

The effect of effect of early marriage essay



**ASSIGN
BUSTER**

Why does early and forced marriage happen? The causes of early and forced marriage are complex, interrelated and dependent on individual circumstances and context. But the practice is driven by these main factors: gender inequality - women and girls often occupy a lower status in societies as a result of social and cultural traditions, attitudes, beliefs that deny them their rights and stifle their ability to play an equal role in their homes and communities poverty - in families on a low income, girls may be viewed as an economic burden.

The perception of girls' potential to earn an income as comparatively poor pushes girls out of their homes and into marriage negative traditional or religious practices - in many countries the importance of preserving family 'honour' and girls' virginity is such that parents push their daughters into marriage well before they are ready. There is a belief that marriage safeguards against 'immoral' or 'inappropriate behaviour' failure to enforce laws - sometimes families are not even aware they are breaking the law.

In some countries early marriage is so prevalent, prosecutions are seldom brought conflicts, disasters and emergencies - disasters and emergencies increase economic pressures on households and many families that wouldn't previously have considered early marriage turn to it as a last resort. What are the consequences of early and forced marriage? Early and forced marriage contributes to driving girls into a cycle of poverty and powerlessness. They are likely to experience: violence, abuse and forced sexual relations - women who marry younger are more likely to be beaten and to believe that husbands can justify it poor sexual and reproductive health - young married girls are more likely to contract HIV than their

unmarried counterparts because of their greater sexual exposure, often with an older husband who by virtue of his age is more at risk of being HIV positive illiteracy and lack of education – girls tend to drop out of school shortly before or when they get married.

There is a commonplace view that once a girl is married she has crossed the threshold into adulthood and no longer needs an education. What is the role of education in preventing early and forced marriage? Even where education is available, the cost, quantity, quality and content of schooling has an impact on whether girls are forced to drop out and marry early. Plan Egypt found that poor quality schooling is behind some school drop-out – overcrowding, unqualified teachers and gender-based violence increase the viability of early marriage as an alternative option.

The expectation that girls will marry and not work impacts on the standard of education they receive – teachers may give them less attention and poorer access to learning materials than boys. The cost of a daughter's education may not be viewed as a sound investment. Supporting girls to complete a quality basic education is best done by focusing on girls' rights. This means making sure learning environments are: safe – that girls can get to and from school safely, are in a secure environment, their specific needs are met and penalties for teachers who sexually abuse pupils are enforced ccessible – that education opportunities are available and free, schools are built close to communities, there are separate sanitation facilities, parents and communities are involved in running schools and there are communications campaigns on the importance of girls' education inspiring – that girls are taught by qualified teachers (especially female ones), teachers are trained to

<https://assignbuster.com/the-effect-of-effect-of-early-marriage-essay/>

understand girls' rights and gender equality, curricula for girls are relevant to their needs, including teaching on sexual and reproductive health.

Getting and keeping girls in school may be one of the best ways to foster later, consensual marriage, while also contributing the delayed sexual initiation, lower rates of HIV and AIDs and greater gender equality. Plan and other NGOs have run education programmes around the world which have increased girls' school attendance and reduced the frequency of early marriage. Such programmes increase awareness of girls' rights and empower girls to resist early marriage.

Plan believes that improving education and school retention for girls in the poorest countries plays a crucial role in eliminating early and forced marriage. It will clearly take decisive and positive action from national governments and the international community to bring about change. How can governments help? Human rights instruments the UN Convention on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) are relevant to forced and early marriage. 86 countries are party to CEDAW. Signatories to such conventions do not always ensure that commitments are implemented and enforced at national level. Proper enforcement is needed - as is greater awareness amongst girls and young women of their rights. Plan UK wants the UK Government to increase its efforts to end early and forced marriage through enhanced co-operation across Whitehall, an increase in Department for International Development programming in developing countries and by using its influence to push for effective international policy and action.