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Child Brides

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Child Brides

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Abstract

The goal of this presentation is to take a look into the human rights violation of child marriage happening in countries all over the world. For the purpose of this presentation, we will focus on four countries where child marriages are extremely prevalent: India, Niger, Bangladesh, and Yemen. First, we will begin with a brief history and background of child brides and statistics related to this population. Second, we will discuss the four countries (as stated above) where this is a major problem, and why the rates of child brides are especially high within each country. Third, we will consider the consequences of child marriages and the ethical implications. Lastly, we will suggest implementation of an intervention for change that is possible on a global level. We hope to educate, provide awareness, and propose ideas for the implementation of interventions to eradicate this human rights issue.

Objectives

- The history and background of child marriage- When did this begin and what are the statistics concerning child brides
- Description of the countries that are exploiting child brides- India, Niger, Bangladesh, Yemen
- Consequences child marriage has on the young bride
- The way forward- How to implement an intervention for change on a global level



History and Laws

- Child marriage has been practiced for hundreds of years
 - Ex: This practice was seen in the Quran by the Prophet Muhammad
- Throughout history, child marriage was viewed as the norm
 - Life expectancy was shorter compared to today
 - Child marriages began to taper off during the 20th century
- The Universal Declaration of Human Rights
- The Convention on the Rights of the Child
- Convention on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW)
- Convention on Consent to Marriage, Minimum Age for Marriage, and Registration for Marriage

High Risk Countries

- India
 - Highest number of child brides in the world
 - Children are viewed as an economic burden
 - Children have poor education
 - Controlling women's sexuality
- Niger
 - Highest rate of child brides in the world
 - Married young because of social and religious tradition
- Bangladesh
 - Recent policy changes are taking this country two steps back
 - Families want higher dowries for daughters
 - Families want economic and social security
- Yemen
 - No legal minimum age for marriage
 - In the middle of a civil war, so child marriages are not a priority to be addressed



Consequences of Child Marriages

- Education of young girls is terminated
- Girls are in a continuous cycle of poverty
- Girls' safety is risked
 - Higher rates of death during pregnancy for women younger than 20
 - Many pregnancy-related injuries
- Safety of babies is at risk
 - Higher death rate during first year of life
 - Low birth weights and long-term health effects
- Motherhood in childhood
 - No sex education
 - No maternal services
 - Little say of when they become pregnant

The Way Forward

- Empowering girls
 - Safe Space Programs
 - Supporting young people to be agents of change
- Mobilize Families and Communities
 - The values and norms which support the practice of child marriage need to shift
 - Reduce the acceptance among those who make the decision to marry girls as children
 - Working with families and the wider community to raise awareness of the harmful consequences of child marriage can change attitudes
- Provide Services
 - Addressing child marriage and supporting the needs of married girls
 - The most vulnerable girls who have no access to a quality education, healthcare or child protection mechanisms
 - Ending child marriage requires us to review the services available to girls

Psalm 127:3-5 "Children are a heritage from the Lord, offspring a reward from him. Like arrows in the hands of a warrior are children born in one's youth. Blessed is the man whose quiver is full of them."

