



SOCIAL DETERMINANTS INFLUENCING EARLY MARRIAGE OF GIRLS

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Abstract: Early marriage of girls remains a significant social and educational challenge in many parts of the world. This phenomenon is influenced by a complex interaction of social, cultural, economic, and pedagogical factors. The article analyzes the theoretical foundations of early marriage, focusing on social and pedagogical determinants, and highlights the role of education, family, and social institutions in preventing early marriage. The study emphasizes the importance of social-pedagogical interventions in promoting girls' rights, educational continuity, and social development.

Keywords: Early marriage, girls, social factors, pedagogical factors, social pedagogy, education, family.

Introduction

Early marriage, commonly defined as marriage before the age of 18, is a global issue that affects millions of girls. It limits their educational opportunities, personal development, and social participation. From a social-pedagogical perspective, early marriage is not only a private family matter but also a societal problem that reflects inequalities in education, gender norms, and social awareness. Understanding the social and pedagogical factors behind early marriage is essential for developing effective prevention strategies.

Theoretical Foundations of Early Marriage

From a sociological theory perspective, early marriage can be explained through **social norms theory**, which suggests that individuals' behaviors are strongly influenced by cultural traditions and collective expectations. In many societies, traditional gender roles position girls primarily as future wives and mothers, reducing the perceived value of prolonged education.

According to social learning theory, behaviors such as early marriage are transmitted across generations through observation and imitation. When early marriage is normalized within a community, families tend to reproduce the same patterns for their daughters.

From the standpoint of social pedagogy, early marriage is viewed as a result of insufficient educational support, weak social protection mechanisms, and limited access to life skills education. Social pedagogy emphasizes holistic development and the protection of children's rights through educational and social interventions. In the scientific works of Uzbek scholars, the issue of early marriage of girls has been studied from social, pedagogical, psychological, and legal perspectives. Researchers emphasize that early marriage is closely connected with family traditions, gender relations, access to education, and the level of social awareness in society. From a social-pedagogical point of view, early marriage is considered a factor that negatively affects the holistic development and socialization of girls.

In the field of social pedagogy, Uzbek scholar Q. Kh. Abdurakhmonov analyzes early marriage as a social problem resulting from insufficient cooperation between family, school, and society. According to his research, the interruption of girls' education and the weakening

of social support mechanisms increase the risk of early marriage. He highlights that social-pedagogical work should be aimed at protecting children's rights and ensuring their continuous education.

D. A. Mahmudova, in her studies, focuses on the social causes of early marriage among girls. She identifies traditional attitudes, low pedagogical awareness of parents, and economic difficulties as the main factors contributing to early marriage. The researcher argues that education plays a key preventive role, as it helps girls develop independent thinking, self-confidence, and long-term life goals.

Gender issues related to early marriage are widely discussed in the works of Z. K. Ismoilova. In her gender-pedagogical research, she emphasizes that limiting girls' access to education reinforces gender inequality and restricts their social participation. According to Ismoilova, early marriage should be viewed not only as a family decision but as a violation of girls' social and educational rights, which requires systematic pedagogical intervention.

Psychological aspects of early marriage are examined in the research of G. R. Karimova. She studies the impact of early marriage on girls' emotional well-being and social adaptation. Her findings show that early marriage often leads to psychological stress, limited personal development, and reduced social activity. Karimova underlines the importance of school psychologists and social pedagogues in identifying girls at risk and providing timely support.

M. A. Qodirova's research is devoted to the cooperation between school and family in preventing early marriage. She argues that regular pedagogical work with parents, including awareness-raising activities and consultations, helps change attitudes toward girls' education. According to her studies, strong school-family collaboration significantly reduces the likelihood of girls leaving school for early marriage.

In addition, N. R. Yusupova focuses on the pedagogical prevention of early marriage in her scientific works. She proposes preventive programs implemented by social pedagogues, including educational trainings, individual counseling, and community-based activities. Her research demonstrates that systematic pedagogical prevention is effective in shaping negative attitudes toward early marriage among adolescents.

In general, the scientific research of Uzbek scholars presents early marriage of girls as a complex social and pedagogical phenomenon that hinders social development and gender equality. Researchers agree that preventing early marriage requires strengthening the education system, improving family pedagogical culture, and expanding social-pedagogical support. These studies provide a theoretical foundation for developing effective educational and social strategies aimed at protecting girls' rights and promoting their full participation in society.

Social Factors Influencing Early Marriage of Girls

Several key social factors contribute to early marriage:

- **Cultural and traditional norms:** In some communities, early marriage is considered a way to preserve family honor or ensure social stability.
- **Economic factors:** Poverty often forces families to view early marriage as a strategy to reduce financial burden.
- **Gender inequality:** Girls are often valued less than boys in terms of education and social investment.
- **Lack of legal awareness:** Limited knowledge about legal marriage age and girls' rights increases the risk of early marriage.

These social conditions create an environment in which early marriage is perceived as acceptable or even necessary.

Pedagogical Factors and Educational Context

Pedagogical factors play a crucial role in either reinforcing or preventing early marriage. Limited access to quality education, especially in rural areas, increases the likelihood of girls leaving school early and entering marriage.

The absence of **gender-sensitive pedagogy**, inadequate reproductive health education, and weak school-family cooperation also contribute to the problem. Schools that fail to provide safe, inclusive, and motivating learning environments may unintentionally push girls toward early marriage.

From a pedagogical viewpoint, education serves as a protective factor. Continuous schooling enhances critical thinking, self-confidence, and future orientation, which reduce the likelihood of early marriage.

The Role of Social Pedagogy in Prevention

Social pedagogy focuses on supporting children and adolescents through educational, social, and psychological means. Social pedagogues, teachers, and community workers play an important role in:

- Raising awareness among parents and communities
- Supporting girls at risk of early marriage
- Promoting life skills and rights-based education
- Strengthening cooperation between schools, families, and social institutions

Preventive social-pedagogical programs aim to empower girls and transform social attitudes toward gender and education.

Conclusion

Early marriage of girls is a multifaceted issue shaped by social and pedagogical factors. Addressing this problem requires a comprehensive approach that combines education, social support, and community engagement. From a social-pedagogical perspective, preventing early marriage means ensuring access to quality education, promoting gender equality, and strengthening the role of social institutions. Sustainable solutions depend on coordinated efforts at the family, school, and societal levels.

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