

# Sociodemographic Characteristics of Females Married less than 18 Years

Dr. Nibras Alaa Hussain\*, Dr. Saif Hameed Mohammed and  
Dr. Laith Amerabd al Hussain

**Abstract---** **Background:** Many young males and females not have a chance to work out their right to select and choosing their partner during marriage, child girls marriage can define as marriage occur in the age below 18 years old, before she become (physiologically, physically and psychologically) appropriate for holder the duties of marriage and childbearing. In Arabic community early married females in represented the protection for them, battles and community difficulties consider one of very important causes of early married. So the aim of study to display some sociodemographic characteristics of females married before 18 years age and find the most common causes behind this marriage. **Results:** most of females were 15 years or less, unemployed, know their husband before marriage, had pregnancy complication, and were happy with her husband. There were significant association between early marriage at 15 years and less and (incomplete education, Occurrence of pregnancy complications. **Conclusion:** This study found that social and personal causes mainly responsible for early marriage.

**Keywords---** Early Marriage, Morbidity and Mortality of Mother and Child, Child Girl's Marriage.

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## I. INTRODUCTION

Marriage is considered optimal in people lives, many young males and females and especially female not have a chance to work out their right to select and choosing their partner during marriage the choice only to male and female disrupts their rights(1). This lead to disturbing effects on young female girls in developing states, each year's 10 million adolescent females get early marriage worldwide, 1 for 3 girls married early in developing states(2). Child marriage define as the marriage or union prior 18 years old (3). Child girls marriage can define as marriage occur in the age below 18 years old, before she become (physiologically, physically and psychologically) appropriate for holder the duties of marriage and childbearing(4). Family is very important in Arabic countries, so represented the security structure for old and young people, in Arabic and Islamic philosophy parents are in charge for children and children take this responsibility for caring of older parents and fulfills their needs, so in Arabic countries marriage represented respect point respect, credit, and social support on both partners also it considered the communal and financial relationship between families and also considered communally and legally satisfactory sexual connection(5). Obligatory marriage is the marriage occur with no agreement of both parties and occasionally with a threatening(6). Early marriage is still very common in rural place and become little in urban area, poor family think that early marriage protect and save their daughters and safe their economic and communal future(7). Reasons of early marriage in Arabic community are: poverty, highly birth and death rates, low education and development, wars and public wars (8). No. of young female in Arabic country who married early is still high, so early marriage lead to early child bearing and high fertility so increase the risk to the child and mother (9). Young wives need to do

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Dr. Nibras Alaa Hussain\*, Lecturer, Al-Nahrain University, College of Medicine, Family &Community Medicine Department, Iraq.  
Dr. Saif Hameed Mohammed, Lecturer, Surgery Department, Al-Nahrain University, College of Medicine, Iraq.  
Dr. Laith Amerabd al Hussain, Lecturer, Surgery Department, Al-Nahrain University, College of Medicine, Iraq.

hard duties in her home as mother and wife (10). Young females are obligatory to be in charge for the attention and well-being of their families and upcoming peers but she is still young and child, so she is not able to make intelligent strategies for their families, so this lead to failed marriages and separation due to loss of maturity (9). Data from Iraq's Central Bureau of Statistics showed that 5% of Iraqi girls were married before the age of 15 years while about 22% of them married before 18 (11) In July 2013, Iraq's Minister of planning and Development Cooperation, announced that Iraq is among countries with the highest rates of underage marriage in the world reaching 11%. Researches show that the prevalence of child marriage in Iraq ranged between 16.7% - 19% under 18 years. (12). the phenomenon of child marriage in the Kurdistan region is the result of a number of interrelated religious, social and economic factors.

The arrival of nearly 245000 refugees from Syria and over one million displaced persons from other parts of Iraq has exacerbated the problem. (13). The aim of study is to display some sociodemographic characteristics of females married before 18 years age and find the most common causes behind this marriage.

## **II. METHODS**

The study was conducted in Al-Imamain Al-Kadhumain Medical city/Baghdad. Data collection was carried out during March and April, 2017. A total of 150 females were interviewed by researchers using a semi constructed questionnaire especially prepared for this study. To achieve the aims of the present study, a cross-sectional study design was adopted.

A convenient sample of the females attending Al-Emamain Al-Kadhumain outpatient, whom married before 18 and accept too involved in this study. The required data were collected from the patients by the researchers through the use of semi constructed questionnaire, which included the following information: Demographic information (age of female and her husband in years), occupation (of female, her parents and husband), years of education (of female, her parents and husband), marital status, and number of siblings. Questions about causes and effects of marriage: the cause of early marriage, duration of marriage, was she satisfy at first, consanguinity, does marriage effect on her education, gap in years between her and the husband, was she know her husband before marriage, number of children, use of contraception, history of (induced abortion, pregnancy complication), feeling with her husband, and her advice to get early marriage. Statistical analysis: Data was translated into a computerized data base structure. Statistical analysis was done by using SPSS (Statistical Package for Social Science) version 22 computer software and Microsoft Excel 2010 was used to draw the figures present in this study. Mean and standard deviation for the quantitative variables. Chi square test for the association studied qualitative variables. A level of significance of less than 0.05 was considered as statistically significant.

## **III. RESULTS**

The participants in this study were 150 female married below 18 years of age taken from Al-Emamain Al-Kadhumain medical city, of which:-101(67.3%) female were married at 15 years of age or less and 49 (32.7%) were more than 15years. see figure (1)

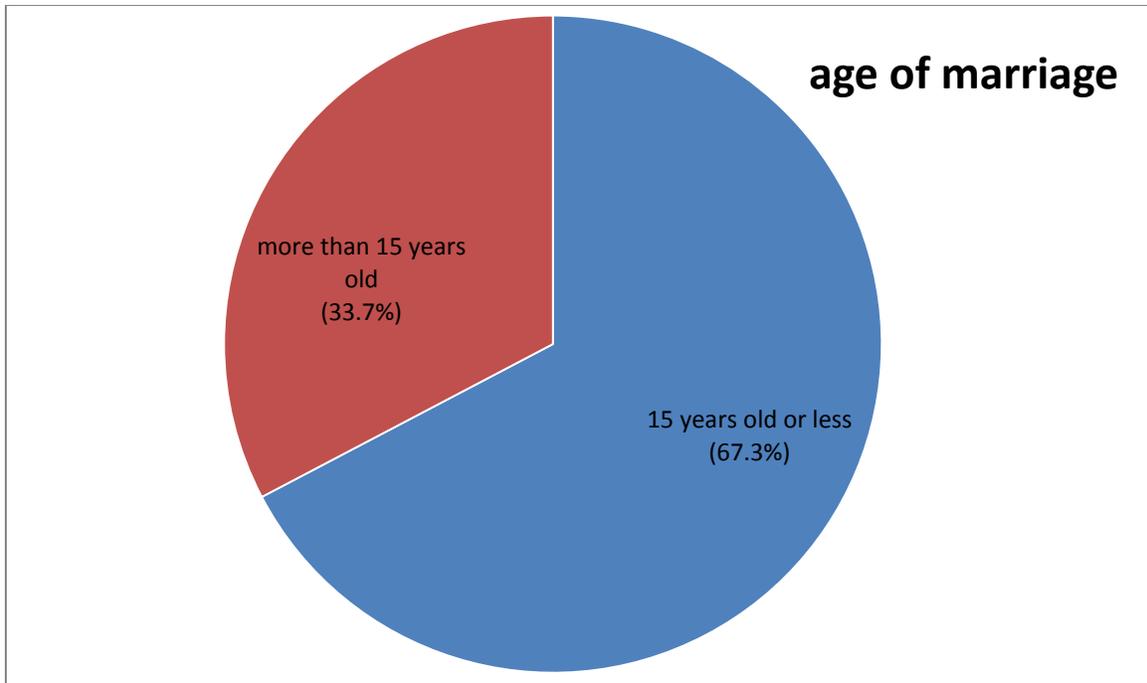


Figure 1: Distribution of the Sample According the Age of Marriage of Females

According to the cause of marriage it found that the highest percentage was married because of the social causes which represented by 70(46.7%) while the most second cause was the personal 43 (28.7%) in comparing with other causes which get lowest percentage , the religious 14(9.3%) , the economic 13 (8.7%) , others 10(6.7%) . See figure (2).

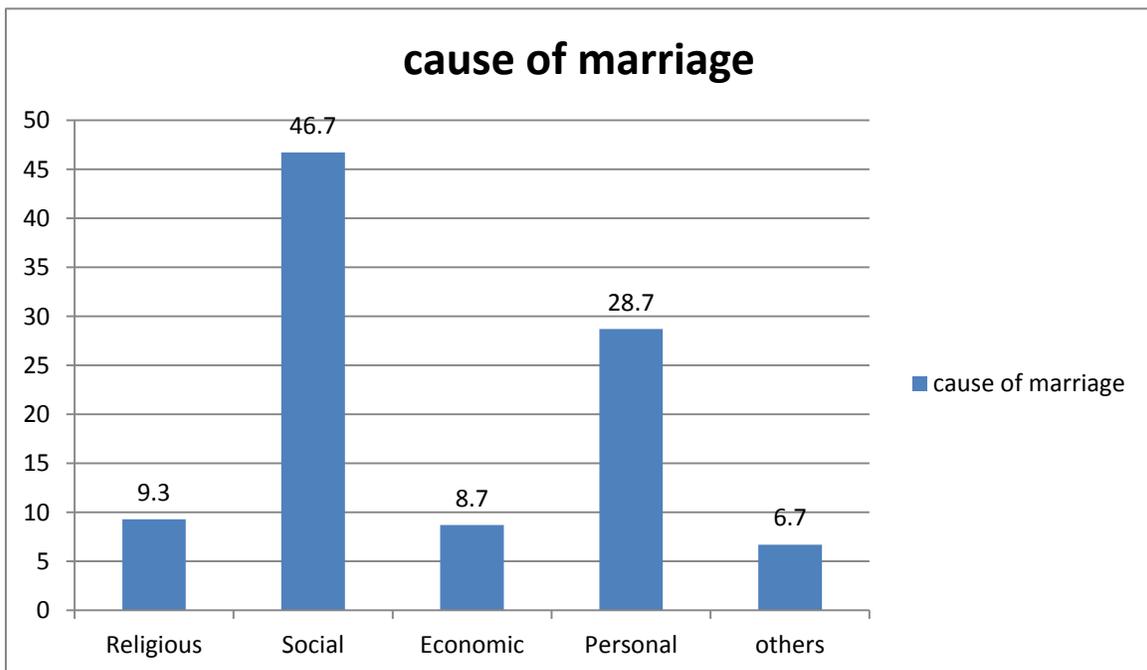


Figure 2: Distribution of the Sample According to the Cause of Marriage

regarding to the distribution of some continues variable mean  $\pm$  SD where 29.2 $\pm$ (11.7), 35.9 $\pm$ (12.3), 7.56 $\pm$ (4.17), 8.85 $\pm$ (5.17), 6.12 $\pm$ (5.13),9.68 $\pm$ (4.14),15.5 $\pm$ (1.66) age of female and husband, female education, father education, mother education, husband education, marriage age, respectively, see table (1).

Table 1: Distribution of the Sample Regarding Some Continuous Variables

Variable	Maximum	Minimum	Mean	SD (standard deviation)
Age of female	74	12	29.1800	11.753
Age of husband	80	16	35.9533	12.337
Female education/years	18	0	7.5667	4.1795
Father education/years	18	0	8.8533	5.1727
Mother education/years	18	0	6.1267	5.1309
Husband education/ years	18	0	9.6867	4.1403
Marriage age	18	11	15.5067	1.6698

According to the sociodemographic characteristics found in the studied sample, 140 (93%), 90(60%), 132(88%), 82(54.7%), were unemployed for female, father, mother, husband, respectively. While 10(6.7%), 60(40%), 18(12%), 68(45.3%), were employed for female, father, mother, husband, respectively. According to marital status the result was married 132(88%), divorced 13(8.6%), and widow 5(3.3%).According to marriage satisfaction at first, there 119(79.3%) were satisfied and 31(20.75%) were not. There were 76 (50.7%) whom were close relative and 74(49.3%) Not. We found that 96(64%) of females know their husband before marriage, 54(36%) didn't know them.64 (42.7%) of the females used contraception while the other 86(57.3%) were Not. Regarding pregnancy complication, 90(60%) of the females had a complications with pregnancy, and 60(40%) had Not. Despite 105(70%) of females were happy with her husband happy, 96(64%) of them were not advice for early marriage. See table (2).

Table 2: Sociodemographic Characteristics of Female Married Below 18 Years in the Studied Sample

Variable	Number	Percent
Female occupation		
Employed	10	6.7%
Unemployed	140	93.3%
Father occupation		
Employed	60	40%
Unemployed	90	60%
Mother occupation		
Employed	18	12%
Unemployed	132	88%
Husband occupation		
Employed	68	45.3%
Unemployed	82	54.7%
Marital status		
Married	132	88%
Divorced	13	8.6%
Widow	5	3.3%
Marriage satisfaction		
Yes	119	79.3%
No	31	20.75%
Couple consanguinity		
Yes	76	50.7%
No	74	49.3%
She knows him before marriage		
Yes	96	64%
No	54	36%
Use of contraception		
Yes	64	42.7%
No	86	57.3%
Pregnancy complications		
Yes	90	60%
No	60	40%
Feeling with her husband		
Happy	105	70%
Unhappy	24	16%
Don't know	21	14%
Advice for early marriage		
Yes	54	36%
No	96	64%

There is significant association between the early marriage age and the effect on female education, were 82% of female the early marriage age (less than 15 years) affect on her education while just 18 % effect on her education when get married at age > 15 years old. Also there is a significant relation between marriage satisfaction and the age of marriage, were 63% of females at age 15 years old and less have marriage satisfaction while 37 % of them at age > 15 years old have marriage satisfaction. There was a significant relation between pregnancy complications occurrence and the marriage earlier before 15 years at P-value less than 0.05, were 77% of females at age 15 years old and less have pregnancy complications while 23 % of them at age > 15 years old have pregnancy complications. As seen in table 3.

Table 3: Association between Age of Marriage of Females and (Effect on Education, Marriage Satisfaction and Pregnancy Complications)

Effect on education	Age of marriage		Total
	15 years and less	More than 15 years	
Yes	51(82.3%)	11(17.7%)	62(100%)
No	50(56.8%)	38(43.2%)	88(100%)
Significant	$X^2= 10.702$	$P= 0.01$	
Marriage satisfaction	Age of marriage		Total
	15 years and less	More than 15 years	
Yes	75(63.0%)	44(37.0%)	119(100%)
No	26(83.9%)	5(16.1%)	31(100%)
Significant	$X^2= 4.86$	$P = 0.028$	
pregnancy complications	Age of marriage		Total
	15 years and less	More than 15 years	
Yes	69(76.7%)	21 (23.3%)	90 (100%)
No	32 (53.3%)	28 (46.7%)	60 (100%)
Significant	$X^2=8.91$	$P < 0.05$	

#### IV. DISCUSSION

Early marriage lead to lackvital synchronization and are doggedly dangerous to pleasure. Teenagers are habitually showed by mother and father and especially father. In this study were found more than half of the females married at age 15 or less, considered as too premature marriage. This marriage occur by parents and called enforced marriage (14). This finding similar to other studies from Tanzania records independence among couples in controlling their marriage course (15). Poverty reasons that parents to impulse daughters to marry premature. For sample, in exacting environments, family benefits can take superiority over individual attention (16). Women less 18 years are not have completely knowledgeable judgements about marriage, early admission to adulthood considered advantage to women. She marriage to old man to become adult so become independent from her family this similar to study in USA (17). Most of those females were unemployed, low educational levels, and close relatives to their husbands; these like survey done in Jordan (18). While regarding female satisfaction, as most of them satisfied about their marriage despite their advice to not married before 18 years; unlike many studies done in Bangla dish (19) and Jordan (18). This may be due their limited free opinion and not tell the true. Young girls supposed they were not developed sufficient and not have enough insight to make decision, problem-solving, cooperation and serious thinking about her future and life so depend on her parents expert regarding their marriage so lead to enable them to deal successfully with the tasks of normal life (20). So a little life skills of young girls make them with insufficient

decision making so allow their parents to making decision instead her, study done in Iran show high grade of literacy not learn young girls about real lives without skills of life (21, 22).

This study found significant association between early marriage and incomplete education, this like a study take place in Nigeria in 2016 (23) and Jordan. Young marriage decision have direct effect on schooling. Financial, health circumstantial have direct effect on schooling performance. Field and Ambrus, Nguyen and Wodon (24,25) show that postponing the marriage for just one year may change our finding on the schooling effects of timing of marriage. There were a significant relation between early marriage and occurrence of pregnancy complications similar to study done in Jordan (18) and Nigeria (23). Complications that occur due to early marriage: obstructed labor lead to bleeding and longtime of sickness next to birth lead to highly risk exposure to mother and her baby, another studies also link between early marriage and Cervical Cancer, genital ulcer, VVF etc. (26). Young girls have high fertility so immediate after married become pregnant and sometime not prepare to this pregnancy and lead to high mortality and morbidity to mother and child, 14 years old girls and younger have highly complications in their pregnancy and during child birth when compared them with older women (27). Finally a significant link between girls satisfaction and early marriage. The aim of this study was to examine the role of expressive intelligence and spiritual alignment variables and females satisfaction they were early married, there was significant correlation between emotional intelligence and marital satisfaction, 16.4 % of the marital satisfaction alteration can be described by expressive intellect and age during marriage this is supported by study done by (Batool et al and Lavalekar et al) show positive significant association emotional intelligence and marital satisfaction (28).

**Ethical Clearance:** The Research Ethical Committee at scientific research by ethical approval of both environmental and health and higher education and scientific research ministries in Iraq

**Conflict of Interest:** The authors declare that they have no conflict of interest.

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