

AGE OF MARRIAGE AND RELATED OUTCOMES: ANALYSIS OF NFHS-4





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Foreword

As India is aiming to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals, it becomes imperative that the good health and well-being of women and children is given the attention it deserves. Acknowledging the long-term negative repercussions of early marriages (i.e. married before the age of 21 years) and teenage pregnancies on women in India and their offspring, the Government of India is currently contemplating raising the age of marriage for girls from 18 years (as prescribed under the Prohibition of Child Marriage Act (PCMA) 2006) to 21 years and in this respect the Cabinet recently approved raising the legal age of marriage to 21 years based on the recommendations of the Jaitley Committee.

Rather than relying upon anecdotal evidence justifying or negating the impact of increasing the age of marriage which has been the focus of many public debates in recent months, this report analyses the National Family Health Survey 2015 - 2016 (NFHS-4) data to ascertain how growth and development outcomes of women are affected by their age at the time of marriage. The report further explores the impact of marriage on girls who were married before the age of 21 years and women who got married at or after the age of 21 years, amongst 21-30 years old women. Additionally, this report analyses data to understand the correlation between the mothers' age of marriage and the health outcomes of their offspring.

The analysis based on NFHS-4 data reveals that 62.6% of women got married before the age of 21 years and only 21.2% of women got married after the age of 21 years. Further, 34.3% of the women got married before the age of 18 years thereby constituting "child marriages" under the current laws of India. With respect to the noticeable differences seen on the impact of increasing marriage age, it is vital to highlight that only 28.1% of the women who married before the age of 21 years had completed secondary education as opposed to 61.8% who married after the age of 21 years. Women who married early, i.e. below 21 years of age, were (majorly employed in agricultural and/or manual-skilled and unskilled work. Additionally, of the children born to women married below 21 years of age, higher proportion suffered from nutritional deficiency as 59.7% of their children were anaemic, 40.6% stunted, and 37.8% underweight, as compared to 56.2% anaemic, 29.1% stunted, and 27.3% underweight as seen in children of women married after the age of 21 years. Along with the issue of poor development of women and their children owing to early marriage (before 21 years of age), the analysis also found that women who got married early consider to have more children, and therefore, increasing the age of marriage for girls will help in containing the population growth which is a step forward towards sustainable living. It further underscores the need to make secondary school completion compulsory, build skills of women, empower them by opening avenues to enter the workforce and raise healthy children.



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Introduction

“We have formed a committee to ensure that the daughters are no longer suffering from malnutrition and they are married off at the right age. As soon as the report is submitted, appropriate decisions will be taken about the age of marriage of daughter.”

– Narendra Modi, Prime Minister of India

August 15, 2020, the Prime Minister made the aforesaid remarks indicating the intent of the Government of India to increasing the age of marriage for the girl child and subsequently a year later the Prohibition of Child Marriage (amendment) Bill, 2021 (“Bill”) was introduced in Lok Sabha on December 21, 2021.

The Bill calling for the increase in age of marriage for girls is based on the principle of equality (i.e. same age of marriage for men and women) and to ensure that the “physical, mental and reproductive health” of women is protected. Rather than viewing this measure as a step in the right direction, strong dissent was raised by opposition members as well as civil society.

Unfortunately, criticism levelled against the legal change sought by the Bill is guided by anecdotal evidence and fails to rely upon credible data to establish whether or not there is a genuine need to increase the age of marriage for girls to ensure their well-being.

Therefore, it is vital to understand how early marriage² impacts a girl’s future trajectory. Aiming at evidence-based understanding, Young Lives India has analyzed the National Family Health Survey 2015–2016 (“**NFHS-4**”)³ data for women in the age group of 21–30 years to determine the difference in the development outcomes of women who got married after the age of 21 years vis-a-vis those who got married before the age of 21 years.

1 By way of background, the Government of India constituted the Jaitly Task Force to examine raising the legal age of marriage of girls to 21 years and representation from various organisations including the National Commission for Protection of Child Rights (“NCPCR”) have been sought. While Young Lives supported NCPCR in its submission to the Jaitly Task Force, the findings from this Task Force are currently awaited.

2 Early marriage is defined to include all the marriages that take place before the age of 21 years.

3 NFHS captures data based on prevalence i.e. “the total number of individuals in a population who have a disease or health condition at a specific period of time, usually expressed as a percentage of the population” and not incidence i.e. “the number of individuals who develop a specific disease or experience a specific health-related event during a particular time period (such as a month or year)” which is captured in Census of India data (School of Public Health, Prevalence and Incidence Defined. Retrieved from Harvard University: <https://www.hsph.harvard.edu/obesity-prevention-source/prevalence-incidence/>). The researchers have opted to rely upon NFHS-4 data from 2015–2016.

Data and Methodology

Data & Limitations

As the last Census of India data was recorded over a decade ago in 2011, NFHS-4 which provides the latest data (albeit from 2015–2016), has been utilized for the purpose of the analysis. NFHS provides national data for health, nutrition, and population for all the Indian States & Union Territories (“**UTs**”). Note, one of the major limitations of the NFHS-4 is that while data pertaining to maternal mortality rate (“**MMR**”) is generally recorded in Demographic and Health Surveys (“**DHS**”), the fourth round of NFHS did not have data available for MMR.

Methodology

The report uses descriptive analysis to ascertain the difference in women in the 21–30 years age group by marital status and age at marriage, further disaggregating them by their socio-demographic background, empowerment status, and health outcomes of women and their children.

For the purpose of this report, the phrase ‘*different groups of women by their age at marriage*’ refers to unmarried women⁴, women married before the age of 21 years, and women married at 21 years and after.

As the NFHS-4 sample is a stratified two-stage sample, all the estimates are weighted using the national sample weight to ensure the sample is representative of the population.

Additionally, Pearson’s chi-squared test is employed to determine if the various groups of women are independent. When both dependent and independent variables are categorical, Pearson’s chi-squared test is used. It is a non-parametric test that determines whether measurement of the various groups are independent. It is an inferential statistical procedure which implies that the finding, i.e. significant (or insignificant) difference between the groups is not just a sample phenomenon but a population characteristic.

⁴ Unmarried women are anywhere between the age of 21 to 30 years at the time of NFHS-4 data collection.

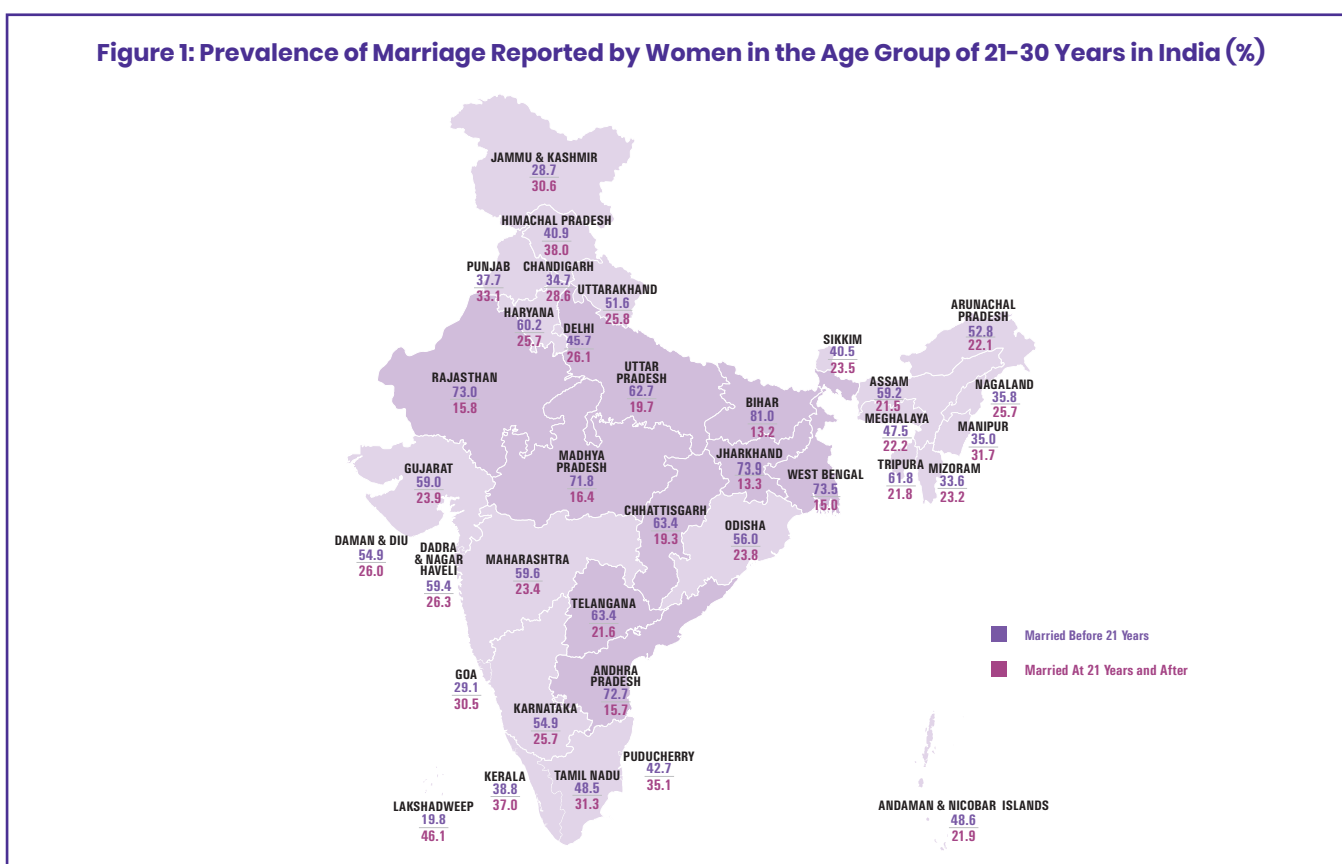
Analysis of NFHS - 4

According to the NFHS-4, 62.6% of women got married before 21 years of age (reported by women in the age group of 21-30 years) (Table 1) while 21.2% of women got married at the age 21 and after.

Age at Marriage	%
Unmarried	16.2
Married before 21 years	62.6
Married at 21 years and after	21.2
Total	100

Source: Young Lives India's Calculation

There are 9 States that have prevalence of marriage higher than the national average for women married before the age 21 years (**Figure 1**). These nine States include Bihar (81%), Jharkhand



Source: Young Lives India's Calculation

(73.9%), West Bengal (73.4%), Rajasthan (73%), Andhra Pradesh (72.8%), Madhya Pradesh (71.8%), Chhattisgarh (63.4%), Telangana (63.4%), and Uttar Pradesh (62.7%). (**Table A1 in Appendix A**).

Furthermore, 28 States & UTs have the prevalence of marriage higher than the national average (21.2%) for women married at the age of 21 years or after. The top 5 States & UTs include Lakshadweep (46.1%), Himachal Pradesh (38%), Kerala (37%), Puducherry (35.1%), and Punjab (33.1%).⁵

Age of Marriage and Place of Residence

The place of residence or location i.e., being raised in a rural or urban area has a significant impact⁶ on the women's age of marriage. Of all the rural women in the age group of 21-30 years, 69.7% got married before the age of 21 years, whereas less than half (49.2%) of their urban counterparts got married before the age of 21 years (**Table 2**).

Age at Marriage	Urban	Rural	Total
Unmarried	23.7	12.2	16.2
Married before 21 years	49.2	69.7	62.6
Married at 21 years and after	27.1	18.1	21.2
Total	100	100	100

Source: Young Lives India's Calculation

Furthermore, 27.1% of urban women got married at the age of 21 years and after, compared to 18.1% of rural women.

Moreover, of all the women who got married before 21 years of age, in the age group of 21-30 years, 72.5% were from rural areas.

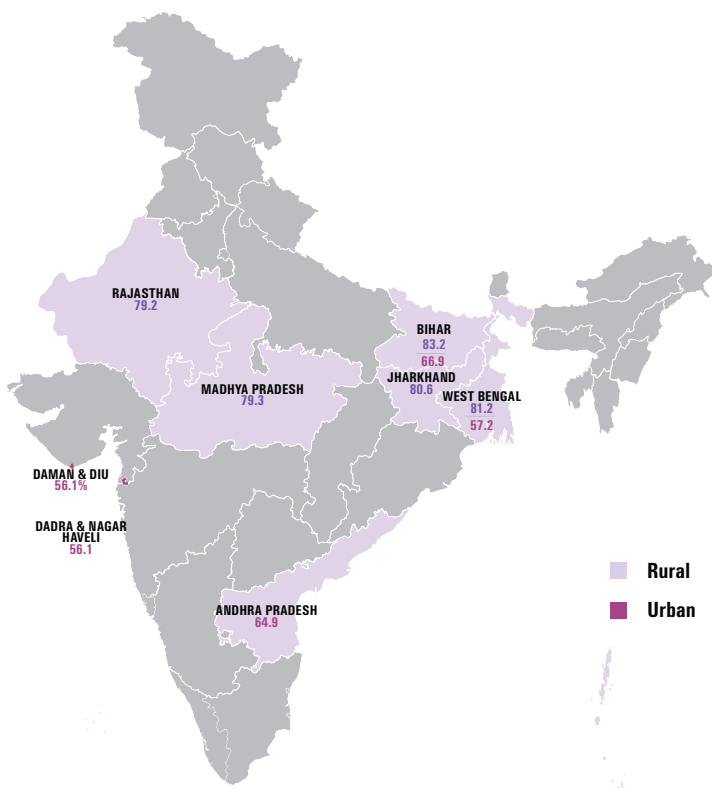
However, the situation is not the same across the Indian States & UTs. The top 5 (five) States with high prevalence of marriage before the age of 21 years in rural areas include Bihar (83.2%), West Bengal (81.2%), Jharkhand (80.6%), Madhya Pradesh (79.3%) and Rajasthan (79.2%)⁷. It is pertinent to note that the 5 (five) States & UTs with high prevalence of marriage in urban areas for women before the age of 21 years include 2 UTs: Bihar (66.9%), Andhra Pradesh (64.9%), West Bengal (57.2%), Daman and Diu (56.1%) and Dadra and Nagar Havel (56.0%). Kerala and Puducherry (**Figure 2, refer to page 5**) have the distinction of having the highest percentage of women in the age group 21-30 getting married after 21 across both rural and urban locations, whereas maximum women were married as child brides across both rural and urban areas in Bihar and West Bengal.

⁵ For more details, see Table A1 in Appendix A.

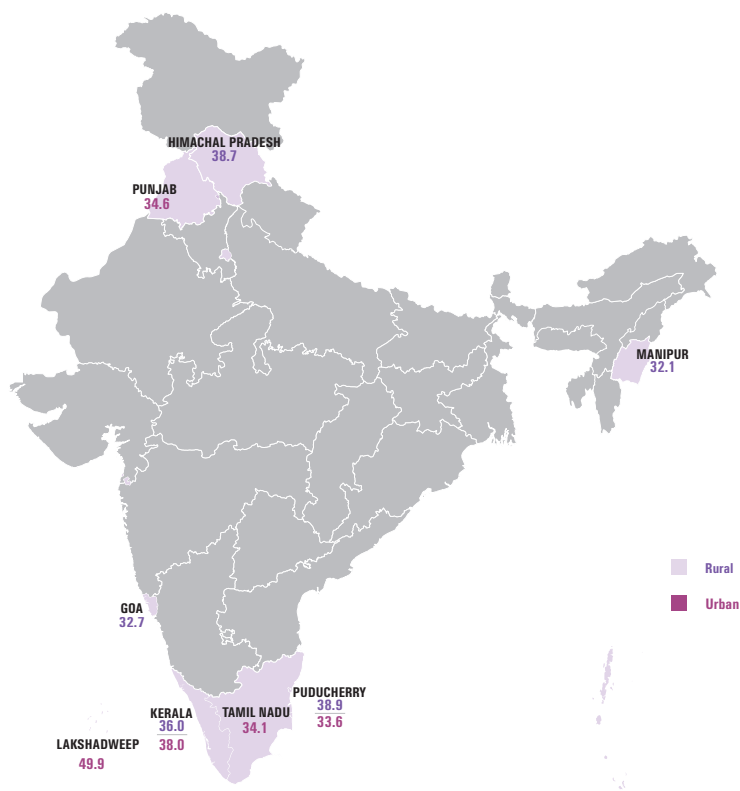
⁶ Based on the Pearson's chi-squared test at 1% level of significance.

⁷ For more details, see Table A2 in Appendix A.

Figure 2: Top Five Rural and Urban States & UTs with High Prevalence of Marriage Before the Age of 21 Years (%)



Top Five Rural and Urban States & UTs with High Prevalence of Marriage At 21 Years and After (%)



Source: Young Lives India's Calculation








Household Wealth and the Age of Marriage

Data from NFHS-4 highlights that age at marriage for women differ significantly based on the wealth of the household⁸. For the purpose of the analysis, the national level sample was divided into household wealth terciles, i.e., bottom, middle, and top.

As highlighted in **Figure 3**, the prevalence of marriage before the age of 21 years is lower for women from top wealth tercile households (43.5%) as compared to bottom (79.1%) and middle (66.2%) wealth tercile households.

Furthermore, a quarter of girls from the top tercile households remained unmarried and close to a third got married at 21 years or after. Prevalence of marriage at 21 years and after was much lower for girls from the middle (19.3%) and bottom (12.4%) wealth tercile households. This underscores that early marriage is associated with girls from poorer households (**Figure 3**).

Figure 3

Wealth Index				
		Bottom Tercile	Middle Tercile	Top Tercile
 <p>Marital Status of Women (21-30 Years) by Household Wealth Terciles (%)</p>	 Unmarried	8.5%	14.4%	25.2%
	 Married Before 21 Years	79.1%	66.2%	43.5%
	 Married At 21 Years and After	12.4%	19.3%	21.3%

Source: Young Lives India's Calculation

While early marriages are seen more in the bottom and middle tercile households, the pattern varies across the Indian States & UTs. Amongst marriages that took place before the age of 21 years, eight states have over 50% of prevalence in the bottom wealth tercile households. In three states, the prevalence of marriage before the age of 21 years was over 50% in the middle wealth tercile households. Furthermore, in eight States & UTs over 50% of the prevalence of marriage before the age of 21 years was in the top wealth tercile households.⁹ Amongst marriages that take place at the age of 21 years and after, Bihar (53.4%) have over 50% of prevalence in the bottom wealth tercile households. In three states, the prevalence of marriage before the age of 21 years was over 50% in the middle wealth tercile households. Furthermore, in seventeen states & UTs, the prevalence of marriage at 21 years and after is higher than the national average (50.5%) in the top wealth tercile households.

Given that the wealth terciles are taken at the national level, certain States have a higher proportion of a particular wealth tercile. Therefore, the same State appears to have high prevalence of marriage both before and at or after the age of 21 years in a particular wealth

⁸ Based on Pearson's chi-squared test at 1% level of significance.

⁹ These include Kerala (70.6%), Lakshadweep (69.4%), Chandigarh (68.9%), Punjab (67.4%), Delhi (64.7%), Haryana (61.6%), Goa (52.9%), and Puducherry (50.7%).

tercile.¹⁰ For instance, 68.8% of the households in Bihar are in bottom wealth tercile and therefore high proportion of marriages take place both before (73.6%) and at (53.4%) the age of 21 years and after in bottom wealth tercile as compared to other wealth terciles. Similarly, 87.3% of the households in Chandigarh are in top wealth tercile, therefore, 68.9% of the marriages take place before the age of 21 years and 95.5% of the marriages take place at the age of 21 years and after in top wealth tercile households.

Caste and Age of Marriage

Data reveals that there is a significant difference in women's age at marriage based on their caste.¹¹

The prevalence of marriage before the age of 21 years is higher amongst the marginal castes viz. Scheduled Castes (66%), Scheduled Tribes (68.6%), and Other Backward Castes (64.2%), as compared to the Other or General Castes (53.7%). Furthermore, the prevalence of marriage at 21 years and after is higher amongst Other Castes (25.8%) as compared to the marginal castes (**Table 3**).

Age at Marriage	SCs	STs	OBCs	Other	Total
Unmarried	15.3	14.5	14.6	20.5	16.1
Married before 21 years	66.1	68.6	64.2	53.7	62.6
Married at 21 years and after	18.6	16.9	21.2	25.8	21.3
Total	100	100	100	100	100

Source: Young Lives India's Calculation

The pattern varies across the Indian States & UTs. For instance, majority of the population of Lakshadweep, Mizoram, Meghalaya, and Nagaland belongs to STs¹², therefore, over 90% of the marriages, whether before or after the age of 21 years, are from ST households. The top 10 States with the majority of marriages before the age of 21 years taking place in the marginal caste households include Tamil Nadu (98.9%), Chhattisgarh (95.7%), Jharkhand (91.9%), Telangana (90.9%), Karnataka (89%), Madhya Pradesh (87.9%), Arunachal Pradesh (86.8%), Bihar (86.1%), Tripura (86%), and Odisha (85.7%). Furthermore, Andaman and Nicobar Islands (70.4%), Goa (54.2%), Himachal Pradesh (51.6%), and Jammu and Kashmir (50.2%) have a majority of marriages before the age of 21 years being undertaken in Other Caste households.¹³

Highest Level of Education and Age of Marriage

Age at marriage is significantly different for women based on their highest level of education. A

¹⁰ For more details, see Table A4–A6 in Appendix A.

¹¹ Based on Pearson's chi-squared test at 1% level of significance.

¹² Based on Census of India 2011, these are predominantly tribal States & UTs (Office of the Registrar General & Census Commissioner, India. **Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes**. Retrieved from https://censusindia.gov.in/Census_And_You/scheduled_castes_and_scheduled_tribes.aspx).

¹³ For more details, see Table A7 in Appendix A.

significant proportion of women (27.5%) in the age group of 21-30 years who got married before the age of 21 years did not receive any formal education.

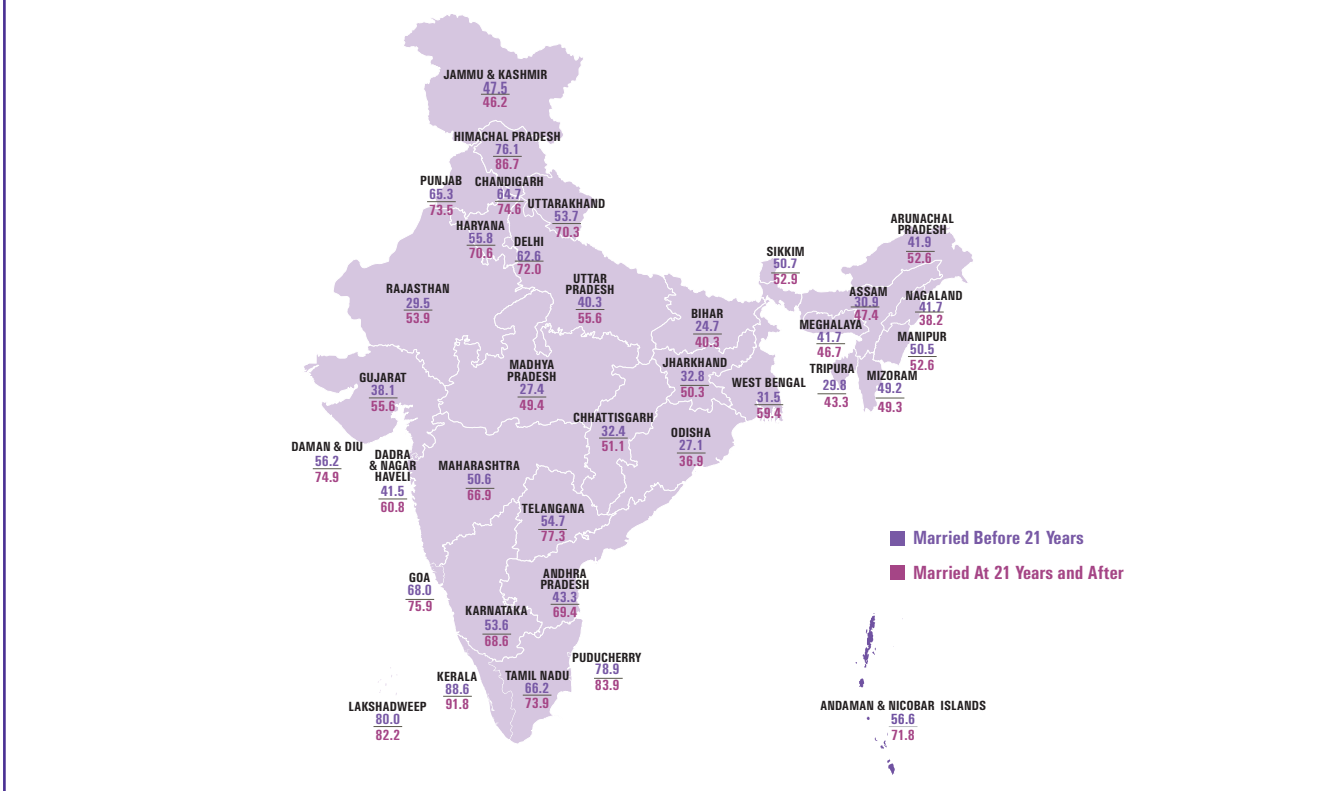
On the other hand, 56.3% and 33.8% of women remain unmarried or got married at 21 years of age and after amongst those who have completed tertiary level of education (**Table 4**).

Age at Marriage	No Education	Primary	Upper Primary	Secondary	Higher Secondary	Tertiary
Unmarried	5.3	4.4	7.5	12.4	14.1	56.3
Married before 21 years	27.5	16.1	20.5	19.3	9.9	6.7
Married at 21 years & after	10.7	7.1	13.1	19.4	16	33.8
Total	20.3	12.3	16.8	18.2	11.9	20.5

Source: Young Lives India's Calculation

It is pertinent to note that the completion rate of secondary education¹⁴ is significantly higher among the women who got married at the age of 21 years and after (69.2%), as compared to women who got married before the age of 21 years (35.9%). This pattern can be seen across all the States & UTs (**Figure 4**).¹⁵

Figure 4 – Completion of Secondary Education Amongst Married Women in the Age Group of 21-30 Years (%)



Source: Young Lives India's Calculation

14 Completion rate of secondary education is the proportion of women who have at least completed Grade 10.

15 For more details, see Table A9 in Appendix A.





Employment and Earnings

Economic empowerment is critical in realizing gender equality and women's rights. It includes access to decent work, agency, and participation in economic decision making, among others¹⁶. Based on NFHS-4 analysis, the type of employment significantly differs based on the women's age at marriage¹⁷.

According to World Bank (2017)¹⁸, women who married early tend to have lower earnings in their lifetime as compared to women who married later due to low educational attainment, higher fertility, and large family size, which impacts the welfare of their respective households. Furthermore, in-kind payments are more common for agricultural and domestic work, with better jobs paying in cash¹⁹.

Amongst women engaged in professional/ technical/ managerial work, 31.4% got married at the age of 21 years and after, only 20.4% got married before 21 years. Agricultural and manual-skilled and unskilled work is predominantly undertaken by women who got married before the age of 21 years (**Figure 5**).

Figure 5

 Type of Occupation Amongst Women (21-30 Years) By Marital Status (%)		Not in the Workforce	Professional/ Managerial	Clerical	Sales	Agricultural	Services & Domestic Labour	Manual-Skilled & Unskilled
	 Unmarried	14.9	48.2	50.4	31.7	9.3	22.4	21.8
	 Married Before 21 Years	60.6	20.5	27.1	53.4	80.4	57	66.9
	 Married At 21 Years and After	24.5	31.3	22.5	14.9	10.3	20.6	11.3
TOTAL	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	

Source: Young Lives India's Calculation

Using the NFHS-4 data, it is found that the type of earnings received by the working women significantly differ based on the women's age at marriage²⁰. **Figure 6** (refer to page 10) shows that a significantly higher proportion of women who got married at the age of 21 years and after are paid in cash (78.4%), as compared to 70% of women who got married before 21 years²¹.

16 UN Women. (2018). Facts and Figures: Economic Empowerment. Retrieved from <https://www.unwomen.org/en/what-we-do/economic-empowerment/facts-and-figures>

17 Based on Pearson's chi-squared test at 1% level of significance.

18 The World Bank. (2017). Economic Impacts of Child Marriage: Work, Earnings, and Household Welfare Brief.

19 Ibid.

20 Based on Pearson's chi-squared test at 1% level of significance.

21 Based on Pearson's chi-squared test at 1% level of significance.

Figure 6


 Type of Earnings of Working Women (21-30 Years) by Age at Marriage%		Not Paid	Cash Only	Cash and In-Kind	In- Kind Only
	 Married Before 21 Years	17.6	70.0	8.3	4.1
 Married At 21 Years and After	14.8	78.4	4.0	2.8	

Source: Young Lives India's Calculation

Also, a higher proportion of women who got married before the age of 21 years are paid in-kind (4.1%), as compared to 2.8% of women who got married at the age of 21 years and after. This may be an indicator of the agency of girls who married later and demanded wages in cash for work rendered.

The decision-making power with respect to women's earning²² is also significantly associated with their age at marriage²³. While 82.1% of working women, who got married at the age of 21 years and after are involved in deciding how to spend their earnings whereas 78% of working women who got married before the age of 21 years got involved in these decisions (**Figure 7**).

Figure 7

 Decision Regarding the Spending of the Working Women's Earnings by Age at Marriage(%)	Person Who Usually Decides On Women's Earnings	Married Before 21 Yrs	Married at 21 Yrs and After
	Respondent Alone	17.3	23.8
Respondent and Husband/ Partner	60.7	58.4	
Husband/ Partner Alone	19.9	15.9	
Someone Else	2.1	2.0	

Source: Young Lives India's Calculation

Teenage Pregnancy

Women's age at first birth is significantly associated with her age at marriage.²⁴ Of the women married before the age of 21, 53.5% become a teenage mother.²⁵ It is pertinent to note that 34.3% of women in the age-group of 21-30 years got married before the age of 18 years, and 79% of

22 Here, decision making pertains to only the money earned by the women.

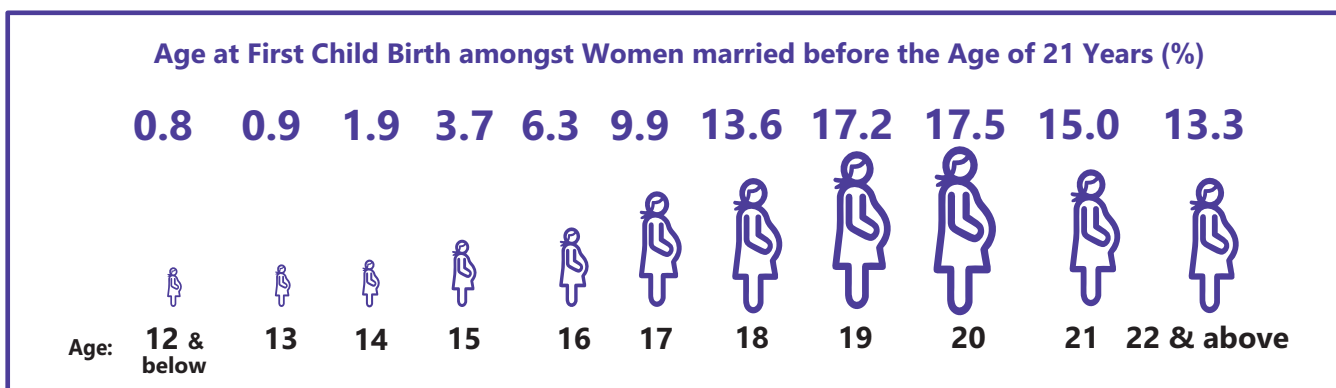
23 Based on Pearson's chi-squared test at 1% level of significance.

24 Based on Pearson's chi-squared test at 1% level of significance.

25 For more details, see Table A10 in Appendix A.

these became teenage mothers. WHO (2020)²⁶ reports teenage pregnancy to be the leading cause of death amongst 15 to 19-year-old girls. Additionally, while 95.3% of women who married at 21 years and after gave first birth after the age of 22 years, only 13.3% of women who married before 21 years gave first birth after 22 years of age (**Figure 8**). According to Perez-Alvarez & Favara (2019),²⁷ early motherhood also has detrimental impact on the health and cognition of their children.

Figure 8



Source: Young Lives India's Calculation

Body Mass Index

Low body mass index²⁸ (BMI) is significantly associated with the women's age at marriage²⁹. Of all the women married before the age of 21 years, 23.5% had low BMI, whereas 17.1% of women who got married at the age of 21 years and after had low BMI (**Table 5**). It is pertinent to note that literature informs about poor health outcomes amongst women who married early, specifically on account of early pregnancy.

Table 5: Prevalence of Married Women (21–30 years old) with Low Body Mass Index (BMI) (%)	
Age at Marriage	Low BMI
Unmarried	23.5
Married at 21 years and after	17.1

Source: Young Lives India's

The top 5 States with low BMI among women married before the age of 21 years include Jharkhand (34.0%), Dadra and Nagar Haveli (31.9%), Madhya Pradesh (29.3%), Bihar (29.2%), and Gujarat (29.1%)³⁰.

26 World Health Organization. (2020). Adolescent pregnancy. Retrieved from <https://www.who.int/news-room/fact-sheets/detail/adolescent-pregnancy>

27 Perez-Alvarez, M., & Favara, M. (2019). Maternal Age and Offspring Human Capital in India. (IZA DP No. 12489). Retrieved from <http://ftp.iza.org/dp12489.pdf>

28 The estimate does not include women who were pregnant or had given birth to a child in the past 2 months at the time of the interview.

29 Based on Pearson's chi-squared test at 1% level of significance.

30 For more details, see Table A11 in Appendix A.

Ideal Number of Children as Perceived by Women Aged 21–30 Years

The ideal number of children is the number of children women aged 21–30 shared they would choose to have in their whole life. According to the DHS Guide, this number is affected by the actual number of living children of women. Age at marriage and the ideal number of children is significantly associated with each other³¹. As highlighted by **Table 6**, the earlier the women are married, the more children they consider ideal. For instance, while 24.3% of the women married before the age of 21 years consider three or more children to be ideal, only 11.2% of the women married at 21 years and after consider it to be an ideal number. Therefore, to curb the growth in Indian population for a sustainable future, it is imperative to ensure that women are well-educated and marry when they are mature enough to start their own family.

Table 6: Ideal Number of Children Reported by Women (21–30 years) by Age at Marriage (%)

Number of children	Married before 21 years	Married at 21 years and after	Total
0	2.9	2.6	3.6
1	5.1	11.2	8.0
2	67.6	74.9	69.2
3	18.0	8.7	14.0
4	5.4	2.2	4.1
5	0.6	0.2	0.4
6+	0.3	0.1	0.2
non-numeric response	0.3	0.2	0.3
Total	100	100	100

Source: Young Lives India's Calculation

Children Born to Women Aged 21–30 Years

The number of children³² born to women in the age group 21–30 years is significantly different among women based on their age at marriage³³. It is pertinent to note that 92.7% of the women who got married before the age of 21 years had at least one child compared to 68.4% of women who got married at 21 years and after (**Figure 9**, refer to page 13).

³¹ Based on Pearson's chi-squared test at 1% level of significance.

³² This is taken as the total number of children ever born to the woman.

³³ Based on Pearson's chi-squared test at 1% level of significance.

Figure 9

 No. of Children Born to Women (21-30 Years) by Age at Marriage (%)		No Child	One or More Child
	 Married Before 21 Years	7.3	92.7
 Married at 21 Years and After	31.6	68.4	

Source: Young Lives India's Calculation

The same trend is seen across the States where over 80% of women who married before the age of 21 years had one or more children.³⁴

Table 7: Percentage of Women (21-30 years) by Total Children Ever Born (%)

Total Children Ever Born	Unmarried	Married before 21 years	Married at 21 years and after	Total
0	99.8	7.3	31.6	27.4
1	0.1	23.6	42.4	23.8
2	0.1	40.6	21.6	30.0
3	0.0	19.2	3.7	12.8
4	0.0	6.6	0.7	4.3
5	0.0	2.0	0.1	1.2
6	0.0	0.6	0.0	0.4
7	0.0	0.1	0.0	0.1
Total	100	100	100	100

Source: Young Lives India's Calculation

Of women married before the age of 21 years, 23.6% have one child, 40.6% have two children, 19.2% have three or more children. Of women married at and after 21 years of age, 42.4% have one child, 21.6% have two children, and 3.7% have three or more children. **Table 7** shows that the number of children born to a woman is significantly³⁵ less when she is married at and after 21 years of age.

Nutritional Status of Children

Anthropometric measures of weight and height are used to determine the nutritional status of children. Additionally, the severity of anaemia is considered as it can cause stunting, impair cognitive development, and increase the chances of falling ill due to infectious diseases.

³⁴ For more details, see Table A12 in Appendix A.

³⁵ Based on Pearson's chi-squared test at 1% level of significance.

Anaemic level amongst the children is significantly associated with the age at which the women (their mothers) got married³⁶ (**Table 8**). A higher proportion of children born to women who got married before the age of 21 years are anaemic (59.7%), as compared to children born to women who got married at and after the age of 21 years (56.2%).

Table 8: : Children with Anaemia Born to Women (21–30 years) by Age at Marriage (%)		
Anaemia level	Married before 21 years	Married at 21 years and after
Severe	1.6	1.4
Moderate	29.7	27.9
Mild	28.4	26.9
Not anaemic	40.3	43.8

Source: Young Lives India's Calculation

This is true also for stunting amongst the children which is found to be significantly associated with the age at which the women (their mothers) got married³⁷. Of children born to the women married at and after the age of 21 years, 29.1% are stunted as compared to 40.6% stunting reported amongst children born to the women who married before age of 21 years (**Table 9**).

Table 9: : Prevalence of Stunting Amongst Children Born to Women (21–30 years) by Age at Marriage (%)		
Whether the child is stunted?	Married before 21 years	Married at 21 years and after
Yes	40.6	29.1
No	59.4	70.9

Source: Young Lives India's Calculation

Weight for age amongst the children is significantly associated with the age at which the women (their mothers) got married³⁸. While 71.9% of children born to women married at and after the age of 21 years had normal weight³⁹ in accordance to their age, only 61.8% of children born to women married before the age of 21 years had normal weight (**Table 10**).

Table 10 : Prevalence of Underweight Children Born to the Women (21–30 years) by Age at Marriage (%)		
Weight category	Married before 21 years	Married at 21 years and after
Underweight	37.8	27.3
Normal weight	61.8	71.9

Source: Young Lives India's Calculation

³⁶ Based on Pearson's chi-squared test at 1% level of significance.

³⁷ Based on Pearson's chi-squared test at 1% level of significance.

³⁸ Based on Pearson's chi-squared test at 1% level of significance.

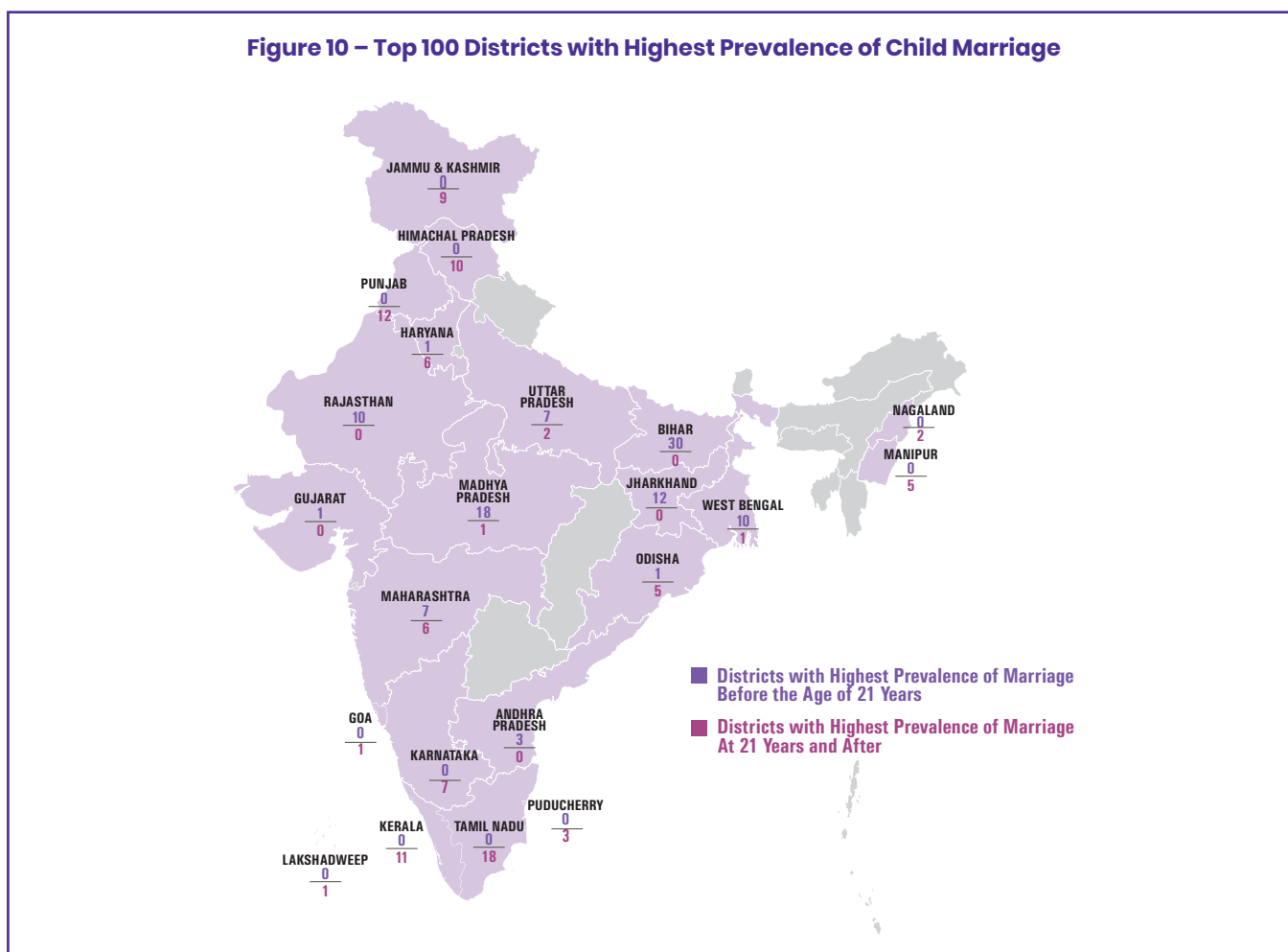
³⁹ Body mass index between 18.5 to 24.99 kg/m² is considered healthy or normal weight.

District Level Analysis

The top 100 districts with the highest prevalence of marriage before the age of 21 years belong to 11 Indian States (**Figure 10**), viz. Bihar (30), Madhya Pradesh (18), Jharkhand (12), Rajasthan (10), West Bengal (10), Maharashtra (7), Uttar Pradesh (7), Andhra Pradesh (3), Gujarat (1), Haryana (1), and Odisha (1).⁴⁰

On the other hand, the top 100 districts with the highest prevalence of marriage at and after the age of 21 years belong to 17 Indian States & UTs, viz. Tamil Nadu (18), Punjab (12), Kerala (11), Himachal Pradesh (10), Jammu & Kashmir (9), Karnataka (7), Haryana (6), Maharashtra (6), Manipur (5), Odisha (5), Puducherry (3), Nagaland (2), Uttar Pradesh (2), Goa (1), Lakshadweep (1), Madhya Pradesh (1), and West Bengal (1).⁴¹

To ensure an end to intergenerational transmission of poverty, policymakers need to focus on the top 100 districts where higher proportion of marriages take place before women are 21 years old. Additionally, studies could be undertaken to understand what has been working in the top 100 districts where higher proportion of marriages take place after women turn 21 years of age.



Source: Young Lives India's Calculation

40 For more details, see T9able A13 in Appendix A.

41 For more details, see Table A14 in Appendix A.

Conclusion

The analysis supports, that marriages before women attaining 21 years of age, robs them of formal education, reduces their agency, and severely impact the health and upbringing of their off-springs.

According to the NFHS-4 data, nine States have higher prevalence of marriage of young women before the age of 21 years as compared to the national average (62.6%).

As also reported by UNICEF (2001)⁴² and Sudarsoa, Mas'udahb and Budirahayu (2020)⁴³, early marriage is found to be a rural phenomenon. There are 15 States in which more than 70% of marriages before the age of 21 years take place in rural areas. While early marriage is seen more amongst poor households, in eight States & UTs, over 50% of marriages before the age of 21 years take place in wealthy households. Moreover, marriage before the age of 21 years is more prominent amongst marginal castes as compared to general castes. There are 20 States & UTs in which more than 80% of marriages before the age of 21 years take place amongst marginal castes.

The analysis reveals that critical education and health outcomes amongst women who got married at and after the age of 21 years are significantly better compared to women who got married before the age of 21 years, as higher proportion of women completed their secondary education (61.8%) and lower proportion of women have low BMI (18.6%), if married at and after 21 years of age. Women who got married at and after the age of 21 years are seen to have a better job, earn in-cash, and have relatively higher autonomy on spending their earnings as compared to women who got married before the age of 21 years.

An important finding pertains to teenage pregnancy which is prominent amongst the women who got married before the age of 21 years. Out of total 21-30 years old women with children, 80% got married before the age of 21 years; and the nutritional status and anaemia level of children born to women who got married at and after the age of 21 years (29.1% stunted, 27.3% underweight, and 56.2% anaemic) is better than the children of women who got married before the age of 21 years (40.6% stunted, 37.8% underweight, and 59.7% anaemic). In addition, women who were married before 21 years of age were found to hold beliefs that considered greater number of children as ideal, which would in turn negatively impact increase in population growth. The aforesaid findings clearly justify the benefits of increasing the minimum age of marriage as enumerated by the Bill towards improving the well-being and growth trajectory of young women in India.

While the authors clearly believe the Bill is a step in the right direction, the analysis captured in this report brings forth the shortcomings of the Prohibition of Child Marriage Act 2006

42 UNICEF. (2001). Early Marriage: Child Spouses. (Innocenti Digest). Retrieved from <https://www.unicef-irc.org/publications/pdf/digest7e.pdf>

43 Sudarsoa, Mas'udahb, S. and Budirahayu, T. (2020). Early Marriage and Women's Empowerment in Rural Areas. International Journal of Innovation, Creativity and Change, 13(3).

(“**PCMA 2006**”). In spite of the enactment of PCMA, the glaring reality remains that NFHS-4 notes that 34.3% of women in 21-30 years of age-group were married as a child.

It is pertinent to point out that according to PCMA 2006, i.e., the current prevailing law in force, child marriages are legally voidable (not null and void), and the onus of declaring the marriage void via filing a petition falls only on the contracting party, i.e., the individuals who got married (or by the guardian if the child is minor).

The Bill unfortunately squanders the opportunity to declare child marriages void and requires further legislative rethink.

In summation; increasing the minimum age of marriage for women as provided by the Bill is a step in the right direction, however there is an urgent need to look at child marriage using a human rights lens and declaring all child marriages *void ab initio*.

Appendices

Table A1: Prevalence of Marriage Amongst Women (21-30 Years) across States and UTs by Age at Marriage

States & UTs	Unmarried (%)	Married before 21 years (%)	Married at 21 years and after (%)
	1	2	3
Andaman and Nicobar Islands	29.5	48.6	21.9
Andhra Pradesh	11.5	72.8	15.7
Arunachal Pradesh	25.1	52.8	22.1
Assam	19.3	59.2	21.5
Bihar	5.8	81	13.2
Chandigarh	36.7	34.7	28.6
Chhattisgarh	17.3	63.4	19.3
Dadra and Nagar Haveli	14.3	59.4	26.3
Daman and Diu	19.1	54.9	26
Goa	40.4	29.1	30.5
Gujarat	17.1	59	23.9
Haryana	14.1	60.2	25.7
Himachal Pradesh	21.1	40.9	38
Jammu and Kashmir	40.7	28.7	30.6
Jharkhand	12.8	73.9	13.3
Karnataka	19.4	54.9	25.7
Kerala	24.2	38.8	37

Table A1: Prevalence of Marriage Amongst Women (21–30 Years) across States and UTs by Age at Marriage

States & UTs	Unmarried (%)	Married before 21 years (%)	Married at 21 years and after (%)
	1	2	3
Lakshadweep	34.1	19.8	46.1
Madhya Pradesh	11.8	71.8	16.4
Maharashtra	16.9	59.6	23.4
Manipur	33.3	35	31.7
Meghalaya	30.3	47.5	22.2
Mizoram	43.2	33.6	23.2
Nagaland	38.5	35.8	25.7
Delhi	28.2	45.7	26.1
Odisha	20.1	56	23.8
Puducherry	22.2	42.7	35.1
Punjab	29.2	37.7	33.1
Rajasthan	11.2	73	15.8
Sikkim	35.9	40.5	23.5
Tamil Nadu	20.2	48.5	31.3
Tripura	16.3	61.8	21.8
Uttar Pradesh	17.6	62.7	19.7
Uttarakhand	22.6	51.6	25.8
West Bengal	11.6	73.4	15
Telangana	14.9	63.4	21.6
India	16.2	62.6	21.2

Table A2: Prevalence of Marriage Before the Age of 21 Years Amongst Women (21-30 Years) across States & UTs by location

States & UTs	Urban (%)	Rural (%)	Total (%)
Andaman and Nicobar Islands	37.5	62.5	100
Andhra Pradesh	28.2	71.8	100
Arunachal Pradesh	24.4	75.6	100
Assam	10.6	89.4	100
Bihar	11	89	100
Chandigarh	97	3	100
Chhattisgarh	19.1	80.9	100
Dadra and Nagar Haveli	42.9	57.1	100
Daman and Diu	73.9	26.1	100
Goa	82.2	17.8	100
Gujarat	39.3	60.7	100
Haryana	35.7	64.3	100
Himachal Pradesh	6.7	93.3	100
Jammu and Kashmir	16.7	83.3	100
Jharkhand	20.2	79.8	100
Karnataka	38.1	61.9	100
Kerala	47.3	52.7	100
Lakshadweep	69.6	30.4	100
Madhya Pradesh	24.6	75.4	100
Maharashtra	40.3	59.7	100
Manipur	33	67	100
Meghalaya	14.8	85.2	100
Mizoram	44.3	55.7	100
Nagaland	30	70	100
Delhi	99.2	0.8	100

Table A2: Prevalence of Marriage Before the Age of 21 Years Amongst Women (21-30 Years) across States & UTs by location

States & UTs	Urban (%)	Rural (%)	Total (%)
Odisha	15.1	84.9	100
Puducherry	73	27	100
Punjab	35.9	64.1	100
Rajasthan	20.3	79.7	100
Sikkim	32.1	67.9	100
Tamil Nadu	45.4	54.6	100
Tripura	24.1	75.9	100
Uttar Pradesh	19.8	80.2	100
Uttarakhand	31.4	68.6	100
West Bengal	25.1	74.9	100
Telangana	42.2	57.8	100
India	27.5	72.5	100

Table A3: Prevalence of Marriage At and After the Age of 21 Years Amongst Women (21-30 Years) across States & UTs by location

States & UTs	Urban (%)	Rural (%)	Total (%)
Andaman and Nicobar Islands	37.6	62.4	100
Andhra Pradesh	36.4	63.6	100
Arunachal Pradesh	32.9	67.1	100
Assam	17.8	82.2	100
Bihar	18.3	81.7	100
Chandigarh	97.5	2.5	100
Chhattisgarh	35	65	100
Dadra and Nagar Haveli	57.2	42.8	100
Daman and Diu	73.1	26.9	100

Table A3: Prevalence of Marriage At and After the Age of 21 Years Amongst Women (21-30 Years) across States & UTs by location

States & UTs	Urban (%)	Rural (%)	Total (%)
Goa	61	39	100
Gujarat	55.9	44.1	100
Haryana	43.2	56.8	100
Himachal Pradesh	7.6	92.4	100
Jammu and Kashmir	28.8	71.2	100
Jharkhand	40	60	100
Karnataka	51.4	48.6	100
Kerala	49.2	50.8	100
Lakshadweep	87.4	12.6	100
Madhya Pradesh	45	55	100
Maharashtra	57.5	42.5	100
Manipur	37.7	62.3	100
Meghalaya	22.3	77.7	100
Mizoram	55.4	44.6	100
Nagaland	34	66	100
Delhi	99.2	0.8	100
Odisha	18.2	81.8	100
Puducherry	67.9	32.1	100
Punjab	40.9	59.1	100
Rajasthan	40.1	59.9	100
Sikkim	34.5	65.5	100
Tamil Nadu	54.9	45.1	100
Tripura	30.9	69.1	100
Uttar Pradesh	35.8	64.2	100
Uttarakhand	42	58	100
West Bengal	50.6	49.4	100
Telangana	67.1	32.9	100
India	44.6	55.4	100

Table A4: Proportion of Households Across the Wealth Terciles for States & UTs

States & UTs	Bottom Tercile (%)	Middle Tercile (%)	Top Tercile (%)	Total (%)
Andaman and Nicobar Islands	10.7	36.9	52.5	100
Andhra Pradesh	14.1	52.9	33	100
Arunachal Pradesh	32.4	43.6	24	100
Assam	52.6	34.7	12.7	100
Bihar	68.8	22.3	8.9	100
Chandigarh	2.7	10.1	87.3	100
Chhattisgarh	47.6	28.3	24	100
Dadra and Nagar Haveli	35.7	34	30.3	100
Daman and Diu	7.4	33.1	59.5	100
Goa	3.9	23.9	72.2	100
Gujarat	18.2	34.4	47.4	100
Haryana	4.7	26.8	68.5	100
Himachal Pradesh	6.2	38.8	54.9	100
Jammu and Kashmir	19.1	41	39.9	100
Jharkhand	61	23	16	100
Karnataka	19.4	44.9	35.7	100
Kerala	1.3	22.9	75.8	100
Lakshadweep	0.3	20.6	79.1	100
Madhya Pradesh	44.9	27.5	27.6	100
Maharashtra	18.5	38.4	43.1	100
Manipur	29	49.4	21.7	100
Meghalaya	36.4	49.6	14	100
Mizoram	12.5	30.7	56.8	100
Nagaland	32.2	43.5	24.3	100

Table A4: Proportion of Households Across the Wealth Terciles for States & UTs

States & UTs	Bottom Tercile (%)	Middle Tercile (%)	Top Tercile (%)	Total (%)
Delhi	1.2	20.4	78.4	100
Odisha	55.5	31.4	13.1	100
Puducherry	8.3	31.2	60.5	100
Punjab	1.8	18.8	79.4	100
Rajasthan	30.2	34.7	35.1	100
Sikkim	3.2	64.3	32.5	100
Tamil Nadu	12.1	45.9	42	100
Tripura	47.1	41.2	11.7	100
Uttar Pradesh	40.3	30	29.6	100
Uttarakhand	13.2	38.6	48.3	100
West Bengal	46.1	35.1	18.8	100
Telangana	16.4	42.4	41.3	100
India	32.3	33.9	33.9	100

Table A5: Prevalence of Marriage Before the Age of 21 (21–30 Years) across States & UTs by Household Wealth Tercile

States & UTs	Bottom Tercile (%)	Middle Tercile (%)	Top Tercile (%)	Total (%)
Andaman and Nicobar Islands	14.4	41.6	44	100
Andhra Pradesh	15.3	57.5	27.3	100
Arunachal Pradesh	37.6	44.5	17.9	100
Assam	60.8	32.2	6.9	100
Bihar	73.6	20.6	5.8	100
Chandigarh	5.4	25.7	68.9	100
Chhattisgarh	55.8	28.8	15.5	100
Dadra and Nagar Haveli	39.2	38.2	22.6	100
Daman and Diu	11.4	40.4	48.2	100

**Table A5: Prevalence of Marriage Before the Age of 21 (21-30 Years)
across States & UTs by Household Wealth Tercile**

States & UTs	Bottom Tercile (%)	Middle Tercile (%)	Top Tercile (%)	Total (%)
Goa	10.6	36.5	52.9	100
Gujarat	23.1	40.1	36.8	100
Haryana	6.2	32.2	61.6	100
Himachal Pradesh	11.1	48.7	40.2	100
Jammu and Kashmir	33.7	42	24.2	100
Jharkhand	67.1	22.7	10.2	100
Karnataka	23.9	47.1	29	100
Kerala	1.6	27.8	70.6	100
Lakshadweep	0	30.6	69.4	100
Madhya Pradesh	52	28.2	19.7	100
Maharashtra	23.4	44.3	32.2	100
Manipur	39	47.4	13.6	100
Meghalaya	46.7	47	6.3	100
Mizoram	24.2	37	38.8	100
Nagaland	49.4	41.4	9.2	100
Delhi	2.4	32.9	64.7	100
Odisha	60.8	30	9.2	100
Puducherry	11.7	37.6	50.7	100
Punjab	3.6	28.9	67.4	100
Rajasthan	35.4	37.6	27	100
Sikkim	4.3	71.2	24.5	100
Tamil Nadu	15	51.6	33.4	100
Tripura	51.9	40.6	7.6	100
Uttar Pradesh	49.9	30.9	19.2	100
Uttarakhand	19.7	46	34.3	100
West Bengal	53	35.3	11.8	100
Telangana	19.4	47.4	33.2	100
India	40.4	35.8	23.8	100

Table A6: Prevalence of Marriage At and After the Age of 21 Years (21–30 Years) across States & UTs by Household Wealth Tercile

States & UTs	Bottom Tercile (%)	Middle Tercile (%)	Top Tercile (%)	Total (%)
Andaman and Nicobar Islands	5.1	27	67.9	100
Andhra Pradesh	8.2	41.5	50.4	100
Arunachal Pradesh	28.6	39.6	31.8	100
Assam	39.8	39.9	20.3	100
Bihar	53.4	27.5	19.2	100
Chandigarh	1.2	2.9	95.9	100
Chhattisgarh	31.1	27.9	41	100
Dadra and Nagar Haveli	27	24.3	48.7	100
Daman and Diu	2.8	20.7	76.5	100
Goa	0	18.7	81.3	100
Gujarat	10	25.3	64.6	100
Haryana	2.4	18	79.6	100
Himachal Pradesh	2.7	31.3	66	100
Jammu and Kashmir	14.9	37.5	47.7	100
Jharkhand	46.7	22.3	31.1	100
Karnataka	11.5	40.8	47.7	100
Kerala	0.6	19.8	79.6	100
Lakshadweep	0.6	12.9	86.6	100
Madhya Pradesh	29.1	25.5	45.4	100
Maharashtra	12.1	31.8	56	100
Manipur	23.4	51.5	25.1	100
Meghalaya	35.2	50.7	14.2	100
Mizoram	8.6	37.4	54	100
Nagaland	33.2	46.1	20.6	100

Table A6: Prevalence of Marriage At and After the Age of 21 Years (21–30 Years) across States & UTs by Household Wealth Tercile

States & UTs	Bottom Tercile (%)	Middle Tercile (%)	Top Tercile (%)	Total (%)
Delhi	0.1	12.8	87.1	100
Odisha	42.7	37.3	20	100
Puducherry	3.8	29.9	66.3	100
Punjab	1	12.6	86.4	100
Rajasthan	17.8	26.7	55.4	100
Sikkim	2.6	62	35.4	100
Tamil Nadu	8.5	41.3	50.2	100
Tripura	35.4	43.6	20.9	100
Uttar Pradesh	25.9	28.3	45.7	100
Uttarakhand	6.8	30.1	63.1	100
West Bengal	25.2	36.7	38.1	100
Telangana	8.9	32.3	58.8	100
India	18.7	30.8	50.5	100

Table A7: Prevalence of Marriage Before the Age of 21 Years (21–30 Years) across States & UTs by Caste

States & UTs	SC (%)	ST (%)	OBC (%)	Other Castes (%)	Total (%)
Andaman and Nicobar Islands	7.2	4.1	18.3	70.4	100
Andhra Pradesh	22.8	5.8	53.7	17.6	100
Arunachal Pradesh	8.7	71.6	6.5	13.2	100
Assam	14.7	16.8	31.8	36.7	100
Bihar	21.2	3.8	61.1	13.9	100
Chandigarh	37.4	0	31.1	31.5	100
Chhattisgarh	14.9	32.4	48.4	4.3	100

**Table A7: Prevalence of Marriage Before the Age of 21 Years (21–30 Years)
across States & UTs by Caste**

States & UTs	SC (%)	ST (%)	OBC (%)	Other Castes (%)	Total (%)
Dadra and Nagar Haveli	7.3	67.1	11.1	14.4	100
Daman and Diu	14	7.3	50.2	28.5	100
Goa	8.7	12.2	24.8	54.2	100
Gujarat	11.7	16.8	50.1	21.4	100
Haryana	29.9	0.3	48.7	21.1	100
Himachal Pradesh	35.1	3.7	9.5	51.6	100
Jammu and Kashmir	17.2	25.8	6.8	50.2	100
Jharkhand	14.9	25.9	51.1	8.1	100
Karnataka	26	12.8	50.2	11	100
Kerala	9.7	2.3	71.3	16.7	100
Lakshadweep	0	100	0	0	100
Madhya Pradesh	18.6	21.5	47.8	12.1	100
Maharashtra	18.8	15.4	23.7	42	100
Manipur	7.3	36.9	19.5	36.3	100
Meghalaya	3.7	95.2	0.7	0.4	100
Mizoram	0.7	95.8	3.5	0	100
Nagaland	10.4	87.6	1.4	0.5	100
Delhi	27.3	1.1	33.8	37.8	100
Odisha	22.4	28.4	34.9	14.3	100
Puducherry	22.2	0.9	76.7	0.2	100
Punjab	43.9	0.3	21.2	34.5	100
Rajasthan	19.6	14.6	50.7	15.1	100
Sikkim	5.7	33.6	32.4	28.3	100
Tamil Nadu	31.9	2.2	64.8	1.1	100

Table A7: Prevalence of Marriage Before the Age of 21 Years (21–30 Years) across States & UTs by Caste

States & UTs	SC (%)	ST (%)	OBC (%)	Other Castes (%)	Total (%)
Tripura	27.8	37.3	20.8	14	100
Uttar Pradesh	25.2	1.5	56.3	17	100
Uttarakhand	26.7	5	25.4	42.9	100
West Bengal	37	7.3	14.1	41.7	100
Telangana	20.9	9.3	60.7	9.1	100
India	23.1	10.7	46.3	19.9	100

Table A8: Prevalence of Marriage At and After the Age of 21 Years (21–30 Years) across States & UTs by Caste

States & UTs	SC (%)	ST (%)	OBC (%)	Other Caste (%)	Total (%)
Andaman and Nicobar Islands	6	7.7	22.4	63.9	100
Andhra Pradesh	18.9	4.8	51.4	24.8	100
Arunachal Pradesh	7.9	79.4	5.5	7.2	100
Assam	12.4	19.5	36.8	31.3	100
Bihar	15.3	3.7	56	25	100
Chandigarh	32.1	0	16.2	51.7	100
Chhattisgarh	11	28.4	47.5	13.2	100
Dadra and Nagar Haveli	9.7	55.3	7.8	27.2	100
Daman and Diu	7.1	11.4	41	40.5	100
Goa	8.4	9.3	29.3	53.1	100
Gujarat	11.1	10.1	42	36.8	100
Haryana	25	0.7	43.1	31.3	100

Table A8: Prevalence of Marriage At and After the Age of 21 Years (21-30 Years) across States & UTs by Caste

States & UTs	SC (%)	ST (%)	OBC (%)	Other Caste (%)	Total (%)
Himachal Pradesh	21.7	3.9	19.1	55.3	100
Jammu and Kashmir	17	14.8	12	56.3	100
Jharkhand	11.3	29.8	41.5	17.4	100
Karnataka	24.5	8.1	56.7	10.6	100
Kerala	9.6	1.2	54.3	34.8	100
Lakshadweep	0.6	98.3	1.2	0	100
Madhya Pradesh	14.1	15.3	47	23.6	100
Maharashtra	16	9.7	29.3	45	100
Manipur	6.9	30.7	19.1	43.3	100
Meghalaya	2.3	96.1	1.1	0.5	100
Mizoram	0.4	98.3	1.3	0.1	100
Nagaland	3.3	95.3	0.8	0.6	100
Delhi	22.4	6	24.1	47.5	100
Odisha	19.4	19.3	38	23.3	100
Puducherry	25.1	1.3	72.6	1.1	100
Punjab	34.6	0.1	20.9	44.4	100
Rajasthan	16.2	9.7	44.9	29.2	100
Sikkim	4.7	38.3	33.6	23.4	100
Tamil Nadu	27.2	1.4	69.3	2.1	100
Tripura	25.8	38.6	20.9	14.6	100
Uttar Pradesh	18.2	1.2	52.2	28.4	100

Table A8: Prevalence of Marriage At and After the Age of 21 Years (21-30 Years) across States & UTs by Caste

States & UTs	SC (%)	ST (%)	OBC (%)	Other Caste (%)	Total (%)
Uttarakhand	19.3	3.2	24.5	53	100
West Bengal	30.3	6.5	17.5	45.8	100
Telangana	15.3	3.4	59.5	21.9	100
India	19.1	7.8	45	28.1	100

Table A9: Attainment of Secondary Level Education for Women (21-30 Years) Across States & UTs by Age at Marriage

States & UTs	Married before 21 years (%)	Married at 21 years and after (%)
Andaman and Nicobar Islands	36.5	71.8
Andhra Pradesh	32.8	69.4
Arunachal Pradesh	27	52.6
Assam	17.7	47.4
Bihar	18.6	40.3
Chandigarh	32	74.6
Chhattisgarh	17.9	51.1
Dadra and Nagar Haveli	28.4	60.8
Daman and Diu	42.3	74.9
Goa	35	75.9
Gujarat	23	55.6
Haryana	42.1	70.6
Himachal Pradesh	56.8	86.7
Jammu and Kashmir	22.7	46.2

Table A9: Attainment of Secondary Level Education for Women (21–30 Years) Across States & UTs by Age at Marriage

States & UTs	Married before 21 years (%)	Married at 21 years and after (%)
Jharkhand	23.3	50.3
Karnataka	42	68.6
Kerala	80.9	91.8
Lakshadweep	76.4	82.2
Madhya Pradesh	15.3	49.4
Maharashtra	35.8	66.9
Manipur	31.1	52.6
Meghalaya	22.5	46.7
Mizoram	27.1	49.3
Nagaland	15.6	38.2
Delhi	42	72
Odisha	17.1	36.9
Puducherry	66.5	83.9
Punjab	40.4	73.5
Rajasthan	17.3	53.9
Sikkim	23.5	52.9
Tamil Nadu	52.8	73.9
Tripura	16.6	43.3
Uttar Pradesh	26.2	55.6
Uttarakhand	34.2	70.3
West Bengal	19.5	59.4
Telangana	41.9	77.3
India	28.1	61.8

Table A10 : by Age at First Childbirth for Women (21–30 Years) by Marital Status

Age at first childbirth (in years)	Unmarried (%)	Married before 21 years (%)	Married at 21 years and after (%)	Total (%)
5	0	0	0	0
6	0	0	0	0
7	0	0	0	0
8	0	0	0	0
9	0	0.1	0	0
10	0	0.1	0	0.1
11	0.2	0.2	0	0.1
12	1.6	0.4	0	0.3
13	1.3	0.9	0	0.7
14	0.1	1.9	0.1	1.5
15	5.6	3.7	0.1	2.9
16	1.1	6.3	0.1	5.1
17	3.2	9.9	0.2	8
18	10.9	13.6	0.3	10.9
19	10.1	17.2	0.3	13.8
20	9.7	17.5	0.5	14.1
21	20	15	3.2	12.6
22	12.7	7.6	19.8	10.1
23	9.8	3	22.7	6.9
24	4.2	1.4	19.3	5
25	5.3	0.7	13.8	3.3
26	0.6	0.3	9.3	2.1
27	0.3	0.2	5.5	1.2
28	0.2	0.1	3.2	0.7
29	1.6	0	1.3	0.3
30	0.1	0	0.3	0.1
Total	100	100	100	100

The total percentage for unmarried does not add up to 100% due to missing data

Table A11: Low Body Mass Index for Women (21–30 Years) Across States & UTs by Age at Marriage

States & UTs	Married before 21 years (%)	Married at 21 years and after (%)
Andaman and Nicobar Islands	13.7	12.9
Andhra Pradesh	18.5	16
Arunachal Pradesh	7	6.2
Assam	23.7	19.8
Bihar	28.3	26.5
Chandigarh	12.9	10.8
Chhattisgarh	26.3	21.8
Dadra and Nagar Haveli	31.4	17.2
Daman and Diu	13.3	11.9
Goa	17.3	9
Gujarat	28.1	24.8
Haryana	15.6	12.9
Himachal Pradesh	18.1	16.2
Jammu and Kashmir	11.6	10.7
Jharkhand	32.3	28.1
Karnataka	22	18.9
Kerala	10.1	7.9
Lakshadweep	17.6	13.2
Madhya Pradesh	28.3	25.7
Maharashtra	25.8	24.9
Manipur	9	7.9
Meghalaya	11.7	12.6
Mizoram	8.7	7.2

Table A11: Low Body Mass Index for Women (21–30 Years) Across States & UTs by Age at Marriage

States & UTs	Married before 21 years (%)	Married at 21 years and after (%)
Nagaland	13.4	13.8
Delhi	11.4	7.8
Odisha	25.2	21.9
Puducherry	9.4	6.7
Punjab	12.3	9.8
Rajasthan	26.5	22.5
Sikkim	6	4.1
Tamil Nadu	14.5	12.5
Tripura	20.3	17.9
Uttar Pradesh	22.1	18.9
Uttarakhand	18.1	16
West Bengal	19.6	14.9
Telangana	24.5	18.6
India	22.5	18.6

Table A12: Percentage of Women (21–30 Years) with Children Across States & UTs by Age at Marriage

States & UTs	Married before 21 years (%)	Married at 21 years and after (%)
Andaman and Nicobar Islands	94.2	68.2
Andhra Pradesh	93.2	68.1
Arunachal Pradesh	92.6	64.1
Assam	94.9	72.9
Bihar	93.8	70.1
Chandigarh	96.7	68.9

Table A12: Percentage of Women (21-30 Years) with Children Across States & UTs by Age at Marriage

States & UTs	Married before 21 years (%)	Married at 21 years and after (%)
Chhattisgarh	92.5	70.3
Dadra and Nagar Haveli	90.6	69.9
Daman and Diu	89.3	61
Goa	92.2	65.8
Gujarat	89.7	67
Haryana	94.3	68.4
Himachal Pradesh	95	74.9
Jammu and Kashmir	94.5	71.5
Jharkhand	93.3	70.5
Karnataka	90.4	69.3
Kerala	91.9	67.2
Lakshadweep	80.2	59.1
Madhya Pradesh	92.9	67.9
Maharashtra	91.9	64.8
Manipur	95.8	75.8
Meghalaya	96	76
Mizoram	97	80.8
Nagaland	95.8	77.4
Delhi	92.8	65.7
Odisha	92.7	71.8
Puducherry	94.5	74.9
Punjab	94.2	70
Rajasthan	91.6	65
Sikkim	96	57
Tamil Nadu	93.5	74.3

Table A12: Percentage of Women (21–30 Years) with Children Across States & UTs by Age at Marriage

States & UTs	Married before 21 years (%)	Married at 21 years and after (%)
Tripura	95.9	72.7
Uttar Pradesh	91.4	64.9
Uttarakhand	92.7	70.1
West Bengal	94.9	66.2
Telangana	93.5	69.3
India	92.7	68.4

Table A13: Top 100 Districts with the Highest Prevalence of Marriage Before the Age of 21 Years Amongst Women (21–30 Years)

States & UTs	District	Married before 21 years (%)	Married at 21 years and after (%)
Bihar	Jamui	91.9	6.4
Bihar	Madhepura	91.1	7.7
Bihar	Begusarai	89.9	7.3
Bihar	Khagaria	89.7	7.5
Jharkhand	Godda	89.1	7.3
Jharkhand	Chatra	89.1	7.3
Uttar Pradesh	Shrawasti	89	8.2
Jharkhand	Giridih	88.9	8.4
Bihar	Supaul	87.9	9.3
Jharkhand	Garhwa	87.8	7.5
Bihar	Purba Champaran	87.3	9.3
Bihar	Sheikhpura	86.5	9
Rajasthan	Barmer	86.3	9.7
Bihar	Samastipur	86.2	10.6

Table A13: Top 100 Districts with the Highest Prevalence of Marriage Before the Age of 21 Years Amongst Women (21-30 Years)

States & UTs	District	Married before 21 years (%)	Married at 21 years and after (%)
Bihar	Sheohar	86.2	11.8
Bihar	Gaya	86.1	7.7
West Bengal	Purba Medinipur	85.8	9
Bihar	Lakhisarai	85.6	9.7
Jharkhand	Deoghar	85.3	8.7
Bihar	Madhubani	85	11.9
Jharkhand	Kodarma	84.9	10.2
West Bengal	Maldah	84.8	9.5
Bihar	Araria	84.6	11.2
Bihar	Sitamarhi	84.3	12.8
Bihar	Nawada	84.2	10.5
Rajasthan	Sawai Madhopur	84.1	7.9
Andhra Pradesh	Prakasam	83.9	11.1
Madhya Pradesh	Tikamgarh	83.9	7.6
Maharashtra	Jalna	83.9	11.5
Bihar	Arwal	83.8	10.3
Bihar	Darbhanga	83.4	12.1
Madhya Pradesh	Rajgarh	83.3	12.2
Bihar	Banka	83.2	15
Uttar Pradesh	Lalitpur	83	9.2
Bihar	Vaishali	82.5	12
Madhya Pradesh	Singrauli	82.5	9.7
Rajasthan	Karauli	82.5	7.7
Uttar Pradesh	Mahrajganj	82.5	11.3

Table A13: Top 100 Districts with the Highest Prevalence of Marriage Before the Age of 21 Years Amongst Women (21-30 Years)

States & UTs	District	Married before 21 years (%)	Married at 21 years and after (%)
Maharashtra	Aurangabad	82.3	9.2
Maharashtra	Bid	82.3	13.5
West Bengal	Paschim Medinipur	82.3	12
West Bengal	Murshidabad	82	8.6
Bihar	Muzaffarpur	81.7	13.7
Madhya Pradesh	Sidhi	81.6	12.2
Bihar	Katihar	81.3	12.8
Rajasthan	Jaisalmer	81.3	16.4
Bihar	Pashchim Champaran	81.3	13.7
Madhya Pradesh	Rewa	81.3	9
Bihar	Kaimur (Bhabua)	81.2	11.4
West Bengal	Puruliya	81.2	11.5
Rajasthan	Nagaur	81.1	11.2
Bihar	Purnia	80.9	15.1
Gujarat	Banaskantha	80.9	13.9
Maharashtra	Parbhani	80.9	11.3
Rajasthan	Chittaurgarh	80.9	15.1
Madhya Pradesh	Jhabua	80.8	11.8
West Bengal	Uttar Dinajpur	80.8	11.9
Jharkhand	Dumka	80.7	13
Rajasthan	Rajsamand	80.7	14
Madhya Pradesh	Shivpuri	80.6	11.1
Madhya Pradesh	Chhatarpur	80.5	12.6
Jharkhand	Jamtara	80.4	13

Table A13: Top 100 Districts with the Highest Prevalence of Marriage Before the Age of 21 Years Amongst Women (21-30 Years)

States & UTs	District	Married before 21 years (%)	Married at 21 years and after (%)
Madhya Pradesh	Mandsaur	80.4	12.6
West Bengal	Dakshin Dinajpur	80.1	10.2
West Bengal	South Twenty-Four Parganas	80	13.8
Madhya Pradesh	Morena	79.8	15.7
Maharashtra	Nanded	79.8	12.7
West Bengal	Birbhum	79.8	12.2
Madhya Pradesh	Sheopur	79.7	12.8
Bihar	Saharsa	79.6	15.5
Jharkhand	Latehar	79.6	13
Rajasthan	Jalor	79.6	14
Madhya Pradesh	Dindori	79.5	11.7
Maharashtra	Latur	79.5	12.2
Madhya Pradesh	Shajapur	79.3	16
Jharkhand	Palamu	79.3	10.9
Madhya Pradesh	Bhind	79.3	14.8
Rajasthan	Udaipur	79.3	12.1
Madhya Pradesh	Vidisha	79.2	12.2
Uttar Pradesh	Chitrakoot	79.2	11.7
Andhra Pradesh	Kurnool	79.1	11.5
Haryana	Mewat	79.1	13.6
West Bengal	Bankura	78.9	14.5
Uttar Pradesh	Bahraich	78.8	17.2
Bihar	Bhojpur	78.7	13.1

Table A13: Top 100 Districts with the Highest Prevalence of Marriage Before the Age of 21 Years Amongst Women (21-30 Years)

States & UTs	District	Married before 21 years (%)	Married at 21 years and after (%)
Odisha	Nabarangapur	78.7	10.1
Bihar	Nalanda	78.6	14.5
Uttar Pradesh	Gonda	78.6	9.8
Jharkhand	Sahibganj	78.5	10
Madhya Pradesh	Datia	78.4	12
Madhya Pradesh	Umaria	78.4	11.8
Bihar	Jehanabad	78.3	12.6
Maharashtra	Jalgaon	78.3	14.7
Bihar	Rohtas	78.2	14.8
Madhya Pradesh	Ashoknagar	78	14.2
Rajasthan	Churu	77.9	12.9
Uttar Pradesh	Mirzapur	77.7	14.9
Bihar	Aurangabad	77.6	16.4
Andhra Pradesh	Guntur	77.5	15.1
Jharkhand	Pakur	77.5	13

Table A14: Top 100 Districts with the Highest Prevalence of Marriage at and after the age of 21 Years amongst Women (21-30 Years)

States & UTs	District	Married before 21 years (%)	Married at 21 years and after (%)
Tamil Nadu	Kanniyakumari	18.8	54.1
Kerala	Ernakulam	19.4	52.2
Kerala	Alappuzha	21.4	51.7
Himachal Pradesh	Kangra	28.3	49.5
Kerala	Thiruvananthapuram	29.9	46.8

Table A14: Top 100 Districts with the Highest Prevalence of Marriage at and after the age of 21 Years amongst Women (21-30 Years)

States & UTs	District	Married before 21 years (%)	Married at 21 years and after (%)
Lakshadweep	Lakshadweep	19.8	46.1
Himachal Pradesh	Hamirpur	42.3	44.6
Karnataka	Udupi	16.8	43.3
Kerala	Kottayam	21.2	41.8
Puducherry	Mahe	36.3	41.6
Kerala	Kannur	43.6	41.3
Jammu and Kashmir	Samba	28.4	41
Kerala	Thrissur	35.2	40.7
Tamil Nadu	Tirunelveli	33.7	40.6
Maharashtra	Gondiya	46	40.1
Kerala	Pathanamthitta	25.9	39.9
Himachal Pradesh	Una	32.5	39.8
Punjab	Hoshiarpur	30	39.8
Tamil Nadu	Thoothukkudi	36.5	39.5
Tamil Nadu	Thiruvarur	37.2	39.4
Maharashtra	Ratnagiri	42.2	39.3
Odisha	Jajapur	32.6	39.2
Himachal Pradesh	Bilaspur	65	39
Karnataka	Dakshina Kannada	19.2	38.9
Kerala	Kasaragod	41.1	38.8
Kerala	Kollam	33.5	38.5
Haryana	Ambala	43	38.3
Jammu and Kashmir	Kathua	30.5	38
Tamil Nadu	Ramanathapuram	45.6	38

Table A14: Top 100 Districts with the Highest Prevalence of Marriage at and after the age of 21 Years amongst Women (21-30 Years)

States & UTs	District	Married before 21 years (%)	Married at 21 years and after (%)
Odisha	Puri	40.3	37.5
Punjab	Patiala	37.8	37.5
Punjab	Sahibzada Ajit Singh Nagar	35.8	37.5
Karnataka	Hassan	41.4	37.4
Tamil Nadu	Nagapattinam	38.2	37.3
Tamil Nadu	Thiruvallur	42.2	37.1
Punjab	Rupnagar	32.1	37
Punjab	Sangrur	23.2	36.9
Puducherry	Karaikal	41.5	36.5
Himachal Pradesh	Solan	43.5	36.4
Punjab	Fatehgarh Sahib	35.4	36.4
Punjab	Gurdaspur	33	36.2
Jammu and Kashmir	Leh	21.8	36.1
Himachal Pradesh	Lahul And Spiti	33.4	36
Haryana	Panchkula	42.5	35.8
Jammu and Kashmir	Kulgam	16.2	35.8
Manipur	Bishnupur	31.5	35.6
Jammu and Kashmir	Badgam	13.9	35.4
Karnataka	Bangalore	42.3	35.2
Puducherry	Puducherry	42.2	35.2
Tamil Nadu	Sivaganga	47.2	35.2
Haryana	Kurukshetra	44.8	35.1
Tamil Nadu	Pudukkottai	40.4	35.1
Himachal Pradesh	Chamba	43.8	35

Table A14: Top 100 Districts with the Highest Prevalence of Marriage at and after the age of 21 Years amongst Women (21-30 Years)

States & UTs	District	Married before 21 years (%)	Married at 21 years and after (%)
Himachal Pradesh	Kullu	44.3	34.9
Jammu and Kashmir	Ganderbal	24.8	34.9
Punjab	Faridkot	42.2	34.9
Himachal Pradesh	Sirmaur	36.5	34.8
Maharashtra	Raigarh	63.1	34.8
Punjab	Jalandhar	21.6	34.7
Odisha	Jagatsinghapur	32.6	34.6
Tamil Nadu	Chennai	39.6	34.3
Tamil Nadu	Thanjavur	43	34.3
Haryana	Karnal	50.7	34.2
Jammu and Kashmir	Jammu	31.2	34.1
Tamil Nadu	Tiruchirappalli	45.8	34
Karnataka	Shimoga	44.1	33.7
Tamil Nadu	Kancheepuram	43.2	33.6
Odisha	Kendrapara	40.3	33.5
Manipur	Thoubal	36.2	33.4
Odisha	Bhadrak	44	33.4
Manipur	Imphal West	27.8	33.3
Manipur	Ukhrul	37.8	33.3
Jammu and Kashmir	Kupwara	33.7	33.2
Kerala	Idukki	35.8	33.2
Maharashtra	Bhandara	41.1	33
West Bengal	Kolkata	40	33
Tamil Nadu	Karur	53.9	32.8

Table A14: Top 100 Districts with the Highest Prevalence of Marriage at and after the age of 21 Years amongst Women (21-30 Years)

States & UTs	District	Married before 21 years (%)	Married at 21 years and after (%)
Himachal Pradesh	Shimla	35.2	32.5
Maharashtra	Sindhudurg	39.1	32.4
Punjab	Ludhiana	37.5	32.1
Tamil Nadu	Coimbatore	51.1	32.1
Manipur	Tamenglong	43.3	32
Punjab	Barnala	44.5	31.9
Nagaland	Zunheboto	21	31.8
Jammu and Kashmir	Srinagar	11.4	31.7
Goa	North Goa	26.3	31.6
Uttarakhand	Garhwal	49.7	31.6
Karnataka	Uttara Kannada	35.2	31.5
Haryana	Yamunanagar	43.4	31.4
Karnataka	Bangalore Rural	53.5	31.4
Punjab	Tarn Taran	41.7	31.3
Tamil Nadu	The Nilgiris	53.5	31.3
Tamil Nadu	Virudhunagar	47.7	31.3
Uttarakhand	Dehradun	34.3	31.3
Maharashtra	Wardha	47.3	31.2
Madhya Pradesh	Balaghat	50.2	31.1
Kerala	Wayanad	46.2	30.8
Nagaland	Wokha	29.7	30.8
Tamil Nadu	Vellore	47.4	30.8
Haryana	Kaithal	54.5	30.7



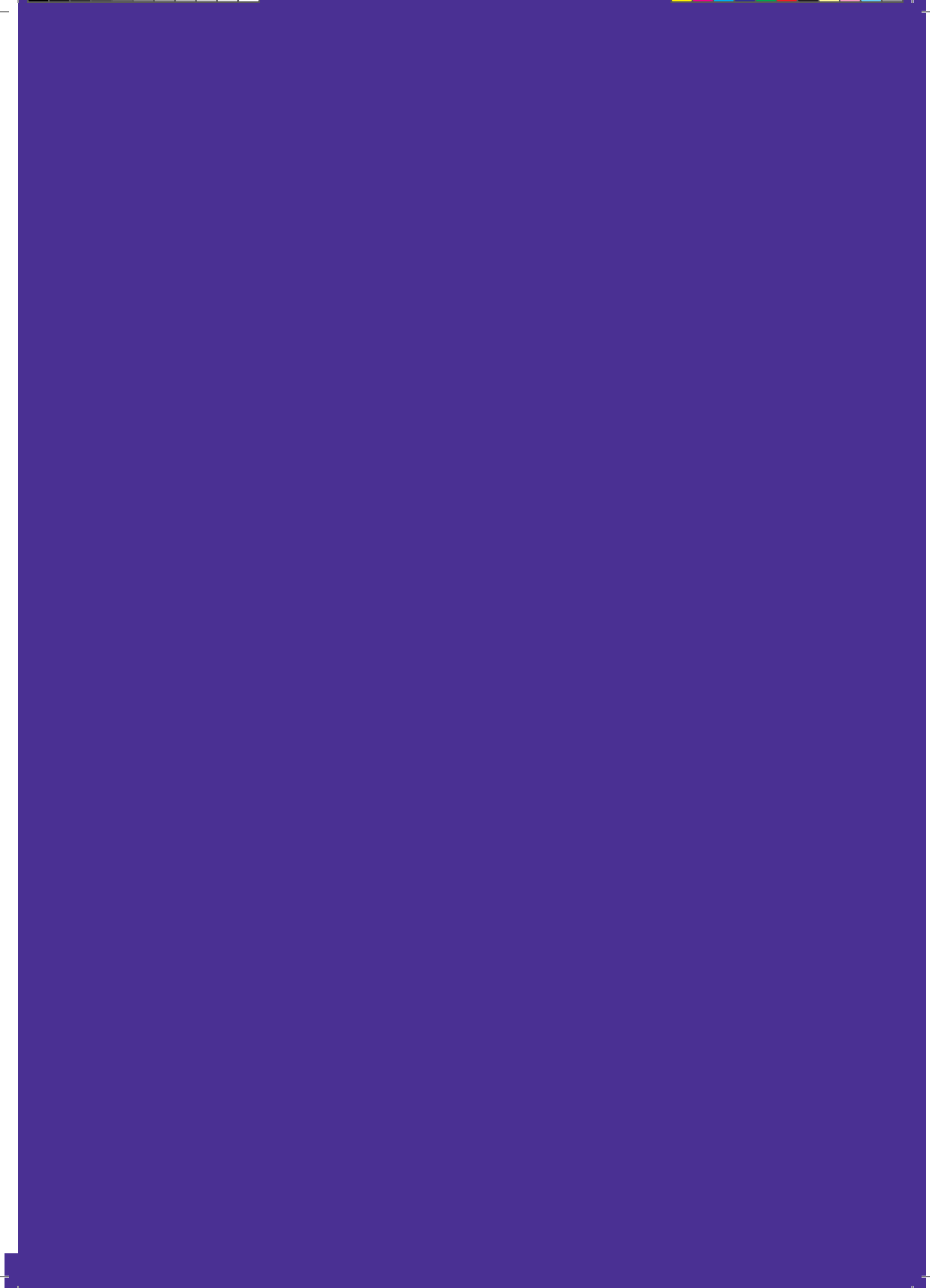
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