover and exert their latent powers for constructive action.

It recognises and validates authentic and accurate knowledge of girls and women, boys and men; which is based on real experiences, and synthesises it with fresh insights and restructured concepts based on the analysis of experience. The new body of knowledge thus created leads to a powerful sense of ownership and a willingness to transform the reality.

As an approach to social change, it was envisaged that while this methodology would enable youth to learn appropriate methods to conduct research for social transformation; at the same time it would also foster ownership of the data so generated with the view of ensuring sustainability to the work so begun. It was envisaged that the participation of youth, especially the young girls in such a study, in which they own the process and the data so generated would be an empowering experience for them.

Annexure (iii)

Profile of Married Respondents

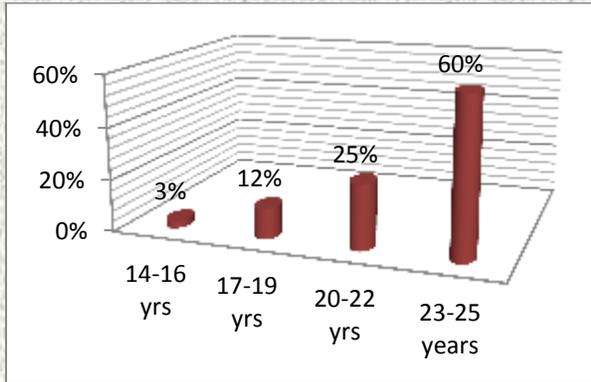


Figure 3.1: Age of married respondents

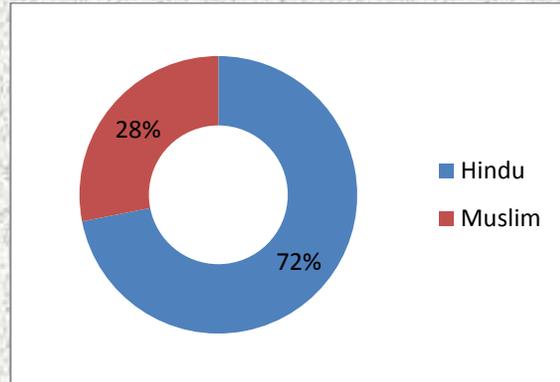


Figure 1.3: Religion of respondents

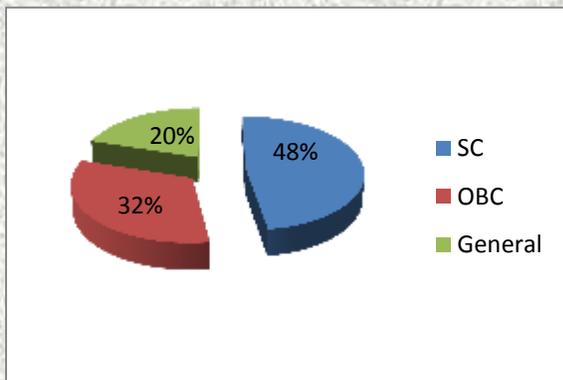


Figure 1.4: Caste of the respondents

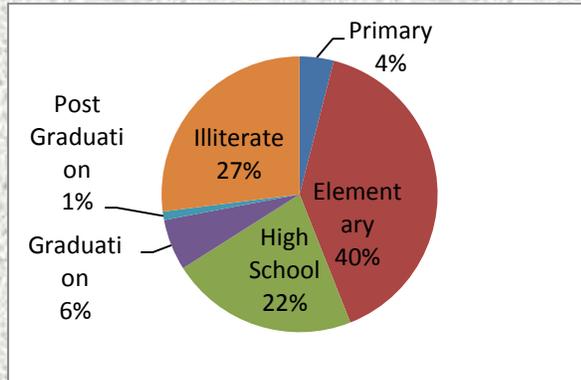


Figure 1.5: Education level of the respondents

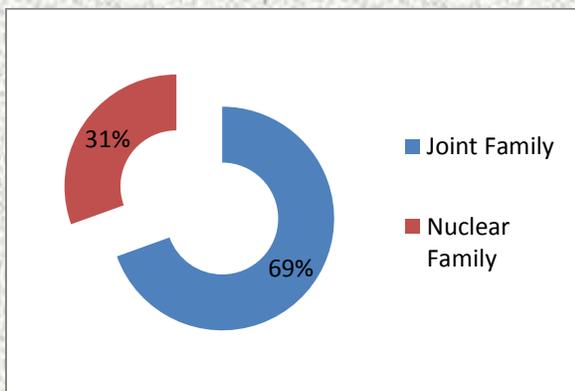


Figure 1.6: Family Type

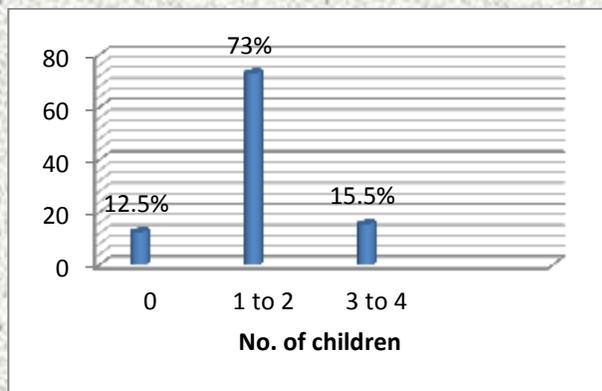


Figure 1.7: Number of children

Annexure (iv)

Profile of Unmarried Respondents

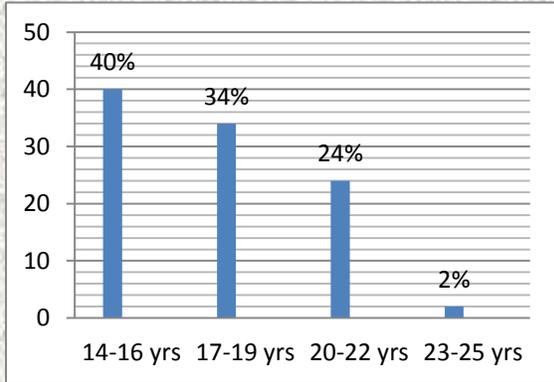


Figure 4.2: Age of unmarried respondents

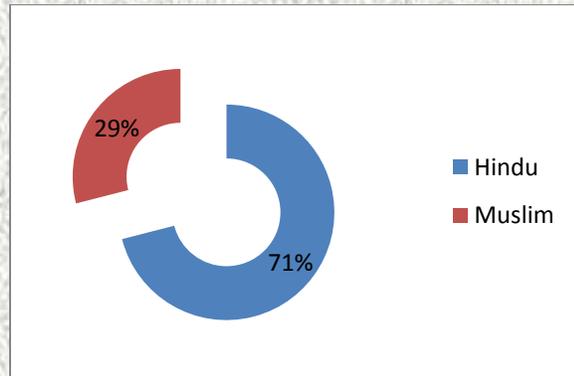


Figure 1.8: Religion of respondents

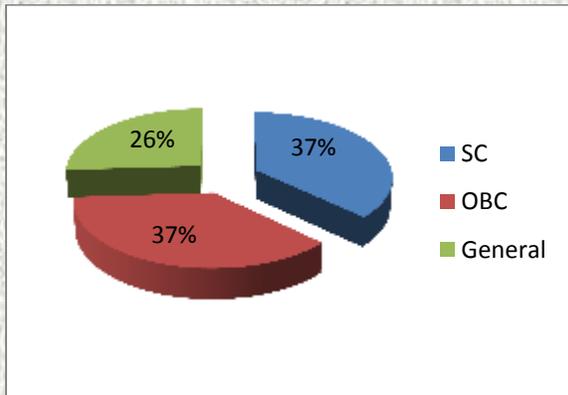


Figure 1.9: Caste of Respondents

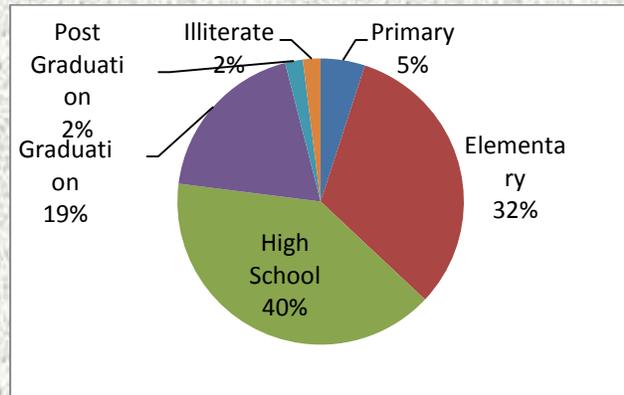


Figure 1.10: Education level of respondents

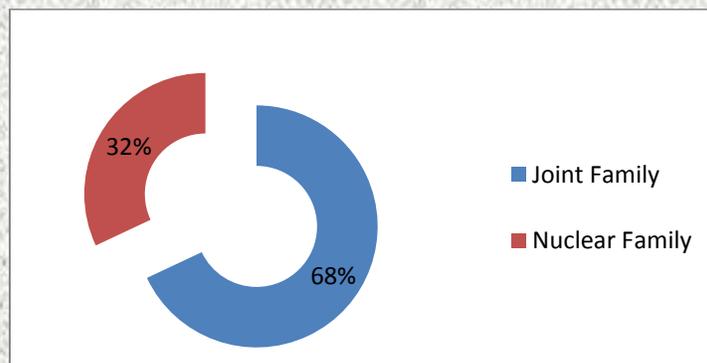


Figure 1.11: Type of family

Annexure (v)

INTERVIEW SCHEDULE-MARRIED

1. Name:

2. Age:

3. Village:

4. Education:

- a) Primary School b) Elementary School c) High School d) Graduation
e) Post Graduation f) Illiterate

5. Religion

- a) Hindu b) Muslim c) Christians d) Others

6. Caste

- a) SC b) OBC c) General

7. Family Type

- a) Nuclear b) Joint c) Extended

8. Family Profile

S No.	Relation	Education	Income if any

9. At what age did you get married?

- a) <10 yrs b) 10-13 yrs c) 14-17 yrs d) 18-21 yrs e) 22 and above

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10. What is the age gap between you and your husband?
a) 1-3 yrs b) 4-6 yrs c) 7-9 yrs d) 10 yrs and above
11. Were you forced to get married?
a) Yes b) No
12. If yes, why did you not want to get married?

13. Who forced you to get married?

14. In your opinion why did they force you to get married?

15. Was gauna Pooja performed right after marriage?
a) Yes b) No c) I don't know
16. If no, when was it performed?

17. Were you studying when your marriage was fixed?
a) Yes b) No
18. If yes, did you continue studying after marriage?
a) Yes b) No
19. If no, how did u react to discontinuing your studies?

20. What was the reason for discontinuing your studies after marriage?

21. What were your expectations from marriage before getting married?

22. What were the changes in your life after marriage?

23. In your opinion, why does early marriage happen?

24. Were you aware of family planning at the time of marriage?

- a) Yes b) No

25. If yes, how did you get information on it?

26. If no, when did you find out?

27. Were you forced to have sexual relationship with your husband initially?

- a) Yes b) No

28. Who decided the birth control technique?

- a) Husband b) Self c) Both d) Others

29. What kind of birth control do you use?

- a) Oral Contraceptive b) Condoms c) Copper T d) Others

30. At what age was your first pregnancy?

31. Was there any pressure from your family to have children?

- a) Yes b) No

32. If yes, what was the reason for the pressure?

33. Did you know the consequences of early pregnancy?

- a) Yes b) No

34. If yes, what were the consequences?

35. Did you avail any of the following services, pre-natal, anti-natal, post-natal?

- a) Yes b) No

36. Were you provided nutritional counselling at the time of pregnancy?

- a) Yes b) No

37. Where did you deliver your baby?

- a) Home b) Hospital c) Others

38. Who assisted you at the time of birth?

39. What was the outcome of your first pregnancy?

40. Did you face any reproductive health problem after your first pregnancy?

- a) Yes b) No

41. If yes, please list

42. Did you seek medical attention for the same?

a)Yes b)No

43. Did you face any form of violence early on in your marriage?

a) Yes b)No

44. If yes, what were they?

45. Is violence in marriage justified?

a) Yes b) No

46. Were you aware of Child Marriage Prohibition Act?

a) Yes b)No

47. If yes, are you aware of the consequences of violating the act?

a) Yes b)No

48. Is there a legal age to marry?

a)Yes b) No

49. If yes, what is it?

50. In your perception, what is the ideal age for marriage?

51. How should a girl be prepared before she gets married?

52. In your perception, what are the solutions to the problems faced by you?

Annexure (vi)

INTERVIEW SCHEDULE-UNMARRIED

1. Name:

2. Age:

3. Village:

4. Education:

b) Primary school b) Elementary school c) High school d) Graduation d) Post graduation

e) Illiterate

5. Religion

b) Hindu b) Muslim c) Christians d) Others

6. Caste

b) SC b) OBC c) General

7. Family Type

a) Nuclear Family b) Joint Family c) Extended family

8. Family Profile

S No.	Relation	Education	Income if any

9. Are you pressurized to get married?

26. What are the services available for pregnant girls/women in your community?

27. Do you believe that violence is part of marriage?

- a) Yes b) No

28. If yes, why do you think so?

29. Are you aware of family planning?

- a) Yes b) No c) Heard about it

30. If yes, how did you find out?

31. What are the various methods of family planning?

32. In your opinion, how should a girl be prepared before her marriage?