

# Analysing early marriage in egypt religion essay



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Marriage is wonderful event, it bears a lot of meanings such as love, care, and responsibility. Early marriage may look like any other marriage but it has many different consequences.

In that paper I will talk about the early marriage in Egypt and in the Middle East explaining its effects on the spouses and their future children.

## Introduction

Marriage is a very happy celebration throughout the world, however, that celebration doesn't happen in early marriage cases, there a lot of women that get married while they are still under eighteen years of age, and that happens in many different countries and nations of the world; some parents just force their daughters into marriage in that age to get fortune, titles, or for other social reasons.

I believe that early marriage is definitely against all the natural human rights because early marriage will subsequently lead to early pregnancy and early responsibilities that may cause financial or even psychological problems to the parents.

Early marriage doesn't have only negative effects on the young girl or boy only; it also extends to a series of worse effects on their children and the whole society.

The Universal Declaration of Human rights suggests that the " free and full" right cannot be put into consideration or even discussed if one of the two parties is not able to take decide whether his partner suitable or not because of his lack of experience.

There may be many shapes and forms of early marriage and there may be a lot of causes, but the only thing that matters is the impact of that marriage on your child regardless his gender.

In that paper I will discuss the early marriage as it deprives the young kids from their childhood, and the effects of that marriage on them and the society as a whole, I will also explain its causes and its relation with poverty, overpopulation and social culture.

### Review of literature

#### Neglecting the woman's rights

UNICEF (2001) and Lefevre, Murphy and Quiroga (2004) have stated that marriage is a lovely event all over the world, it means that each of the partners is ready to share his life with the other one and is ready to bear responsibility, however, early marriage cuts the childhood of the boy or the girl and it takes place when at least one of them is not ready to be responsible even for himself therefore early marriage will just deprive him from his fundamental rights.

Otoo-Oyotey and Pobi (2003) confirms that early marriage is usually arranged by the parents and they don't care about the interest of their child in most of the cases, and those marriages often includes some force elements.

#### Causes of early marriage

P. M. Fayez (2006) has stated that parents are forcing their daughters into early marriage because they believe that by doing that they will get social and financial benefits and will reduce their financial burden

Matmur (2003) and Nour (2006) have both said that parents would encourage early marriage of their young daughters because they see her as a financial burden where one daughter less is one mouth less to be fed

Early marriage and our modern life today

Bunch (2005) explains that the practice of early marriage will definitely increase poverty in the developing countries

UNICEF (2001) stated that the young mother lacks the education and is immature and is unable to raise children.

Mathur (2003) stated that early marriage is by all means against the Millennium Development Goals; and according to DFID (2005) the education of girls is the most significant investment that any developing nation shall make in its future

Early marriage and its impact on children and society.

According to Teti and Lamb (1989) early marriage will lead to early pregnancies that will lead to a great increase in both the stress and instability in the relationship between the parents or it may even extend to marriage failure according to Kurdek (1991).

USAID Gender Assessment (2003-2005) reports that most of young wives are subjected to violence by their spouses

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In Egypt, Population Council (2000) reported that 29 per cent of the wives of early marriage are beaten by their husbands and out of that number about 40 per cent were pregnant.

## Methodology

Approach: I used case study approach to explain the actual causes and the next consequences of early marriage in Egypt.

Participants: 1000 housewives from 1997 until the moment were used in that study.

Procedure: the women were asked in private about the time they got married and the causes of their marriage and finally the consequences they have faced..

## Results

The study showed that about 89.7% of the girls were married before the age of the age of eighteen in 2001 and that percentage is decreasing throughout time, the study also showed that 50% of the women were forced to that marriage for many causes, and about 70% of them reported that were beaten and maltreated by their husbands after their marriage, a lot of them reported also that they had problems during pregnancy and labor.

## Discussion

Neglecting the woman's rights

Early marriage was common in the 1st half of the twentieth century, it was common in a lot of countries because it was supposed that early marriage would definitely increase the reproductive span of the wife and that would normally lead to having bigger families, nonetheless, today it is proved that the girl's body in cases of early marriage is immature or not mature enough and that may be dangerous on the wife or the child or both and sometimes it might be fatal.

Early marriage throughout the world

Early marriage of young girls is widely common in Sub Saharan Africa, west Africa and Southern Asia, on the other hand, girls are married just after and sometimes at their puberty time in Asia, North Africa, the Middle East, some parts of Latin America and Eastern Europe.

Causes of early marriage

There are many causes of early marriage and they depend on the society and its traditions and concepts about making a family

Sometimes the society is not the main cause because some families have their own concepts and others view it as a financial deal and a promise of fortune.

To summarize the main causes of early marriage:

### **A deal of money**

Poverty and lack of money may be considered the most common reason of early marriage especially if the bride's family is poor, in that case the girl is

nothing to the family but a burden that causes them more money, and in such cases marrying the girl to a rich man may be considered a survival strategy for the bride's family.

In Sub Saharan for example the man offers cattle as a bride gift to her family, while in poor small countries of Egypt families prefer to marry their daughter a rich man from gulf countries with the assistance of some brokers whether the groom was good or bad, young or on his death bed.

### **Protecting young daughters**

Another common cause of early marriage is that some families believe that marriage will protect their daughter and will provide safety and security for her because she will be under her man's control.

In some countries such as North Uganda young daughters are forced to marry militia members by their families because they think that this kind of marriage will just provide safety for her and her family.

On the other hand some families may prefer early marriage in order to protect their own daughters but in a different way which is the " premarital sex". Virginity of the girl is favorable by many societies; therefore they put strict limits in order to protect the girl until the moment she gets married

Early marriage and our modern life today

Life is hard today, everything is expensive and our requirements are increasing continuously, our modern life has put more pressures on us that made our life harder, a lot of families have broken up and divorce cases have markedly increased. Poor families in small countries move to town in order to

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find better job opportunities, however, the increased population and children costs and all of that made the women are in need for jobs, and to have a good job education is needed.

Early marriage prevents the girl from her right to learn and to get a proper education that will definitely help her and her family to live a better life.

Early marriage and its impact on children and society.

Early marriage has a marked effect on young married girls because of their lack of experience and their ignorance, you find them rushing for their families begging for help in most cases and after a few months of marriage, it may lead to psychological disorders, reproduction problems, health impairment, violence and of course ignorance.

The young married girl loses self confidence and became unable to make proper friendships and the most important issue is that she will not be able to know the proper way to deal with her husband because she doesn't have any experience or knowledge.

If the girl is married to a boy of her age before puberty, they are both irresponsible and careless, they would only think about playing and they will never realize the true meaning of building a family, on the other hand, if the girl is married too young to an old man, he may ask for his rights as a husband and that would be a problem and will absolutely cause a psychological trauma for her and will be dangerous on her health and maybe her life.

An action to decrease early marriage

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Early marriage has horrible effects on the society, it may cause social, health and economic problems, many nations have taken serious decision in order to ban or even decrease it.

In Egypt, early marriage is found mainly in poor and small villages, and it leads to the birth of thousands of children that will increase the overpopulation and its horrible effects on our country in all aspects; in addition to that, it increases the rates of ignorance and lack of education.

It was stated that about seventeen per cent of the girls in Egypt are married before the 19th of their age, and that was the reason of changing the age of marriage to sixteen for women and eighteen for men in order to decrease the number of early marriage cases, nevertheless, about twenty eight per cent of the girls are still married before reaching the legal age in small villages.

In Yemen about twenty five per cent of girls are married before the 14th of age and fifty six per cent are married before the 19th. So they made the legal age of marriage seventeen for both sexes.

We live a hard life nowadays, the life is expensive, and job opportunities are not enough, the pressure of media and the street is strong and in the same time marriage became a difficult and a very expensive issue, all of this forces the young youth to start illegal relationships because youth are very active sexually and unable to get married, those kinds of relationships are illegal, against our religion, and cause the transmission of a lot of horrible diseases and may end in illegal pregnancy and abortion.

In general early marriage must be banned or there must be strict and serious decisions in that matter in order to reduce it and reduce its effects, and the most important step to succeed is to improve the education and the advertising in order to make the people realize the dangers and the effects of early marriage on their daughters.

### Conclusion

Early marriage is common and found in many countries in Asia and Africa, it is still found in some regions in Egypt where girls became forced to marry in a very young age and they get pregnant while still being teenagers.

Early marriage has many bad effects on the health and psychology of the young girl, and moreover it prevents her from having her rights of proper education and proper childhood, it may affect her reproductive ability, and may be life threatening to the mother and her child because those young girls are simply not ready mentally, emotionally or even physically.

I believe that the suitable solution for that problem is to make the people realize themselves that early marriage is unacceptable and dangerous, they must realize that their daughters and their kids are humans that have brains to think with and hearts to love with and they are free whoever they find suitable to share their lives with, and that may only happen if they are both old enough and able to understand the real purpose of marriage and the way to build a successful family by having proper education and getting sufficient legal experience.