

International Multidisciplinary
Research Journal

Golden Research
Thoughts

Chief Editor
Dr.Tukaram Narayan Shinde

Publisher
Mrs.Laxmi Ashok Yakkaldevi

Associate Editor
Dr.Rajani Dalvi

Honorary
Mr.Ashok Yakkaldevi

Welcome to GRT

RNI MAHMUL/2011/38595

ISSN No.2231-5063

Golden Research Thoughts Journal is a multidisciplinary research journal, published monthly in English, Hindi & Marathi Language. All research papers submitted to the journal will be double - blind peer reviewed referred by members of the editorial board. Readers will include investigator in universities, research institutes government and industry with research interest in the general subjects.

International Advisory Board

Flávio de São Pedro Filho Federal University of Rondonia, Brazil	Mohammad Hailat Dept. of Mathematical Sciences, University of South Carolina Aiken	Hasan Baktir English Language and Literature Department, Kayseri
Kamani Perera Regional Center For Strategic Studies, Sri Lanka	Abdullah Sabbagh Engineering Studies, Sydney	Ghayoor Abbas Chotana Dept of Chemistry, Lahore University of Management Sciences[PK]
Janaki Sinnasamy Librarian, University of Malaya	Ecaterina Patrascu Spiru Haret University, Bucharest	Anna Maria Constantinovici AL. I. Cuza University, Romania
Romona Mihaila Spiru Haret University, Romania	Loredana Bosca Spiru Haret University, Romania	Ilie Pinteau, Spiru Haret University, Romania
Delia Serbescu Spiru Haret University, Bucharest, Romania	Fabricio Moraes de Almeida Federal University of Rondonia, Brazil	Xiaohua Yang PhD, USA
Anurag Misra DBS College, Kanpur	George - Calin SERITAN Faculty of Philosophy and Socio-Political Sciences Al. I. Cuza University, IasiMore
Titus PopPhD, Partium Christian University, Oradea, Romania		

Editorial Board

Pratap Vyamktrao Naikwade ASP College Devrukh, Ratnagiri, MS India	Iresh Swami Ex - VC. Solapur University, Solapur	Rajendra Shendge Director, B.C.U.D. Solapur University, Solapur
R. R. Patil Head Geology Department Solapur University, Solapur	N.S. Dhaygude Ex. Prin. Dayanand College, Solapur	R. R. Yalikal Director Management Institute, Solapur
Rama Bhosale Prin. and Jt. Director Higher Education, Panvel	Narendra Kadu Jt. Director Higher Education, Pune	Umesh Rajderkar Head Humanities & Social Science YCMOU, Nashik
Salve R. N. Department of Sociology, Shivaji University, Kolhapur	K. M. Bhandarkar Praful Patel College of Education, Gondia	S. R. Pandya Head Education Dept. Mumbai University, Mumbai
Govind P. Shinde Bharati Vidyapeeth School of Distance Education Center, Navi Mumbai	Sonal Singh Vikram University, Ujjain	Alka Darshan Shrivastava Shaskiya Snatkottar Mahavidyalaya, Dhar
Chakane Sanjay Dnyaneshwar Arts, Science & Commerce College, Indapur, Pune	G. P. Patankar S. D. M. Degree College, Honavar, Karnataka	Rahul Shriram Sudke Devi Ahilya Vishwavidyalaya, Indore
Awadhesh Kumar Shirotriya Secretary, Play India Play, Meerut (U.P.)	Maj. S. Bakhtiar Choudhary Director, Hyderabad AP India.	S.KANNAN Annamalai University, TN
	S. Parvathi Devi Ph.D.-University of Allahabad	Satish Kumar Kalhotra Maulana Azad National Urdu University
	Sonal Singh, Vikram University, Ujjain	

Address:- Ashok Yakkaldevi 258/34, Raviwar Peth, Solapur - 413 005 Maharashtra, India
Cell : 9595 359 435, Ph No: 02172372010 Email: ayisrj@yahoo.in Website: www.aygrt.isrj.in

THE VICIOUS CYCLE BETWEEN LOW LITERACY AND EARLY MARRIAGE IN AGRO-BASED ECONOMY: A CASE STUDY IN NADIA DISTRICT, WEST BENGAL



Mahadeb Ghosh¹ and Biswaranjan Mistri²

INTRODUCTION

Early marriage, is better known as child marriage, is defined as marriage carried below the age of 18 years, "before the girl is physiologically and psychologically ready to shoulder the responsibilities of marriage and child bearing"(The Inter African Committee, 2003). Early marriage is by no means a new phenomenon (Dhital, 2000). Poor parents think that they will be benefited economically and socially if they give marry of their female child very early became the daughter is considered as a financial burdens on the family. Child marriage is a practice that robs millions girls of their childhood, their rights and their dignity (Tutu, 1997). Early marriage affects both boys and girls but impact on girls is

Abstract

Marriage is the approved social pattern where by two or more people establish a family (Herton & Hunt, 1984). Throughout the world, marriage is regarded as a moment of celebration and a milestone in adult life (UNICEF, 2001). Child marriage is a formal marriage or informal union entered into by an individual before reaching the age of 18 (UNICEF, 2011). Sadly, in case of where bride's age is less than 18 years, the marriage gives no such celebration and enjoy in human life but it is enunciated bewilderment in life of the bride. Patriarchal society gives less value to girl child, mainly in less educated agrarian society where female children are illiterate or less educated has no chance for job, hence force to marry. Child marriage is one of the most prevalent forms of sexual abuse and exploitation especially of girls (Ghosh, 2011). This social practice is also a violation of human rights. Nadia district, the study area, of West Bengal is situated in flood plain of lower Ganges Basin and main economic activity of the area is agriculture. As per 2011 census, Govt. of India, except urban centre, percentage of literacy of the district is lower (75.58%) than state level (77.1%) and female literacy rate is (70.98%) which is (7.77%) lower than male literacy rate (78.75%). In this agro-based society, generally poor families want to reduce their economic constrain, protect girl child from pre- marriage sex and avoid pregnancy outside marriage, marry off their girl in very early before legal age of marriage (18 years). In addition, they desire to ensure girl child under the guardianship of a male causes more girl child fall into the trap of early marriage. The vicious relation between low female literacy and early marriage and its negative consequences have been studied in detail and the way of probable protective measures are drawn in the research.

Keywords : Social Institution, Patriarchal Society, Agrarian Society, Child Education.

Short Profile

Mahadeb Ghosh is working as an Assistant Teacher at Nakashipara High School, Nadia. He Has Completed M.Sc. (Geography), U.G.C. and NET. He Has Professional Experience 10 Years.

more intense (UNICEF, 2001). Lack of education of parents as well as of child bride is a major risk factor for child marriage (United Nation, 2011). Education is often seen as a key to preventing child marriage (UNICEF, 2004). Early marriage affects on their (girls) education, health, economy and social status, deprived from life choices and sinful nature of poverty. In India, the term 'child marriage' refers to a marriage to which either of the contracting parties is a child meaning a girl below 18 years and boy below 21 years (The Prohibition of Child Marriage Act, 2006). Teen-agers mainly female children are married when they are not mature enough for

¹Assistant Teacher, Nakashipara High School, Nadia.

²Assist. Professor, Dept. of Geography, The University of Burdwan .

marriage and reproductive hurdles just after puberty and unfortunately creates shorn of fundamental human rights. In India 47% of girls are married before the legal age (UNICEF, 2010). The practice of marrying daughter early is widespread and almost a prevalent practice for many poorly literate, financially backward villages of Rural Bengal (Naskar, 2011). According to National Family Health Survey (2005-2006) in West Bengal 56% of girls are married by age of 18 years.

Nadia, the study area is an agro-based district where literacy rate is low and early marriage has been happening profoundly. In the study area early marriage is till now at 8.02% according to 2001 census in India. It is a socially established practice and persists from generation to generation. In this agro-based society, poverty level is high, percentage of literacy is low (75.58%), gender disparity is high which ensure the continuity of the inhuman practice.

OBJECTIVES

The main objectives of the study on the socio-economic issue are as follows

- 1.To find out different causes of early marriage in Nadia District.
- 2.To analyze the affect of early marriage on women herself and whole society.
- 3.To explain the importance of education to combat early marriage.
- 4.To show relation between early marriage and population growth.
- 5.To assess the reasons of different intensities of early marriage in different community.
- 6.Finally, to give some feasible strategies to reduce the malediction to protect and develop human resource.

Data Base

The study has done based on primary and secondary data. Primary data have collected with the help of structured questionnaires in those household in which marriage ceremony have

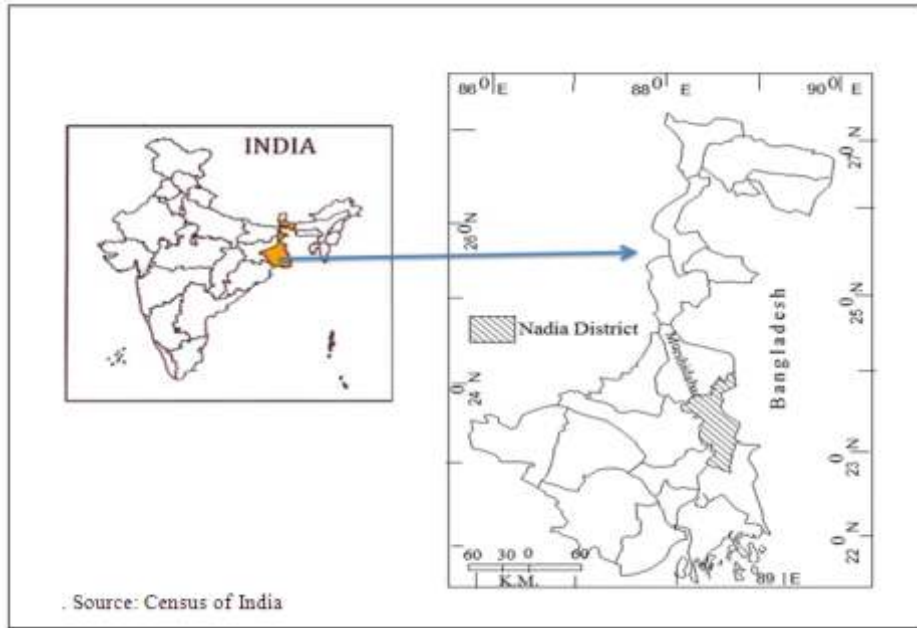
occurred between the last 5 years from the day of survey and 103 households have identified on the basis of the criteria. Primary information has also been collected from Accredited Social Health Activist's (ASHA) workers about age of early marriage and its causes and consequences as well as took suggestions for remedy according to their perception. Secondary informations on other aspects have collected from census office of India, Kolkata, Bureau of Applied Economics and Statistics, Directorate of Panchayat, West Bengal, and Nakashipara Gram Panchayat, Nadia.

Methods

Spatial pattern of early marriage have been shown according to age, caste and residence to present the variation and presented by cartograms. Correlation method also used to show the relationship between human development index (HDI) and percentage of early marriage.

Study Area

Nadia District of West Bengal lies between 22° 53'N to 24° 11' N latitude and 88° 09' E to 88° 48' E longitude. The area of this district is 3927 sq km; consists of four subdivisions, 24 police stations, 10 Municipality, 17 CD block, 187 Gram Panchayat covers 1346 village. Total population of the district is 5168488 (2011, Census of India) in which Hindu is 73.23%, Muslim is 25.41% Christian is 0.64% and others is 0.09%. Its literacy rate is 75.58%, sex ratio is 947. The population density is 1316/sq km and population growth rate is 12.24%. There is 8.02% early marriage of 10-18 years age is performed in the district and 78.95 % in 103 families. 77.7% family lies below poverty line and the income level ranges from ? 2000-3000 per month.



RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The data of early marriage is unavailable on the real extent because many parents exaggerate the actual age of marriage as well as most marriages are not officially registered. Some data have gathered from census handbook and some have collected through primary household survey. On an average in West Bengal 7.29% are married before turning 18 years and in Nadia 8.02% are married before the age of 18 years (2001) . In West Bengal, the highest percentage of early marriage is found in Murshidabad district (9.80%) and lowest

percentage is found in Kolkata (4.76%). In respect to total married population in Nadia the percentage of early marriage is declining from 1961-2001(8.11%-8.02%), though the fact reflected in field survey that in rural Nadia 78.95% girls are married before the age of 18. This percentage is less in urban areas (1.95%), because literacy is higher than rural areas, poverty is low and many females are engaged in economic sectors. 8.91% early marriage happens in rural areas and 6.96% in urban places.

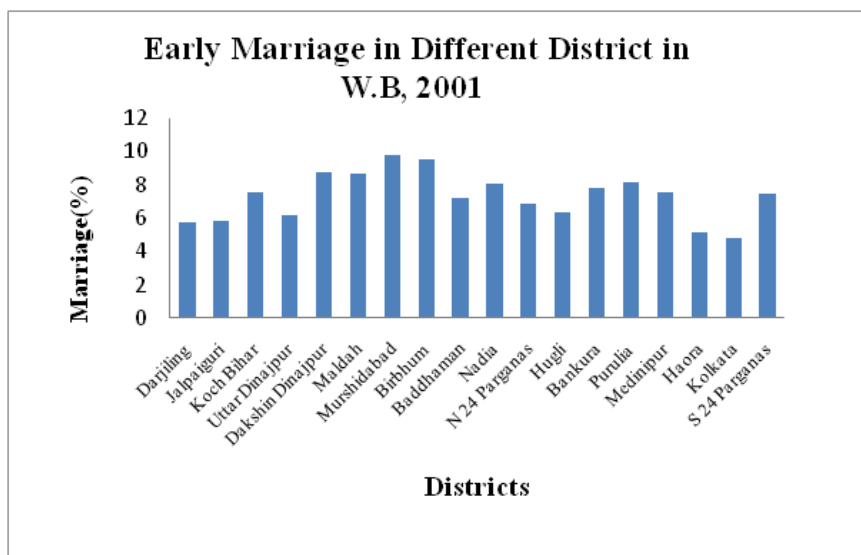


Fig. 2 District wise Early Marriage in West Bengal, 2001

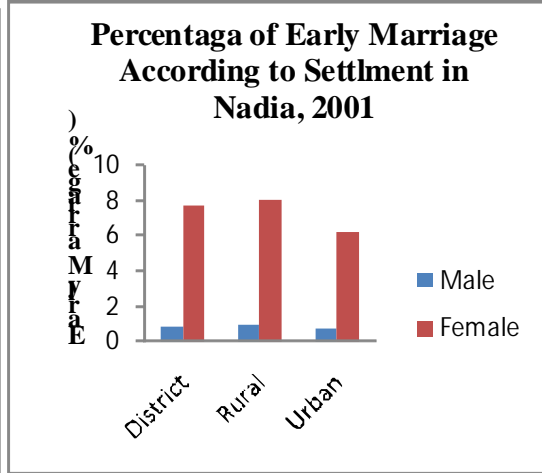
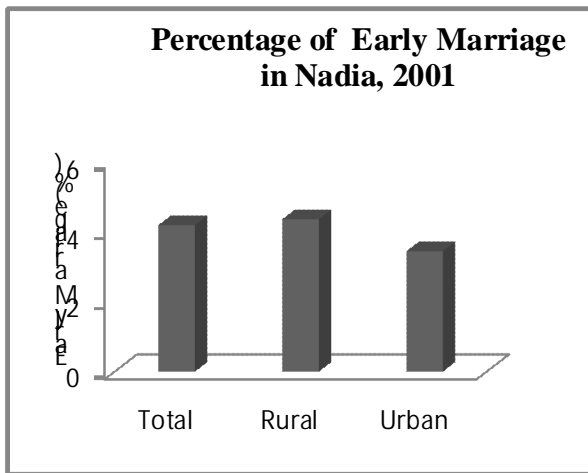


Fig: 3 Rural-Urban Distribution of Early Marriage Fig: 4 Sex wise Early Marriage

There is not only rural-urban variation but also male-female variation is found in this regard. In Nadia less than one percent (0.90%) male get married before the age of 18years where as 7.67% female are married in the age bracket. (Census, 2001).

caste, class and religion. 64.5%, 77.78%, 79.31% and 62.5% early marriage occurred in General, SC, ST and OBC respectively. According to religion class 71.84% Hindu and 82.6% Muslim married before the legal age.

Early Marriage in Sample Village

Causes

There are many causes of early marriage stated by parents, guardians and women who got married in early age, themselves. Economic problem and socio-cultural backwardness as low literacy, low income level, poverty, dowry, inferiority complex and trafficking are mostly underpinning to this bad practice.

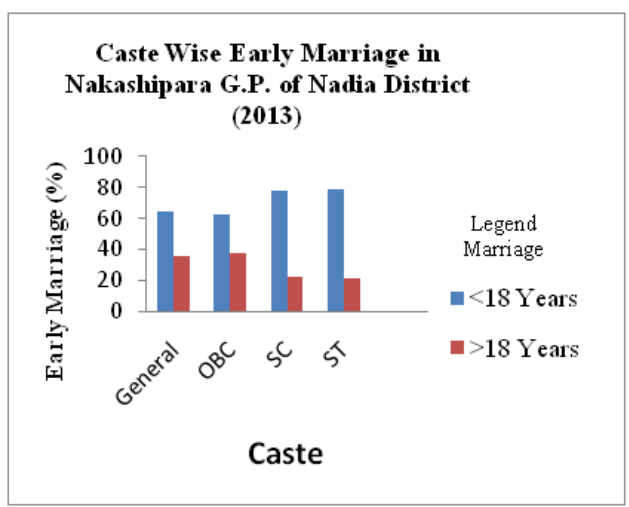


Fig. 5: Early marriage in different categories

In the study, investigation has made at Nakashipara Gram Panchayat (G.P.) of Nakashipara Block in Nadia District. This is an agro based G.P. and its literacy rate is low (61.57%). Alarmingly the percentage of early marriage is 78.95% means only 21.05% were married after legal age of marriage. The incidence of early marriage is varied with

Low Literacy and Early Marriage:

Educated people marry off after adulthood because it takes time to complete higher education and employment the time of marriage gets delayed. In Nadia, percentage of literacy is gradually increasing as 52.53% (1991), 66.1% (2001) and in 2011 it is 75.58%. Parallely percentage of early marriage decreases from 8.11% to 8.02% from 1961 to 2001 respectively. Male female literacy is unequal, male literacy is (72.3%) higher than female literacy rate (59.6%). This is the one of the reasons of more early marriage in girl children. Disparity in literacy between rural and urban is found. Rural literacy rate is 61.8% where as urban literacy rate is 81.4%, even between these two settlements

male-female disparity is notable. In rural area, male literacy rate is 68.2% and female literacy rate is 55%, on the other hand in urban areas male literacy rate is 86.95% and female literacy rate is 75.7%. A correlation between percentage of early marriage and percentage of literacy rate have drawn, these two variables are negatively related with each other. There are also rural-urban variations of early marriage, in rural 8.91% and in urban 6.96% is early marriage. In rural male .93% and female 7.98% and in urban male 0.73% and female 6.23% are married by age less than 18 years. The customs of early marriage are more common in illiterate parents than literate parents, among illiterate parents, 59.77% give marry their girl children as early and in literate the practice is found 40.23%. In the study area, remarkably, 95.15% parents express their urge honestly to educate their girl child.

Economic Reason

Income level is a factor of literacy and early marriage. 77.7% households who perform early marriage belong to an income level less than of ? 3000/per month. Only head of the family earns and 5 or 6 members are depending on this earning. 25.2% parents have three or four children are not able to support their children for education. So, economic burden is high, no savings for future, they do not carry education for their children and resulted in school dropout. When a drop out girl stays in a poor family and the girl has nothing to do but given off early marriage.

Due to lower income level 17.47% girl children as drop out has submissively married. Unfortunately, poor family regards daughter as an economic burden and less important because after marriage she goes and lives in her in-law’s family. 77.7 % give marry their daughter due to acute poverty in sample household of 103.

Dowry System

Dowry is a bad practice of this society. Parents are disagree to continue the education for girls because it is incapable to bear the double cost for education and marriage. 81.6% parents have the fear of dowry payment. 17.5% parents want to give marriage their girl children as early as possible due to this reason. 68.93 % parents don’t support this system but compelled. Unfortunately 31.07% would like to this system.

Inferiority complex

Inferiority complex due to black skin colour, less attractive looking, low height etc. of girls is another grievance for girls’ early marriage. 85.4% parents have suffered from this complexity. 14.6% do not want to send for education because of eve teasing by uncongenial boys. Parents stated that, if girls remain unmarried after adulthood neighbours, villagers and relatives begin to doubt and insult her chastity. Parents want to avoid these insult by hinder the education and arrange their daughter’s marriage as early as possible.

Table 1: Causes of Early Marriage

Sl. No.	Causes	No. of Household	Percentage of Household
1	Poverty/ Found Suitable Bridegroom/ Inferiority Complex/ Fear of Dowry	11	10.67
2	Found Suitable Bridegroom/ Inferiority Complex/ Fear of Dowry/ Trafficking	1	0.97
3	Poverty/ Bridegroom chose the girl/ Inferiority Complex/ Fear of Dowry/ Good Out Looking	5	4.85
4	School Drop Out/ Bad Out Looking/ Religion	1	0.97
5	Found Suitable Bridegroom/ Age Above 20 Yrs/Unemployed	2	1.94
6	More Female Child/Poverty/ Inferiority Complex/ Fear of Dowry	11	10.67
7	More Female Child/Lack of Social Security/ Inferiority Complex/ Fear of Dowry	2	1.94

8	School Drop Out/ Fear of Dowry/Trafficking	1	0.97
9	Poverty/ School Drop Out/ Fear of Dowry/Develop Figure	3	2.91
10	Poverty/ School Drop Out/ Fear of Dowry/ Inferiority Complex	13	12.62
11	Poverty/ School Drop Out	4	3.88
12	Poverty/ Inferiority Complex/ Fear of Dowry/ Good Out Looking	10	9.70
13	Poverty/ Inferiority Complex/ Fear of Dowry	10	9.70
14	More Female Child/ Poverty/ Inferiority Complex/ Fear of Dowry/ Good Out Looking/ Lack of Social Security	4	3.88
15	More Female Child/ Poverty/ Inferiority Complex/ Fear of Dowry/ Good Out Looking/ Lack of Social Security/ Trafficking	6	5.82
16	Poverty/ Age Above 20 Yrs/ Inferiority Complex/ Fear of Dowry	3	2.91
17	Poverty/ Bridegroom chose the girl/ Inferiority Complex/ Fear of Dowry	1	0.97
18	Poverty/ Bridegroom chose the girl/ Inferiority Complex/ Fear of Dowry/ Lack of Guardian	5	4.85
19	School Drop Out/ Good Out Looking/ Inferiority Complex/ Fear of Dowry/ Lack of Guardian	1	0.97
20	Poverty/ Inferiority Complex/ Fear of Dowry/ Trafficking/ Lack of Social Security	2	1.94
21	More Female Child/ Found Suitable Bridegroom/ Inferiority Complex/ Fear of Dowry	1	0.97
22	Love Affair	6	5.82
	Total	103	100

Consequences of Early Marriage

Early marriage impedes to education, opportunity of employment, dispassionate in family life, health of mother as well as child and finally increases population growth. In the study area, 30.1% has drop out from school due to marriage before legal age and has a little chance (2.91%) for education in laws' family. In this area early marriage is 78.95% and among them 76.04% is unlikely to continue education after marriage. These uneducated or less educated women have not developed in skill for brain labour and they are restricted to get job opportunity. Although, it is noted that 7.77% parents do not accept girls as an earning member outside the home.

In the study area, 9.7% child brides have been facing problem in law's family, tortured by mother-in-law or by husband. It is remarkable that due to early marriage 59.22% have been suffering from ill health condition such as weakness, neuron-problem menstruation problem, birth complication and stomach ache etc.

Early marriage and population growth are positively related ($r = 0.79367$). Adolescent stage

is the high reproductive age also gives birth to more children and this society suggests that child bearing specially son is only a means to secure identity and status in family. This identity compulsion compiles the child bride to become mother in very early age. In the study area percentage of early marriage is decreasing from 8.11% (1961) to 8.02% (2001) and population growth rate also decreases from 49.65% (1961) to 19.5% (2001) and 12.24% (2011).

SUGGESTIONS AND CONCLUSION:

i) It is very necessary to make education free and compulsory for girl child and make effort to full enrolment. By this effort a children will go to school and take education which delays the age of marriage.

ii) All should try to stop school dropout and include all children in school premises of the age bracket (6 -14 years) and also arrange free admission and books, then all children may come to school and the age of marriage would be delayed. Government of India and Government of West Bengal have announced different schemes for girls, such as Girl's incentives, Kanyashree Project, Book grants,

money for dress and one time grants of ? 25000 for unmarried girl students of 18 years age. Villagers' told they are facilitated from this help and want to educate our girl child and give them marriage after 20 or 21 years of their age.

iii) Life style educations is another modern approach in school education enunciated by Govt. of India since 2005 by which students are able to understand their physical health and reduce the curiosity by which percentage of early marriage can be reduced.

iv) Parents did not know what will happen after early marriage of their daughter, when they see the aftermath of married child, told that, "we never repeat this work". There are need of health awareness and social education program.

v) ASHA workers also have able to make convinced to parents about age of marriage for girls. Now women association and self help group have been formed, many girls act as a member of these associations and group and earning money. There are 92.23% parents, who like girls' involvement in economic sector.

vi) Dowry is a social problem, to stop this practice people awareness is very necessary.

vii) In this area, different approach has proposed by parents about the age of marriage, such as 48.5% told it would be 18-20 years, 34%, more than 20 years and 17.5% less than 18 years.

Lastly potent the early marriage prohibition act to combat this malpractice.

The analysis and description of the present paper leads to the conclusion that early marriage is prevalent at higher rate at 78.05% in rural Nadia due to poverty, low literacy, low income level, social and cultural traditional practice and bad effect of modern communication technology. Girls are married before 18 years are less educated and are not able to get job opportunity, have more children which are underpinning the population growth. Girl child is married to a man who is significantly older, in this case woman has no freedom for her life and decision making, girl is beaten and sexually

exploited by her older husband.

REFERENCES:

1. Adlakha, Arjun, Mohamed Ayad and Sunil Kumar (1991), The Role of Nuptuality in Fertility Decline: A Comparative Analysis, In: Proceedings of the Demographic and Health Surveys World Conference, Washinhton DC, 1991, Vol. 2, Columbia, Maryland.
2. Caldwell, John C. and Pat Caldwell (1977) 'Role of Marital Sexual Abstinence in Determining Fertility: A Study of the Yoruba in Nigeria', Journal of Population Studies, Vol.3,1.
3. Ghosh, B. (may,2011), Child Marriage, Society and Law: A Study in a Rural Context in West Bengal, India, International Journal of Law, Policy and the Family 25(2), (2011), p.199–219, Advance Access Publications.
4. Early Marriage: A Harmful Traditional Practice, UNICEF, 2005
5. Early Marriage, Child Spouses, UNICEF, Innocenti Research Center, Florence, Italy, March 2001. Horton, P. B. & Hunt, C. L. (1984): Sociology, 6th ed, Singapore: Mc. Grow Hill Book Companies.
6. Early Marriage: Whose Right to Choose, Mission Statement of the Forum on Marriage and Right of Women and Girls, May 2000.
7. Jones, Gavin W. 'Population Dynamics and Their Impact on Adolescents in the ESCAP Region', Asia Pacific Journal, Vol. 12, No.3, 1997
8. Mathur, Green and Malhortra, New Insights on Preventing Child Marriage: A Global Analysis of Factors and Programs (ICRW, USAID, PACTIGWG, April 2007).
9. Plan, Breaking the Vows: Early and Forced Marriage and Girls' Education (2011). Available from <http://www.planuk.org/resources/documents/Breaking-Vows-Early-and-Forced-Marriage-and-Girls-Education>.
10. R. Nasker, The Role of Folk Media and participatory communication in Rural Develop: An Exploratory Case Study of Combating Child Marriage in Malda, Global Media Journal, India

Ed, Vol. 2/ No. 2 (December 2011).

11. Rocha, Lola, M.C. Gomes and Acosta (1990), 'Consolidating Income-Generating Project for Women', UNICEF programme Division, New York.

12. Rupa Dhital, 2000, Child Marriage in Nepal. Available from <http://www.cwin.org.np/resources/issues/child-marriage.htm>.

13. Sen, P. (1997), A Basket of Resources: Women's Resistance to Domestic Violence in Calcutta, quoted in: Uttara, Mariam, Purna Sen and Marilyn Thomson (1998), 'Forced Marriage, Forced Sex: the Perils of Childhood for Girls' Gender and Development, Vol. 6 No. 3, Oxfarm

14. The Inter-African Committee on Traditional Practices Affecting the Health of Women and Children (1993, Newsletter, December 2003).

15. UNICEF, "The Implication of Early Marriage of HIV/AIDS Policy," 2004.

Available from [unicef.org/rosa/earlymarriage \(lastverson\). doc](http://unicef.org/rosa/earlymarriage(lastverson).doc)

16. UNICEF, 'Girls' Education: Introduction', Website update as of November 2004, Available from <http://www.unicef.org/girlseducation/index>.

17. UNICEF, "Progress for Children: Achieving the MDGs with Equity," 2010, page 47, Available from <http://www.unicef.org/protection/progress-for-children-No.9EN081710.pdf>

19. UNICEF, "Progress for Children: Achieving the MDGs with Equity," 2010, page 46 Available from <http://www.unicef.org/protection/progress-for-children-No.9EN081710.pdf>

20. United Nations, "Secretary General's Report on the Girl Child" (A/66/257, 2011)



Mahadeb Ghosh
Assistant Teacher, Nakashipara High School, Nadia.

Publish Research Article

International Level Multidisciplinary Research Journal For All Subjects

Dear Sir/Mam,

We invite unpublished Research Paper, Summary of Research Project, Theses, Books and Book Review for publication, you will be pleased to know that our journals are

Associated and Indexed, India

- ★ International Scientific Journal Consortium
- ★ OPEN J-GATE

Associated and Indexed, USA

- EBSCO
- Index Copernicus
- Publication Index
- Academic Journal Database
- Contemporary Research Index
- Academic Paper Database
- Digital Journals Database
- Current Index to Scholarly Journals
- Elite Scientific Journal Archive
- Directory Of Academic Resources
- Scholar Journal Index
- Recent Science Index
- Scientific Resources Database
- Directory Of Research Journal Indexing

Golden Research Thoughts
258/34 Raviwar Peth Solapur-413005, Maharashtra
Contact-9595359435
E-Mail-ayisrj@yahoo.in/ayisrj2011@gmail.com
Website : www.aygrt.isrj.in