

The Impact of Mobile Court Act, 2009 on Restraining the  
Propensity of Child Marriage in Bangladesh: Empirical Evidences  
from Ishwarganj Upazilla, Mymensingh

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A thesis submitted to the Department of BRAC Institute of Governance and Development  
in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of  
Master of Arts in Governance and Development

BRAC Institute of Governance and Development  
BRAC University  
30 June 2021

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## Declaration

It is hereby declared that

1. The thesis submitted is my own original work while completing degree at BRAC University.
2. The thesis does not contain material previously published or written by a third party, except where this is appropriately cited through full and accurate referencing.
3. The thesis does not contain material which has been accepted, or submitted, for any other degree or diploma at a university or other institution.
4. I have acknowledged all main sources of help.

**Student's Full Name & Signature:**



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## Approval

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## Ethics Statement

Hereby, I Mohammed Anamul Ahasan consciously assures that for the manuscript “The Impact of Mobile Court Act, 2009 on Restraining the Propensity of Child Marriage in Bangladesh: Empirical Evidences from Ishwarganj Upazilla, Mymensingh” the following is fulfilled:

- 1) This material is the authors' own original work, which has not been previously published elsewhere.
- 2) The paper reflects the authors' own research and analysis in a truthful and complete manner.
- 3) All sources used are properly disclosed (correct citation).

I agree with the above statements and declare that this submission follows the standard guidelines of ethical issues.

Date: 30 June, 2021

Author's signature:



## Abstract

This dissertation contains the study conducted by the researcher as a part of his master's thesis. The study examines the status and effectiveness of the Mobile Court Act, 2009 to restrain the propensity of child marriage in Bangladesh based on the experience of one Upazilla, named Ishwarganj, Mymensingh. Child marriage is a social curse. It is detrimental to a girl's physiological and mental development. It is also harmful for the society as well as for the country. Child marriage is prevalent in Bangladesh in general and rural areas in particular. To reduce the extent of child marriage, Bangladesh government tries in various ways such as motivation, awareness building and enacting law.

Child Marriage Restraint Act, 1929 was enacted and put into practice to stop child marriage. Under the Child Marriage Restraint Act (1929), the legal age of marriage in Bangladesh is 18 years for a female and 21 years for a male. Penalties for child marriage according to the Act are imprisonment for one month or a fine of up to 1,000 taka (\$ 11.76) or both. Any adult or guardian arranging and permitting child marriage can be convicted under the law. Girls cannot be sentenced to imprisonment under the provision of law. This act has failed to create an effective impact to reduce child marriage in Bangladesh. The government understood the failure.

To overcome this problem, government included this law under the schedule of Mobile Court act 2009. Mobile Court brings a new dimension and a significant paradigm shift in the enforcement of laws in Bangladesh to restrain the propensity of child marriage.

Later in 2017, Government has passed Child Marriage Restraint Act, 2017. The current law in Bangladesh is the Child Marriage Restraint Act, 2017 (CMRA) repealing the earlier British law of 1929. The Act sets the minimum age of marriage for a male as 21 years and for a female as 18 years. CMRA criminalizes contracting, allowing, or solemnizing of a child marriage. In 2018 the Child Marriage Restraint Rules had been also formulated providing details of the formation and responsibilities of the Child Marriage Prevention Committees, along with other functional details. Again, Government included Child Marriage Restraint Act, 2017 under the schedule of Mobile Court act 2009.

After the enactment of Mobile Court Act, 2009 executive magistrates conduct mobile court to stop child marriage in their local jurisdiction. At the Upazilla level Upazilla Nirbahi Officer

(UNO) and Assistant Commissioner (Land) enjoy and enforce executive magistracy power. Their relentless effort makes many Upazilla child marriages free. Likewise, the researcher conducted a survey on the people of Ishwarganj Upazilla having diverse socio-economic profile. A part of the survey was also conducted on the children who were saved from the curse of child marriage. Now Ishwarganj Upazilla is a child Marriage free Upazilla. By closely observing the activities of executive magistrates in conducting mobile court, the researcher received the fundamental ideas of how this change achieved. The researcher formulated a theoretical framework to analyze the collected information.

Analysis of primary data revealed that most of the children who were saved from the marriage were satisfied with the active, effective and timely initiative of executive magistrate's mobile courts. The respondents opined that without the intervention of mobile court none could save them from child marriage. Mobile Court Act, 2009 gives the executive magistrates power to stop child marriage and punish those who are involved with child marriage. Upazilla Nirbahi Officer (UNO) and Assistant Commissioner (Land) also apply their administrative power, image and capability against child marriage. Even they are able to create a movement against child marriage. In the study area, it is found that now people are more aware of the harmful effect of child marriage. Meeting, seminar, motivational campaign, active participation of student council, information network and over all exemplary punishment given by mobile court make the people conscious and aware about detrimental effect of child marriage. Family violence and maternal death rate has reduced in this locality. From both service providers and service seekers perspective it is proved that "Mobile Court Act-2009" is an important and effective means against child marriage. Most of the respondents of all cluster termed "Mobile Court Act-2009" as a people friendly act rather a coercive one.

## Dedication

Dedicated

to

my beloved

Father and Mother.

## Acknowledgement

I am sincerely grateful to the almighty Allah for giving me the opportunity to acquire knowledge and experiences I have gathered knowledge throughout the MA in Governance and Development (MAGD) program. I am also thankful to the BIGD for providing financial support throughout the study and to the faculty of MAGD, BRAC Institute of Governance and Development (BIGD) and BRAC University, Dhaka for generous support during yearlong MAGD program.

I would like to convey my heartfelt gratitude to my supervisor, Dr. Taiabur Rahman, PhD, Professor, Department of Development Studies, University of Dhaka for his sincere facilitation, insights and encouragement. I am highly indebted to him for his invaluable advices and intellectual guidance throughout the period of my study. His suggestions helped me much in analyzing various issues related to my research. I would like to express my heartfelt appreciations to Professor Dr. Rashed Uz Zaman, Professor of International Relationship (DU) and academic coordinator, MAGD Program for providing valuable comments and suggestions during the research work. Special thanks to my classmates and all the members of MAGD program for their continuous support during the study.

I would like to offer my earnest thanks to Mr. Razib Kumar Sharker, Upazilla Nirbahi Officer (UNO), Ishwarganj, Mymensingh, Mr. Mahfujul Alom Masum, Assistant commissioner (Land), Ishwarganj, Mymensingh, Rikta Begum, Upazilla women affairs officer, Ishwarganj, Mymensingh and Mr. Badrul Alom Khan, officer in charge, Ishwarganj police station, Mymensingh who provided me with all necessary supports for the study. My deepest gratitude goes to the Children and local representatives of Ishwarganj Upazilla and key informants of Ishwarganj for their valuable time and information for the completion of the study.

My special thanks to my wife Mrs. Lutfun Nasa Aziz, Associate Professor of Government Bangla College, Dhaka for her encouragement and support. And finally, I like to mention the support and inspiration of my family members that let me walk on the path of knowledge.

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## List of Acronyms

Serial No.	Abbreviations	Acronyms
01.	Upazilla Nirbahi Officer	UNO
02.	Assistant Commissioner (Land)	AC (land)
03.	MA in governance and development	MAGD
04.	Bangladesh Rural Advancement Committee	BRAC
05.	Dhaka University	DU
06.	United Nations	UN
07.	United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund	UNICEF
08.	Upazilla Women Affairs Officer	UWAO
09.	United Nations Fund for Population Activities	UNFPA
10.	Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women	CEDAW
11.	Committee on the rights of the child	CRC
12.	International Centre for Research on Women	ICRW
13.	Theory of Change	TOC
14	Child Marriage Restraint Act	CMRA

## Chapter One: Introduction

### 1.1. Background

Bangladesh has stepped in to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) era following huge accomplishments on Millennium Development Goals - increasing enrollment in primary schooling, reducing under-five mortality rate and communicable diseases, achieving gender parity in primary and secondary education, and improving access to safe drinking water. In spite of these progresses in recent times, 52.3 percent (UNICEF June, 2017) of Bangladeshi girls today are married before they reach their 18th birthday. Child marriage remains a usual happening in Bangladesh, with significant costs to individuals, society and the economy alike. Successive inaction by the central government and complicity by local officials allow child marriage. Bangladesh is a highly vulnerable country to natural disasters. This puts more girls at risk as their families are pushed into the poverty that helps drive decisions to have girls married.

Child marriage has been unlawful in Bangladesh since 1929, and the minimum age of marriage has been set at 18 for women and 21 for men since the 1980s. Disregarding this, Bangladesh has the fourth-highest rate in the world of child marriage before age 18, after Niger, the Central African Republic, and Chad. Sixty-five percent of girls in Bangladesh marry before age 18. (UNICEF, 2012)

The government failed to enforce the existing law against child marriage. The law cannot address the factors that contribute to child marriage because child marriage has frequent coping mechanism for poor families. In this prevailing status Government included Child Marriage Restraint act, 1929, under the schedule of Mobile Court Act 2009. After the enactment of this act, mobile court was conducted to restrain child marriage. Although Child Marriage Restraint Act, 1929, was in action but this act was not fully operationalized. Mobile Court Act, 2009 makes the Child Marriage Restraint act, 1929 action oriented. Later in 2017, Government has enacted Child Marriage Restraint Act, 2017 by repealing the earlier British law of 1929. This contemporary law includes increased penalties for involvement in child marriage. Again, Government included Child Marriage Restraint Act, 2017 under the schedule of Mobile Court act 2009 to make it more functional.

Mobile Court is probably the most popular and effective government institution to materialize the laws which is a core demand of millions of down trodden people in Bangladesh, thereby providing an avenue of hope for this nation. Mobile court takes place an unparalleled and distinctive place to stopping child marriage and ultimately justice through the proper enforcement of existing concomitant laws. Ishwarganj Upazilla was a child marriage prone Upazilla. To restrain the propensity of child marriage in this Upazilla severe mobile court were conducted since 2009. This broad initiative makes the Upazilla child marriage free today.

## 1.2. Significance of the Study

Child marriage has lasting effects on girls, which last well beyond adolescence. Girls married in their teens or earlier, struggle with the health effects of getting pregnant at a young age. Early marriages tend to teen pregnancy also significantly create birth complications and social isolation. In poor countries, early pregnancy lessens their education options. This hampers their economic independence. Girls in child marriages are more likely to suffer from domestic violence, child sexual abuse, and marital rape. Child marriage is a common happening in Bangladesh. The Bangladesh government is failing to take effective measure against child marriage. In 2014, at the international “Girl Summit” held in London, United Kingdom, Bangladesh’s Prime Minister vowed to end child marriage. She outlined a series of activities to do so, including reform of the law and development of a national plan of action by the end of 2014. (Human Rights Watch, 2015)

Mobile court is the changing factor which makes the Upazilla from child marriage prone to child marriage free Upazilla. The rigorous effort and commitment of Upazilla Nirbahi Officer (UNO) and Assistant Commissioner (Land) of Ishwarganj Upazilla make the shift regarding child marriage. So, it is important to identify how this change or success becomes possible in this specific Upazilla which can be replicated to other Upazilla of Bangladesh.

## 1.3. Problem Statement

Under the Child Marriage Restraint Act (1929), for child Marriage offence the provision of punishment is nominal. This law has lost its contemporary effectiveness, especially estoppels of child Marriage. Although in 2017 this act was repealed and Child Marriage Restraint Act 2017 was enacted by modifying few sections. In spite of this, child Marriage is a common

happening in Bangladesh. To restrain the propensity of child marriage Mobile Court Act, 2009 became an effective measure. This act gives the executive magistrates administrative and magisterial power. This power is utilized to stop child marriage in local jurisdiction. The main focus is to reveal whether Mobile Court Act, 2009 is an impelling factor to restrain the propensity of child marriage in Bangladesh.

#### 1.4. Objectives of the Study

The main objective of this study is to assess the effectiveness of Mobile Court Act, 2009 which make a Upazilla from child marriage prone to child marriage free Upazilla. The specific objectives of this study are-

- To examine the effectiveness of the Mobile Court Act, 2009 as a weapon to reduce the propensity of child marriage.
- To identify and analyze the factors contributing to the effectiveness of the mobile court combating child marriage.

#### 1.5. Research Question

In view of the broader objective of this study, the following primary research question was raised:

- To what extent, the Mobile Court Act, 2009 become effective to restrain the propensity of child marriage in Bangladesh?

The secondary research questions were following:

- What are the root causes of child marriage?
- Does illiteracy and poverty have correlation with child marriage?
- Is there any institutionalize effort to prevent child marriage?
- Is there any other mechanism prevails to prevent child marriage?

## 1.6. Scope of the Study

The study focuses on the how Mobile Court Act, 2009 becomes effective to make a upazilla child marriage free from child marriage prone Upazilla. That is why researcher collected information from both of the children who saves from child marriage due to mobile court (demand side) and the service providers such as UNO, AC (Land), UWAO and Up chairman (Supply side). The study covered mobile court initiatives at one Upazilla in Mymensingh district. The Ishwarganj Upazilla has chosen because of the performance of this Upazilla is commendable as far as combating child marriage. Here rate of child Marriage was 26% in 2010. After 2010, as Mobile court operation increases the rate of child Marriage decreases. In 2017 Ishwarganj Upazilla was declared as child Marriage free Upazilla. It shows that mobile court has direct impact on lessening child Marriage rate. And thus, child mortality, abortion rate and maternity death rate have reduced. Due to this reason researcher has deliberately chosen this Upazilla under the district of Mymensingh. Moreover, it is located in a remote area and also as it is far from the Dhaka city. This remote Upazilla having distinct geographical features was chosen as the initial assumption was that this would help the researcher to understand the dynamics and variations related to the child marriage having distinct socio-economic and geographical profile.

## 1.7. Limitations of the Study

Due to limitations of time and resources the study does not

- Cover all the respondents who were saved from child marriage due to mobile court initiatives.
- Cover all the members of student council who work as watchdog against child marriage.
- Cover all the UP chairman and Kazis who actively involved in marriage procedure.
- Unavailability of information and statistics regarding mobile court operation under the Child Marriage Restraint Act (1929).

- The questionnaires were prepared on the basis of Child Marriage Restraint Act (1929) and Mobile Court Act, 2009 and feedback was taken from the respondents. Later in 2017, Government has enacted Child Marriage Restraint Act, 2017 by repealing the earlier British law of 1929. So it would not possible to incorporate the references from Child Marriage Restraint Act, 2017.
- Due to the fact that child marriage affects more girls than boys, the literature focuses almost exclusively on marriage amongst girl children. Hence, this study will focus on child marriage amongst girls.

## Chapter Two: Research Method

### 2.1 Introduction

This chapter contains the methodology that had been followed in this study. The data source is categorized based on the role of the stakeholders in conducting mobile court operation. Data collection methodology is also described with details. The reason for choosing the study area is also presented with due importance. The justification of sample size and analysis methodology is also mentioned for the readers' reference.

### 2.2 Source of Data

Both Primary and secondary types of data were collected for this study. Data collection methods of this study are given here in a chart along with type of data and source.

**Table 1: Method of Data Collection**

Type of Data	Data collection Method	Sources of Data
Primary data	Interview, Observation, Questionnaire and Case Study	Stakeholders i.e., Executive Magistrates, Government officers, Child Marriage Victims, Guardians, Political leaders, Local government leaders, Kazi, Teachers, Representative of student council, journalist and civil society members
Secondary Data	Access to internet and Visit to Government Office (UNO) office, DC office & Cabinet Division)	Website of Cabinet division, Bangladesh (Bureau of Statistics (BBS), Web portal of Bangladesh and World Wide Web (WWW).

## 2.3 Study Area

The study has covered Ishwarganj Upazilla of Mymensingh District. Area profile of this Upazilla is given as follows:

<b>Ishwarganj</b>
Ishwarganj is an Upazilla of Mymensingh district having area of 286.19 sq km. It has 11 unions, and 291 villages.
Total population is 338080; among them 172952 are male and 172952 are female. Population density is 1181 per sq km.
It is about 150 km far from Dhaka city.
The average literacy rate is 35.20% where national literacy rate is 61.5%. The male literacy rate is 38.75 and female literacy rate is 31.5%.
Main sources of income are agriculture 70.52%, non-agriculture laborer 3.38%, service 3.84%, industry 0.41%, commerce 10.22%, transport and communication 2.90%, construction 0.87%, religious service 0.32%, rent and remittance 0.18% and others 7.36%.
Communication facilities are - railway 17 km, pucca road 98 km and mud road 574 km.
Educational institutions: college 5, secondary school 26, primary school 145 and madras 106.

Source: The information of Ishwarganj Upazilla has been taken from Upazilla profile kept in Ishwarganj Upazilla Parishad office as well as from the Census report 2001, BBS.

## 2.4 Sample Size

The respondents of this study are the service recipients, and the service providers of mobile court operation at Ishwarganj Upazilla. The sample size was 37. Purposive sampling method has been used in this study for sample selection.

**Table 2: Respondents Distribution for Primary Data Collection**

<b>Types of Respondents</b>	<b>Data Collection Method</b>	<b>No. of respondents</b>
Persons of Ishwarganj Upazilla who saved from child marriage through mobile court operation (Demand side/service recipient)	Survey questionnaire	<b>11</b>
Persons of Ishwarganj Upazilla who involved in mobile court operation to stop child marriage (Supply side/service provider)	Survey questionnaire	<b>10</b>
Related stakeholders of Ishwarganj Upazilla in marriage and mobile court (Political leaders, Local government leaders, Kazi, Teachers, Representative of student council, journalist and civil society)	Survey questionnaire	<b>11</b>
Case study (Ishwarganj Upazilla)	<b>Interview</b>	<b>05</b>
Total =		<b>37</b>

## 2.5 Data Validation

The collected data have been validated through conducting the survey among different types of respondents, like- the service recipients as well as service providers; interviewing the key informants, higher officials who are involved with this mobile court operation and doing some case studies. Besides, the researcher also made phone calls to another ten stakeholders for crosschecking the collected data.

## 2.6 Data Analysis Tools

The collected data was processed and analyzed by using statistical techniques, for example-Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) software & MS-Excel.

## Chapter Three: Literature Review

### 3.1. Introduction

This chapter encompasses the definition of child, marriage and child marriage. The brief history of child marriage in the context of religion and gender is also produced with special attention. The causal relationships among factors of child marriage are also discussed in details. For clarity and justification of this study the prevalence status is described by region with due importance. The consequence of child marriage is analyzed with context. International initiatives to prevent child marriage are also discussed from a general point of view. The present condition of Bangladesh regarding child marriage is also presented. The relevant and important sections of Mobile Court Act - 2009, Child Marriage Restraint Act - 1929 and Child Marriage Restraint Act – 2017 are explained with due manner.

### 3.2. Conceptualizing Child, Marriage and Child Marriage

Early child marriage, according to global literature, is defined as formal or informal union between a boy and girl where either or both parties are under the age of 18 years (Girls Not Brides, 2018). However, in case of Bangladesh, the definition holds different age limits for boys and girls.

The Majority Act of 1875 (Laws of Bangladesh, Act no. IX of 1875) of Bangladesh defines adulthood for girls at 18 years and for boys at 21 years. Therefore, the Child Marriage Restrain Act of 2017 defines child marriage as marriage between a boy and a girl where one or both are underage, as in boy under 21 years of age and girl under 18 years of age (Laws of Bangladesh, Act no. VI of 2017).

According to the Child Marriage Restraint Act, 1929 (Laws of Bangladesh, Act no. XIX of 1929) of section no. 2 the definition of child is-

In this Act, unless there is anything repugnant in the subject or context, -

"Child" means a person who, if a male, is under twenty-one years of age, and if a female, is under eighteen years of age.

Marriage is called union or wedlock, may be a socially or ceremonially recognized union or lawful contract between life partners that sets up rights and commitments between them, between them and their children, and between them and their in-laws. The definition of marriage changes concurring to distinctive societies. But it is mainly an institution in which interpersonal connections, ordinarily sexual, are recognized. In few societies' marriage is an obligation before any sexual action.

According to the Child Marriage Restraint Act, 1929 of section no. 2 the definition of child Marriage is-

In this Act, unless there is anything repugnant in the subject or context, -

"Child marriage" means a marriage to which either of the contracting parties is a child.

Child marriage a formal marriage or casual union entered into by a person under the age of 18. The legal and eligible age for marriage in some jurisdictions is 18 in the case of girls. But in some cases, child marriage is allowed with parental assent or in extraordinary circumstances, such as teenage pregnancy. In some nations, indeed when the legitimate marriage age is 18, social conventions take priority over administrative law. Child marriage influences both boys and young ladies. But young ladies are affected mostly of whom are in destitute financial circumstances.

Poverty, dowry, bride price, regional customs, cultural traditions, laws that allow child marriages, religious and social pressures, fear of remaining unmarried, illiteracy and perceived inability of women to work for money are reasons for child marriage. Child marriage is still reasonably broad in developing countries, such as parts of Africa, South Asia, Southeast Asia, West Asia, Latin America and Oceania. Niger, Chad, Mali, Bangladesh, Guinea and the Central African Republic has the higher rates (50%) (UNICEF, 2012).

### 3.3. The History of Child Marriage

Historically, child marriage was common around the world. The practice began to be questioned in the 20th century, with the age of individuals' first marriage increasing in many countries and most countries increasing the minimum marriage age. In ancient and medieval societies, it was common for girls to be betrothed at or even before puberty. As Friedman claims, "arranging and contracting the marriage of a young girl were the undisputed prerogatives of her father in ancient Israel." Most girls were married before the age of 15, often at the start of their puberty (M. A. Friedman, 1980). In the Middle Ages the legal age for marriage was nearly adolescence throughout the Jewish society. (Steven M. Lowenstein, 2002)

In Greece, early marriage and motherhood for girls was encouraged. Even boys were expected to marry in their teens. With an average life expectancy between 40 to 45 years, early marriages and teenage motherhood was typical (Nancy Demand, 1994). In Ancient Rome, girls married above the age of 12 and boys above 14. In the middle Ages, under English civil laws that were derived from Roman laws, marriages before the age of 16 were common. In Imperial China, child marriage was the norm (Saito O. 1996).

#### 3.3.1 Religion Perspective:

Historically religious advice influences the marriageable age. Hindu vedic scriptures allowed the age of a girl's marriage as three years after the onset of puberty. Christian ecclesiastical law prohibited marriage of a girl before reaching puberty. Jewish scholars and rabbis seriously forbade marriages before reaching of puberty (M. A. Friedman, 1980).

Prior to the 1917 Code of Canon Law, within the Catholic Church, age for a legal marriage was puberty, or usually 14 for males and 12 for females. The 1917 Code of Canon Law raised the marriageable age for a valid marriage at 16 for males and 14 for females. Later from 1983 minimum age for a valid marriage at 16 for males and 14 for females was also maintained. (Caparros, 2004).

The world's most prestigious centers of Islamic learning have issued a fatwa against child marriage, saying marriage should be based on the consent of both parties and "particularly the young woman". The deputy Grand Imam of Al-Azhar, the highest authority of Islamic jurisprudence has declared "Marriage in Islam is based on the consent of both parties, particularly the young woman. Such consent requires the young woman to have reached the age of maturity and reason, so that her consent is validly given," the fatwa read, adding that this age was 18, and quoting parts of the Qur'an and the hadiths of the prophet Muhammad to support it. (The Guardian, 21June, 2019)

### 3.3.2 Gender Perspective:

#### Boys

Boys are sometimes married as children, although according to UNICEF, "girls are disproportionately the most affected". Relatively effects on underage boys are small. On September 2014, about 156 million men were entered into child marriage. (Strochlic, Nina, 2014)

#### Girls

Child marriage has pathetic results on girls, from their wellbeing, education and social advancement viewpoints. The most common causes of death for girls aged fifteen to nineteen are pregnancy and child birth that are the consequence of child marriage.

### 3.4. Causes of Child Marriage

According to UNFPA, poverty and economic condition; gender imbalance; disputes for property, control over sexuality, maintaining family honor; tradition and culture, insecurity, famine, epidemics are the causal factors that promote and reinforce child marriage. Family ties in which marriage is a means of consolidating powerful relations within families is also an important factor. (UNFPA, 2012).

### 3.4.1 Dowry and Bride Price

Providing a girl with a dowry at her marriage is an ancient practice which continues in some parts of the world. This requires parents to bestow property on the marriage of a daughter, which is often an economic challenge for many families. The difficulty to save and preserve wealth for dowry was common, particularly in times of economic hardship, or persecution. These difficulties pressed families to betroth their girl, irrespective of her age, as soon as they had the resources to pay the dowry.

A bride price is the amount paid by the groom to the parents of a bride for them to consent to him marrying their daughter. In some countries, the younger the bride, the higher the price she may fetch. This practice creates an economic incentive where girls are sought and married early by her family to the highest bidder. Child marriages of girls are a source of income to the parents. Bride price is another cause of child marriage and child trafficking.

### 3.4.2 Persecution, Forced Migration and Slavery

Wars, major military campaigns, forced religious conversion, taking natives as prisoners of war and converting them into slaves, arrest and forced migrations of people often made a suitable groom a rare commodity. Persecution and displacement of Roma and Jewish people in Europe, colonial campaigns to get slaves from various ethnic groups in West Africa across the Atlantic for plantations, Islamic campaigns to get Hindu slaves from India across Afghanistan's Hindu Kush as property and for work, were some of the historical events that increased the practice of child marriage before the 19th century. Historically child marriages in Indian subcontinent started more than 1,000 years ago. (New York Times, 1998)

### 3.4.3 Fear, Poverty, Social Pressures and Sense of Protection

A sense of social insecurity has been a cause of child marriages across the world. Other fear of crime such as rape, which not only would be traumatic but may lead to less acceptance of the girl if she becomes victim of a crime. For example, girls may not be seen as eligible for marriage if they are not virgins. In other cultures, the fear is that an

unmarried girl may engage in illicit relationships, or elope causing a permanent social blemish to her siblings, or that the impoverished family may be unable to find bachelors for grown up girls in their economic social group. Such fears and social pressures have been proposed as causes that lead to child marriages.

An additional factor causing child marriage is the parental belief that early marriage offers protection. Parents feel that marriage provides their daughter with a sense of protection from sexual promiscuity and safe from sexually transmitted infections.

#### 3.4.4 Religion, Culture and Civil Law

Although the general marriageable age is 18 in the majority of countries, most jurisdictions allow for exceptions for underage youth with parental and/or judicial consent (UNFPA, 2012). Such laws are neither limited to developing countries, nor to state religion. In some countries a religious marriage by itself has legal validity, while in others it does not, as civil marriage is obligatory. For Catholics incorporated into the Latin Church, the 1983 Code of Canon Law sets the minimum age for a valid marriage at 16 for males and 14 for females. In 2015, Spain raised its minimum marriageable age to 16 from the previous 14 (Time-com. 24 July 2015).

With court's approval many states in the United States of America allow child marriages. Since 2015, throughout Canada 16 is the permissible age. In Canada the age of minority is set by province. So, minors under this age are imposed by additional restrictions (i.e. parental and court consent). In United Kingdom, marriage is allowed for 16–17 years old with parent's assent (Marriages and civil partnerships in the UK, GOV.UK. 16 December 2014). In many Islamic countries do not permit child marriage of girls under their civil code of laws. Sometimes this type of state recognized Sharia religious laws in the issue of child marriage. UNICEF says that the high ranking 5 nations in the world with highest rate of child marriage i.e., Niger (75%), Chad (72%), Mali (71%), Bangladesh (64%), Guinea (63%) - are Islamic dominant countries. (UNICEF, 2012)

### 3.4.5 Politics and Financial Relationships

Child marriages may depend upon socio-economic status. The aristocracy in some cultures, as in the European feudal era tended to use child marriage as a method to secure political ties. Families were able to cement political and/or financial ties by having their children marry. The betrothal is considered a binding contract upon the families and the children.

### 3.5. Child Marriage by Region

A UNFPA report stated that, “For the period 2000-2011, just over one third (an estimated 34 per cent) of women aged 20 to 24 years in developing regions were married or in union before their eighteenth birthday. In 2010 this was equivalent to almost 67 million women. About 12 per cent of them were married or in union before age 15. The prevalence of child marriage varies substantially among countries (UNFPA, 2012)

#### 3.5.1 Africa

Africa observed the highest rates of child marriage. Here in three nations, over 70% of girls got married under the age of 18. In sub-Saharan Africa, Niger possesses the highest rates of child marriage. Among Nigerian women within twenty to twenty-four age group, 76% marrying prior to the age of eighteen and 28% marrying prior to the age of fifteen (UNICEF, 2012).

Many reports state that in many Sub-Saharan countries, there is a high prevalence of marriage among girls less than 15 ages. In 2018 in spite of child marriages have turned down on a worldwide scale, the issue exists most acute in Africa. (UNICEF, 2018).

#### 3.5.2 Asia

More than half of all child marriages occur in the South Asian countries of India, Pakistan, Bangladesh, and Nepal. There was a decrease in the rates of child marriage across South Asia from 1991 to 2007, but the decrease was observed among young

adolescent girls and not girls in their late teens (Raj, A.; Saggurti, N.; Balaiah, D.; Silverman, J. G. 2009). This age-specific reduction was linked to girls increasingly attending school until about age 15 and then getting married.

### 3.5.3 India

According to UNICEF's report, 47% of India's women aged 20–24 were married before the legal age of 18, with 56% marrying before age 18 in rural areas. The report also showed that 40% of the world's child marriages occur in India. (UNICEF, 2009)

The Child Marriage Restraint Act, 1929 was enacted during the term of British rule on India. They fixed up the marriageable age as 21 for a male and 18 for a female for Hindus, Buddhists, Christians and mass people of India. However, this is not currently does not apply to India's 165 million Muslims. This only applies to India's Hindu, Christian, Jain, Sikh and other religious minorities.

India sets a goal to eliminate child marriage completely by 2010. In 2006, "The Prohibition of Child Marriage Act, 2006" was passed to forbid solemnization of child marriages. This law states that at least 21 years of age for men and at least 18 years of age for women are mandatory to marry.

### 3.5.4 Bangladesh

Child marriage rates in Bangladesh are amongst the highest in the world (UNICEF, 2012). Every 2 out of 3 marriages involve child marriages. According to statistics from 2005, 49% of women then between 25 and 29 were married by the age of 15 in Bangladesh (UNFPA, 2015) According to the "State of the World's Children-2009" report (UNICEF, 2009) within the age group of 20–24, 63% of women were married before they reached at 18. Another study conducted in 2008 states that, married girls in Bangladesh were found to have less control on family planning, higher rates of maternal mortality, and lower position in their husband's family than girls who married later (Field, Erica; Ambrus, Attila , 2008). The Ministry of Women and Children Affairs is relentlessly trying to increase women's education and occupation opportunities. This, combined effort and cooperation with religious leaders, is hoped to decrease child marriage.

Table 3: National data on the prevalence of child marriage: Bangladesh (2006-2011)													
Prevalence of child marriage according to demographics (%)												Min. age of marriage	
Total prevalence	Married by 15	Residence		Education			Household Wealth					Female	Male
		Rural	Urban	None	Primary	Secondary Or Higher	Poorest 20%	2nd	3rd	4th	Richest 20%		
65	29	70.3	53.3	82	80.4	57.2	83	78	72	59	46	18	21

Source: (<http://www.girlsnotbrides.org/where-does-it-happen/>, 2013)

### 3.5.5 Nepal

UNICEF reported that 28.8% of marriages (UNICEF, 2012) in Nepal were child marriages. 79.6 percent of Muslim girls in Nepal, 69.7 percent of girls living in hilly regions irrespective of religion, and 55.7 percent of girls living in other rural areas, are all married before the age of 15.

### 3.5.6 Pakistan

According to two 2013 reports, over 50% of all marriages in Pakistan involve girls less than 18 years old (Nasrullah, M; et al. 2013). Another UNICEF report states before the age of sixteen, 70 percent of girls get married in Pakistan. (UNICEF, 2012).

### 3.5.7 Latin America

Child marriage is highly prevalent in Latin America and the Caribbean island nations. About 29% of girls are married before age 18 (UNFPA, 2012. P. 24). The child marriage incidence rate varies among the countries. The widespread belief among poor, rural, and indigenous community's culture and rituals are the driving force of child marriage.

### 3.6. Consequences of Child Marriage

Child marriage has long lasting impacts on girls, which last well beyond adolescence. A married teen struggles with the health effects of getting pregnant at a young age and often with little spacing between children. Early marriages tend to teen pregnancy which significantly increase birth complications and social isolation. In poor countries, early pregnancy reduces education options and economic independence. Child marriage is the root cause of child sexual abuse, domestic violence, and marital rape.

#### 3.6.1 Health

Child marriage has shocking impact on the health and life of girls. Complications from pregnancy and childbirth are the main cause of death among adolescent girls below age 19 in developing countries. Pregnant girls aged 15 to 19 are twice as likely to die in child birth as women in their 20s. Accordingly girls under the age of 15 are five to seven times more likely to die during child birth. Sometimes under developed birth canal and immature pelvis are causes of death. Girls below age of 15 are more vulnerable due to developing obstetric fistula, since their narrow pelvises make them prone to obstructed labor. In 88% cases (Nour, N. M. 2006) pregnant mother below the age of 15 have the risk of developing fistula. Married girls before 15 also have more risk of sexually transmitted diseases, cervical cancer, and malaria than non-married peers or girls who marry in their 20s.

#### 3.6.2 Illiteracy and Poverty

Child marriage often terminates a girl's education specially countries where child marriages are ordinary. Moreover uneducated girls are more prone to child marriage. Girls that have only primary education are twice probable to marry before age 18 than those with a secondary or higher education. Accordingly, girls have no education are three times more likely to marry before age 18 than those with a secondary education (UNFPA, 2012). Early marriage hampers a young girl's ability to continue with her education. The focus on domestic duties and raising childrens are deep rooted cause for drop out from school (Lee-Rife, Susan; Malhotra, Anju; Warner, Ann; McGonagle Glinski,

Allison, 2012). Family and community beliefs that expensing for girls' education is unnecessary as she will play role as a wife and mother (Gaffney-Rhys, Ruth, 2011).

### 3.6.3 Domestic Violence

Following marriage, child girls frequently relocate to their husband's home and take on the domestic role of being a wife. Thus, she often involves relocating to another village or area. This transition may result in a young girl dropping out of school, moving away from her family and friends, and a loss of the social support that she once had (Nour. NM, 2009). A husband's family may also have higher expectations for the girl's submissiveness to her husband and his family because of her youth (Raj, Anita 2010). This sense of isolation from a support system can have severe mental health implications including depression. Large age gaps between the child and her spouse makes her more vulnerable to domestic violence and nonconsensual sexual intercourse.

### 3.6.4 Women's Rights

Through a series of conventions by United Nations (UN) child marriage regarded as a violation of human rights. The Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), the Committee on the Rights of the Child (CRC), and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights establish the international standard against child marriage (UNFPA, 2012). A Child marriage hinders a range of women's holistic rights such as sex, health, education, freedom, reproduction and wealth. The results of these deprivations impact not only the woman, but her children and over all society (Clark, Shelley; Bruce, Judith; Dude, Annie 2006).

### 3.6.5 Development

High rates of child marriage have negative impact on countries' economic development. Early marriages' impact on girls' education and labor market participation. Increased rates of child marriage hinders the advancement toward each of the eight Millennium Development Goals due to its effects on education, economic and political activities and health (Lee-Rife, Susan; Malhotra, Anju; Warner, Ann; McGonagle Glinski, Allison, 2012).

### 3.7. International Initiatives to Prevent Child Marriage

In December 2011 a resolution was adopted by the United Nations General Assembly (A/RES/66/170). On October 11, 2012 the first International Day of the Girl Child was observed, the theme of which was ending child marriage.

In 2013 the first United Nations Human Rights Council recognizes child marriage as a human rights violation and pledges to eliminate the practice as part of the U.N.'s post-2015 global development agenda (Stuart, Hunter 16 October 2013).

In 2014 the UN's Commission on the Status of Women agreed to eliminate child marriage (Liz Ford, 18 February, 2015).

The World Health Organization recommends increased educational attainment among girls, increased enforcement structures for existing minimum marriage age laws, and informing parents in practicing communities of the risks associated as primary methods to prevent child marriages.

The Haryana state government in India started a program in which poor families were given a cash incentive if they remained their daughters in school and unmarried until age 18.

Same type of program was executed in 2004 by the Population Council and the regional government in Ethiopia's rural Amhara region. Families received cash if their daughters kept in school and remained unmarried during the two years of the program (Parsons, Jennifer; McCleary-Sills, Jennifer. 2014).

A variety of programs are conducted to achieve girls' empowerment, education, sexual and reproductive health, financial literacy, life skills, communication skills, and community mobilization.

Bangladesh is a signatory to the UN Convention on Consent to Marriage, Minimum Age for Marriage and Registration of Marriages. This Convention requires signatory states to obtain consent from both parties entering into a marriage and to establish a legal minimum age for marriage.

<b>Table 4: Timeline of Child Marriage in the International Community</b>	
Year	Actions
1948	The Universal Declaration of Human Rights
1962	The UN Convention on the consent to Marriage
1979	UN approves CEDAW
1989	UN convention on the rights of the child
1994	International conference on population and development countries agree to take action to eliminate child marriage.
1995	Fourth World Conference on Women plan of action includes section on child marriage
2001	Publication: UNICEF-Early marriage: child spouses
2005	The MAPUTO protocol to African charter on human and people's rights on the rights of women 18 as minimum age of marriage.
2006	USAID publishes first brief on child marriage.  IPPF and the forum on marriage publishes "Ending child marriage: A guide for global policy action."
2007	Publications:  The Population council – "Reaching the girls left behind"  ICRW- "New insights on preventing child marriage and how to end child marriage: Action strategies for preventing and protection.
2008	World Vision Publishes "Before she's ready: 15 placed girls marry at 15"
2011	The elders launch girls not brides at Clinton global initiative.  The Commonwealth Heads of States commit to addressing early marriage.
2012	The first international day of the girl child.

	<p>World health assembly includes Child marriage at annual meeting.</p> <p>EU strategic framework in human rights adds protection against child marriage.</p> <p>US presidential memorandum includes section on child marriage</p>
2013	<p>High level panel on post – 2015 MDGs adds child marriage to agenda.</p> <p>Obama signs violence against women act with section on child.</p> <p>Education summit addresses ECM</p> <p>UN commission on status of women has first special session on early child marriage.</p> <p>ICRW launch turning point campaign.</p> <p>UN human rights council resolution on early child marriage.</p>

### 3.8. Prevalence Data

Percentage of women aged 20–24 who were married or in union before the age of 18 is listed in the table below. The data from International Center for Research on Women (ICRW) and UNICEF, if traced all the way to the ultimate sources, is from surveys that are 10 to 20 years old. The UN data is between 10 to 15 years old.

Table 5: Data on Child Marriage

Country	Percentage of girls married not reaching at 18 (UN data)	Percentage of girls married not reaching at 18 ICRW-UNICEF data (year of data)
Afghanistan	29	40 (2012)

Dominican Republic	29	41 (2009-2010)
Nepal	40	41 (2011)
Ethiopia	30	41 (2011)
Uganda	32	40 (2011)
Eritrea	38	41 (2010)
Zambia	24	42 (2002-2007)
Nicaragua	32	41 (2000-2006)
Somalia	38	45 (1998-2006)
India	30	47 (1999-2005)
Burkina Faso	35	52 (2010)
Sierra Leone	47	44 (2010)
Madagascar	34	41 (2012)
Mozambique	47	48 (2011)

Malawi	37	50 (2010)
Guinea	46	52 (2012)
Mali	50	55 (2010)
Bangladesh	48	65 (2011)
Central African Republic	42	68 (2010)
Chad	49	68 (2010)
Niger	62	76 (2012)

Source: (ICRW, 2015)

### 3.9 Relevant Sections of Child Marriage Restraint Act, 1929

The act contains 12 sections of which few are produced here-

Section 1. Title - This Act called the Child Marriage Restraint Act, 1929. It came into force on the 1st day of April, 1930

Section 4. Whoever, being a male above twenty-one years of age, or being a female above eighteen years of age, contracts a child marriage shall be punishable with simple imprisonment which may extend to one month, or with fine which may extend to One Thousand Taka, or with both.

Section 5. Whoever performs conducts or directs any child marriage shall be punishable with simple imprisonment which may extend to one month, or with fine which may

extend to One Thousand Taka, or with both, unless he proves that he had reason to believe that the marriage was not a child marriage.

Section 6. (1) Where a minor contract a child marriage, any person having charge of the minor, whether as parent or guardian or in any other capacity, lawful or unlawful, who does any act to promote the marriage or permits it to be solemnized, or negligently fails to prevent it from being solemnized, shall be punishable with simple imprisonment which may extend to one month, or with fine which may extend to one thousand Taka, or with both: Provided that no woman shall be punishable with imprisonment.

Section 6 (2) For the purposes of this section, it shall be presumed, unless and until the contrary is proved, that where a min of has contracted a child marriage, the person having charge of such minor has negligently failed to prevent the marriage from being solemnized.

Section 8. Notwithstanding anything contained in section 190 of the Code of Criminal Procedure, 1898, no Court other than of a Magistrate of the first class shall take cognizance of, or try, any offence under this Act.

Section 9. No Court shall take cognizance of any offence under this Act after the expiry of one year from the date on which the offence is alleged to have been committed.

### [3.10 Relevant Sections of Child Marriage Restraint Act, 2017](#)

Bangladesh has recently enacted the new Child Marriage Restraint Act 2017, wherein the law increases the penalty for child marriage. (Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh, 2017). The act contains 22 sections of which few are produced her.

#### Section 3. Formation of Child Marriage Prevention Committees –

For the prevention of child marriage, the Government may, in such manner as may be prescribed by rules, form Child Marriage Prevention Committees at national, district, upazila and union levels comprising government officials, local people's representatives, non-government officials and respectable persons at local level and determine the functions of the committees.

Section 4. General powers of certain government officials and local government representatives to prevent child marriage. –

Without prejudice to the generality of the provisions of section 5, the Upazila Nirbahi Officer, the Executive Magistrate, the Upazila Women Affairs Officer, the Upazila Social Welfare Officer, the Upazila Primary or Secondary Education Officer, the Officer in Charge of Police Station or the representatives of Local Government shall, upon receiving information about child marriage through a written or oral application made by a person or through any other means, stop the child marriage or may take necessary measures in such manner as may be prescribed by rules to proceed with legal action against such marriage.

#### 7. Punishment for contracting a child marriage -

(I) If any adult, male or female, contracts a child marriage, it shall be an offence, and for this, he shall be punished with imprisonment which may extend to 2 (two) years, or with fine which may extend to 1 (one) lakh Taka, or with both, and in default of payment of the fine, shall be punished with imprisonment which may extend to 3 (three) months.

(II) If any minor, male or female, contracts a child marriage, he shall be punished with detention which may extend to 1 (one) month, or with fine which may extend to 50 (fifty) thousand Taka, or with both: Provided that if any case is filed against, or penalty imposed upon, a person under section 8, no punishment shall be imposed upon the aforesaid minor, whether male or female.

(II) In case of trial and punishment under sub-section (2), the provisions of the children Act, 2013 (Act No. XXIV of 2013) shall be applicable.

#### Section 9. Punishment for solemnizing or conducting a child marriage –

If any person solemnizes or conducts a child marriage, it shall be an offence, and for this, he shall be punished with imprisonment which may extend to 2 (two) years but not less than 6 (six) months, or with fine which may extend to 50 (fifty) thousand Taka, or with both, and in default of payment of fine, shall be punished with imprisonment which may extend to 3 (three) months.

This law increases the penalty for child marriage but possesses a loophole in form of a special clause (section 19), which can be exploited to continue with child marriage. The said clause allows marriage of children under 18 years, not stating any minimum age for marriage, under special circumstances which considers parental consent to be legitimate

for initiating marriage – reflects an ambiguous stance of the Government of Bangladesh on the issue (Government of the People’s Republic of Bangladesh, 2017).

### 3.11 Relevant Section of Mobile Court Act, 2009

The Mobile Court Act, 2009 is the 59<sup>th</sup> act of 2009. It was promulgated after judicial separation. Under this act executive magistrate including district magistrate apply their magisterial authority. It contains 17 sections. In section 4, it is stated that in any district or metropolitan area mobile court be conducted to maintain law and situation and to combat offence. In section 5, it is depicted that government may confer power to any executive magistrate or district magistrate to conduct mobile court in local jurisdiction. Section 6 describes the scope or power to conduct mobile court. Section 7 describes the procedure of conducting a mobile court under the scheduled law. In section 8 it is said that an executive magistrate cannot give imprisonment more than 2 years. In case of fine, fine shall be within the limit of that relevant law. Under this law 109 minor acts are included. The Child Marriage Restraint Act 1929 is as scheduled act under Mobile Court Act 2009.

In fine we can say that Child Marriage Restraint Act, 1929 and Child Marriage Restraint Act, 2017 were enacted to restrain the propensity of child marriage. Mobile Court Act, 2009 scheduled this minor act so that Executive Magistrates can apply their executive power.

## Chapter Four: Theoretical Framework

### 4.1. Introduction

A number of theoretical frameworks have been proposed in these years to explain and cover multiple cause of child marriage. It is also evident throughout the literature that child marriage is caused by interplay of social norms, economics, structures and familial motivations. It is not easy to determine which of these factors has the biggest influence on the prevalence of child marriage. Most studies suggest that unequal gender norms are the overarching reason for the existence and persistence of child marriage.

This chapter will provide an overview of the different reasons for the prevalence and persistence of child marriage into an overall comprehensive - Theory of Change (ToC) (Theory of Change: Ending Child Marriage in Bangladesh , 2014) framework (ICRW, 2014). It will divide the reasons into distinct categories. In reality the factors are often interdependent and interacting. This chapter depicts how the drivers of child marriage can be divided between five different levels; child, family, community, institutions and policies.

### 4.2 Theory of Change (ToC): Drivers, Consequences and Solutions

There are five key drivers for the child marriages in Bangladesh. The five key drivers include: poverty; poor implementation of birth and marriage registration systems and enforcement of child marriage prevention law and programs; violence against girls; and negative impact of media and information and communication technologies and religious or cultural beliefs. Out of five drivers, the second driver is linked with mobile court. Enforcement of child marriage prevention law is done through mobile court operation under the act “Mobile Court Act – 2009”

#### 4.2.1 Drivers

##### 4.2.1.1 Poverty

Economic condition is perceived as a huge factor driving child marriages in Bangladesh. Household poverty and families, especially in rural areas, not being able to meet the dowry and marriage expenses of girls are perceived as instrumental in driving down the

age at marriage for girls. Poor families marry off their daughters at the earliest opportunity, because they perceive a girl child as a financial burden on the family. Performing the marriage of two or more girls in the family at the same time, irrespective of whether or not any girl has attained the legal age of marriage, is a simple cost cutting technique used by families to save on marriage and dowry expenses. For girls dropping out of school because their families are unable to meet the cost of education, marriage is the only option to acquire economic security and avoid becoming a financial burden on their families. Even poor parents believe that investing in a girl's education yields poor returns, because after marriage, a girl will have very little control over her earnings and will be unable to give financial support to her parents and siblings.

#### 4.2.1.2 Poor Implementation of Birth and Marriage Registration Systems and Enforcement of Child Marriage Prevention Law

Low public awareness and knowledge on the requirement to register all births and marriages, and lack of clarity regarding the registration process are reasons for why child marriage continues to thrive within the country. The enforcement of child marriage prevention laws and compulsory registration of birth and marriage was weak. Punitive measures against those violating the lawful age at marriage or issuing false birth certificates to legitimize marriages were not stringent enough to discourage families and community leaders from breaking the law.

Child Marriage Restraint Act – 1929 has failed to create an effective impact to reduce child marriage. The government understood the lacking. And later on, this act is repealed by Child Marriage Restraint Act – 2017 through modifying and adding few sections. To overcome this problem government included this law under the schedule of Mobile Court Act – 2009.

#### 4.2.1.3 Violence against Girls and Lack of Physical Safety

Physical protection of girls especially in rural areas is an important factor. Girls in rural areas are often experience sexual harassment, physical assault and bullying by adolescent boys and adult men on the way to school and even in the school. Due to these problems, parents are hesitant to send their daughters long distances to school over security

concerns. There is strong social stigma attached to pre-marital sex and rape. So, parents are seriously concerned about family honor and respect.

#### 4.2.1.4 Negative Impact of Information and Communication Technology

Despite numerous advantages and opportunities presented by information and communication technologies, there is a downside. The extensive proliferation of television, mobile phones, and internet were seen as having negative impact on the attitudes, values and behavior of young people. The lack of extra-curricular activities and opportunities to engage in healthy pursuits and interests outside school has led to youngsters relying exclusively on the television and internet for entertainment and amusement. This has led to adolescents, both girls and boys, holding unhealthy views on sex and, sometimes, encouraged self-initiated marriages.

#### 4.2.2 Consequences

The detrimental consequences of child marriage on sexual, reproductive, and psychological health of the young brides have been well explained in a number of research studies. These can be categorized into four broad areas: physical and mental wellbeing of adolescent married women; health of the offspring of adolescent mothers; quality of marital and family life of adolescent married women; and national productivity and economic growth.

##### 4.2.2.1 Physical and Psychological Health of Married Adolescent Girls

Early marriage has correlation with high maternal morbidity and mortality rates. Specifically, girls married at early ages are more likely to experience multiple pregnancies, recurrent miscarriage and termination of pregnancy. They are also more likely than women married at older ages to be malnourished, suffer frailties, unable to achieve healthy pregnancies. They have poor physical and mental health, and susceptible to sexually transmitted diseases, fistula, and poor sexual health.

##### 4.2.2.2 Off Spring Health

Pregnancy at very young age is more likely than pregnancy at older age to lead to birth abnormalities than pregnancy at older age. Almost all groups felt that children born to

young mothers are also more likely to suffer from malnourishment and long-term debility and have stunted growth. These children are also likely to be poorly raised, because the mothers are not emotionally mature enough to handle child care responsibilities.

#### 4.2.2.3 Quality of Marital and Family Life

Young mothers are less likely to be emotionally mature and possess the necessary life skills and knowledge to deal with the challenges of married life. Marriages involving a very young wife and much older husband tend to be less cohesive, riddled with marital strife and dissatisfaction, and more likely to end in divorce, abandonment, or polygamy. Additionally, young brides with much older husband have higher risk of becoming widows early in life than older brides.

#### 4.2.2.4 National Productivity and Economic Growth

Early marriage reduces female labor force participation and hinders economic growth and development. The host of psychological and physical health problems associated with early marriage, pregnancies, and childbirth also impose heavy costs to society.

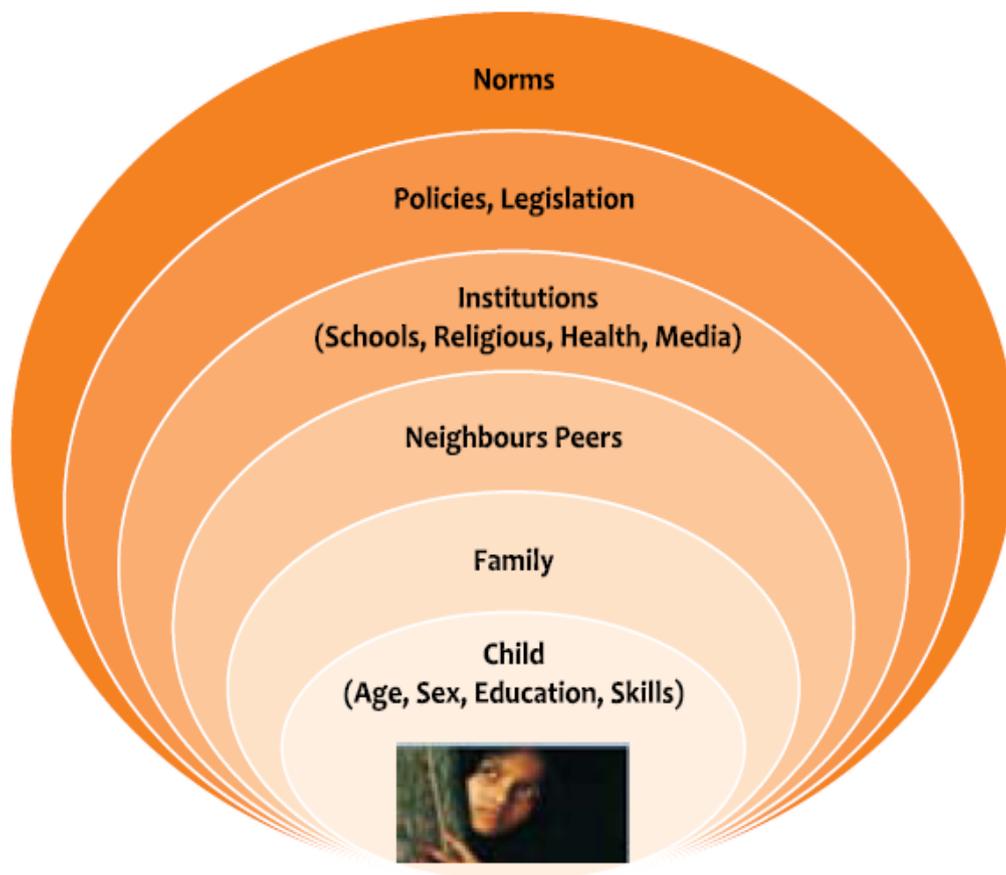
### 4.3 Theory of Change (ToC) through Ecological Framework: Five Pillars to End Child Marriages

A careful analysis of the drivers, consequences and solutions of child marriages seems to clearly suggest that approach to child marriage prevention must find ways to combine both macro and micro level factors in ways that would impact a girl's life, by giving her opportunities to make informed choices and operate within a safe environment free from violence. For example, poverty reduction programs must be accompanied by concomitant shifts in changing aspirations and values of girls, and schools and open spaces need to be made safe for girls to realize their aspirations and potential.

The interdependence of various factors can be easily understood within an ecological framework, where a girl's life impacts and is impacted upon by factors that operate at various levels i.e. five layers of influence on a girl's life. These can be considered as five pillars of the theory of change (ToC) intended to end child marriage:

1. Child
2. Family
3. Community
4. Institutions; and
5. Policies

Interdependence among these five pillars can be visually seen in the following diagram which shows how each pillar impacts and is impacted by the other. Without implying any particular hierarchy, presented below is a list of illustrative activities at various levels that should be undertaken to end child marriage.



**Figure: 1. five pillars to end child marriage**

#### 4.3.1 Child Level Activities and Expected Outcomes:

Enabling a girl to choose what she wants in life without fear from violence is very important. Empowering a girl is an essential step to make her enable. Both married an

unmarried teenage should be the focus of program interventions. Some of the targeted activities aimed at girls who are at risk are as follows:

- a. Incorporate child marriage related content within the school curriculum. This open-ended discussion facilitated girls a legitimate platform to raise their voices and set a defense if a girl is forced into marriage.
- b. Recreation, creative learning, health promotion and skill generation activity can enhance quality of education. Quality education is desired for child.
- c. Both married adolescents and 'at risk' girls should be in an accessible condition through the elimination of violence and greater safety measures.
- d. For both married and unmarried girls and boys equal opportunities should be existed.

Some of the expected outcomes of these activities are:

- a. Ensure secured environment for girls to facilitate education.
- b. Increased value of girl child and respect for her educational and career aspirations.

#### 4.3.2 Family Level Activities and Expected Outcomes:

Family is the most essential support for girls to enable them to continue their education and not fall within the trap of early marriage. Family provides food, shelter, safety and security. All types of families should therefore be considered for intervention programs and initiatives. Some of the activities that were identified at family level are as follows:

- a. Arrange regular opinion exchanging program between officers and parents to motivate the detrimental consequences of child marriage.
- b. Support families to understand the value of girl child through intensive engagement and public dialogues.
- c. Facilitated families to expand support for the adolescent girl.

At family level outcomes would be as follows:

- a. Families try to retain girls in institution till they complete their study and not marry them off while they are still in study.
- b. Families extend more assistance to girls to grow their learning skills and enable them to fulfill their educational aspirations.

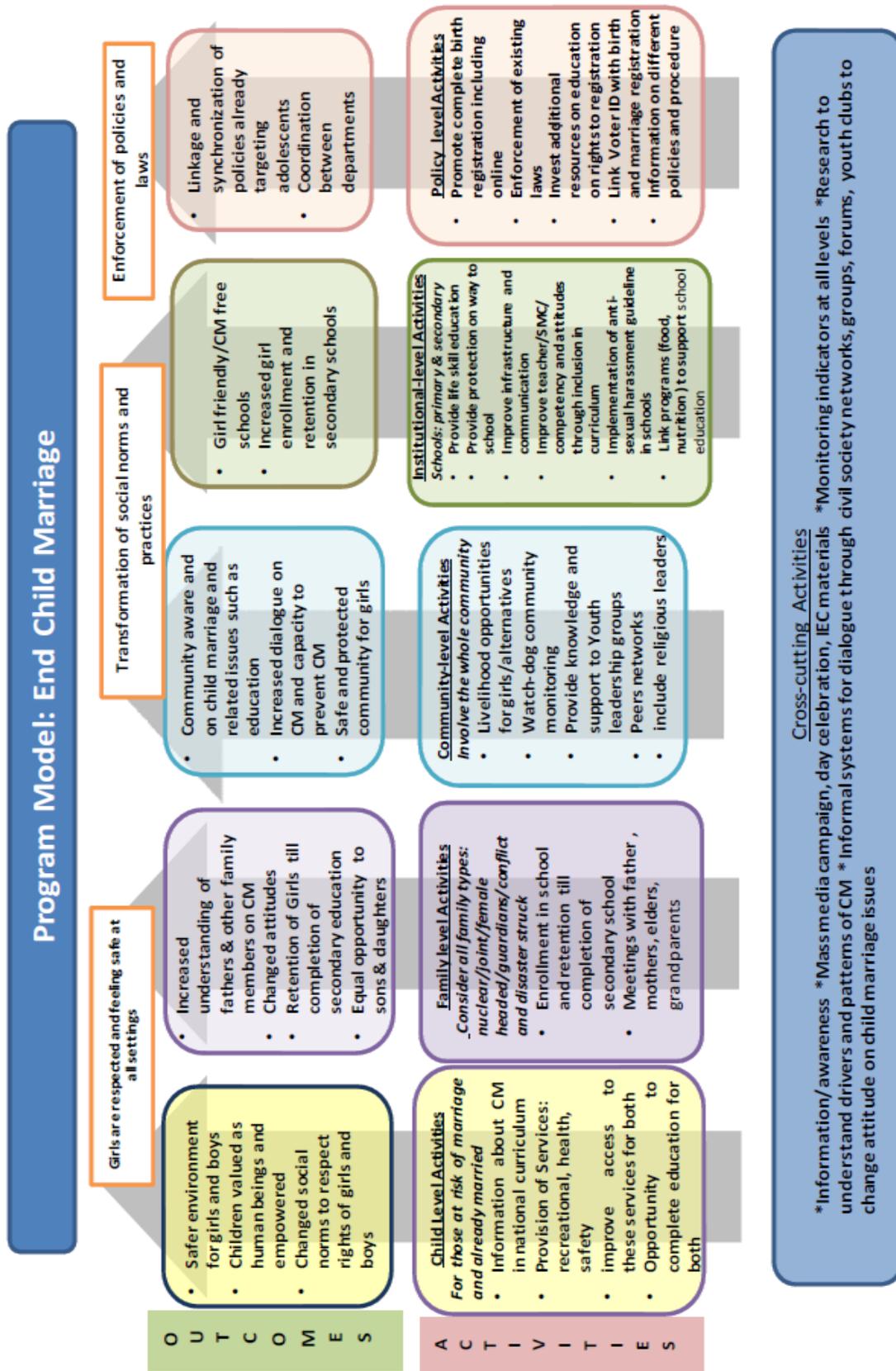


Figure: 2 Program Model (ICRW, 2014)

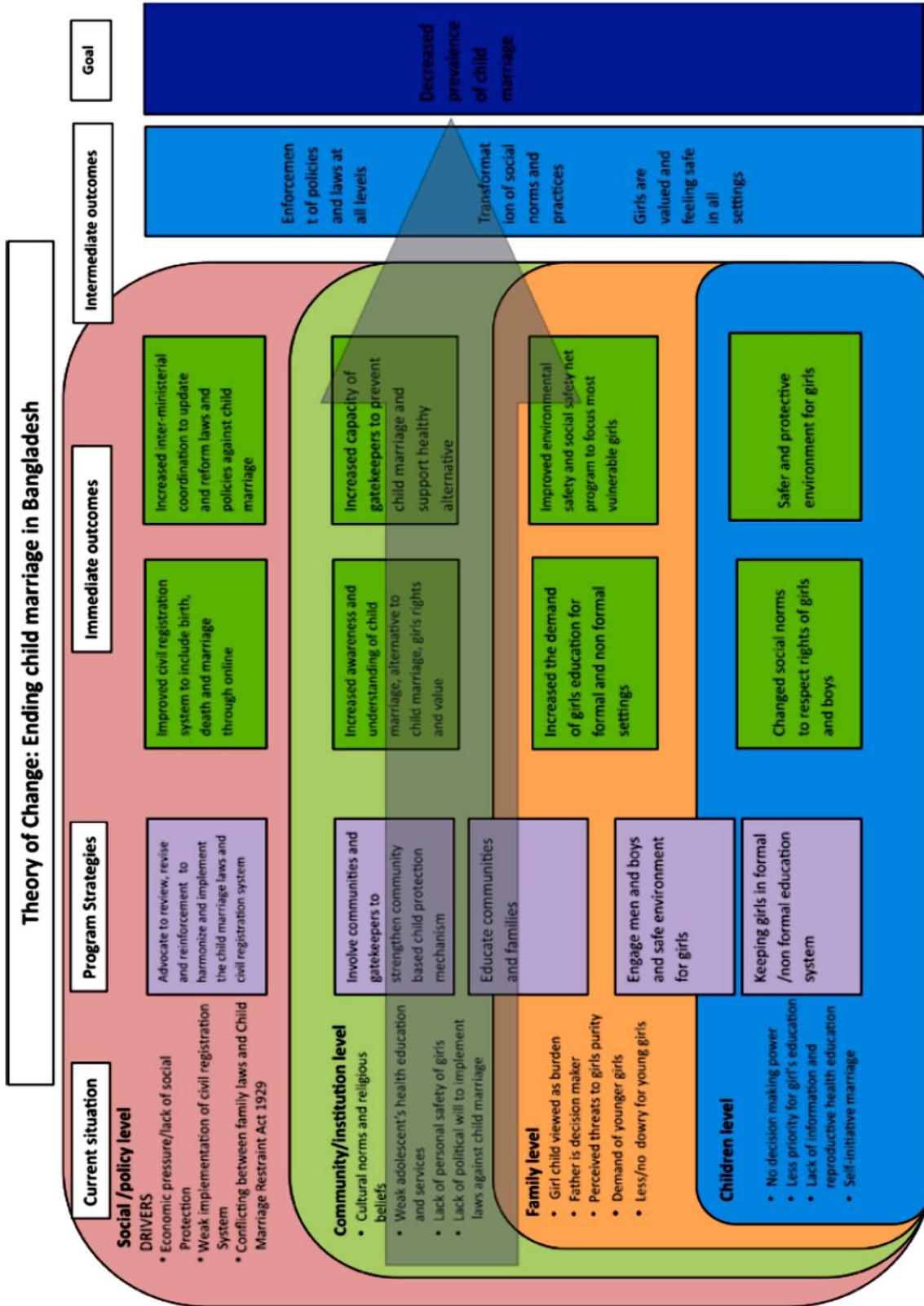


Figure: 3 Theory of Change (ICRW, 2014)

#### 4.3.3 Community Level Activities and Expected Outcomes

Community is a large platform and can include an immediate community, such as a neighborhood, or various types of peer groups in a variety of settings. It is desired that communities are well designed, functional and targeted with some interventions and messages. The intervention programs and initiatives to end child marriage should be wider so that these can include those sections of society and communities currently outside the purview of these programs. Similarly, a fundamental change in male and societal attitudes to women is critically needed. The initiatives to end child marriage should focus on changing the norms that discriminate against women.

It is noted that, local government leaders (Union Parishad Chairman and Member), Kazi, imam, teachers, representatives of student council, journalist and civil society members provide information of child marriage occurrence to Mobile court. This community level activity helps to reduce the propensity of child marriage. Community stakeholders are acting partners in conducting Mobile Court. Thus, Mobile court has a significant role in community level to reduce child marriage.

Some of the activities at the community level were identified as follows;

- a. Set up a community or neighborhood watch-dog to prevent child marriage. This watch-dog inform message of child marriage to competent “Mobile Court Authority”.
- b. Provide employment opportunities for girl children.
- c. Arrange regular view exchanging program with the community on child marriage.
- d. Make them aware with clear messages on the problems of child marriages.
- e. Create awareness through strengthened peer network;
- f. Expose role models and public face and make them visible through some kind of reward system.
- g. Involve enlighten and inclined religious leaders to express vocal support to girl children.

Some of the expected outcomes are given:

- a. Community support for female education and opposition to child marriage is increased.
- b. Community creates surroundings safer for girls.
- c. Community identifies families at risk of marrying off daughters early, and helps them to prevent child marriage in the family and increase support for girl children.

#### 4.3.4 Institution Level Activities and Expected Outcomes:

There are several institutions within the immediate environment of girls. These institutions need to be identified and targeted with messages on child marriage. This would help to increase the value of girls in those institutions. For example, educational institutions or schools are the obvious ones. Sports, media, work place, and health institutions are others.

It is also noted that, there are several institutions are involved with Mobile Court operation. Office of the Upazilla Nirbahi Officer, Office of the Assistant Commissioner (Land), Office of the Upazilla Women Affairs Officer, Police Station, Office of the Prosecuting agency and Union Parishad are the institutions who are direct role player to child marriage prevention. Thus, these institutions play an active operational role to restrain the propensity of child marriage through mobile court.

At the institutional level, some of the activities are as follows;

- a. Rigorous drive against child marriage through conducting mobile court operations.
- b. If we can keep girls at school then it is considered as an important and effective strategy in delaying the age at marriage for girls. Try to establish girl-friendly and child marriage-free schools.
- c. Ensure safe environments for girls to study.
- d. Food and nutrition programs can be a strategy to encourage girls to stay in schools.

Some of the expected outcomes will be:

- a. Girls extended their study in institutions.
- b. Set up girl friendly and child marriage free schools.

#### 4.3.5 Policy Level Activities and Expected Outcomes

Even sound policies need close monitoring, coordination and resource support for effective implementation and achieving intended outcomes. There needs to be a cohesive effort by all government departments and nongovernment organizations working for upliftment of women and children, in developing strategies to end child marriage.

To ensure effective implementation through better coordination, monitoring and resource mobilization some of the activities and proposals are given. Some of them are as follows:

- a. The child marriage prevention laws (The Child Marriage Restraint Act – 2017 and Mobile Court Act – 2009) and compulsory registration of all births and marriage need to be strictly enforced and punitive measures against those who violate the laws or commit an act of violence against women be made more stringent. These are the policy level interventions by formulating and enforcing laws to combat against child marriage.
- b. To improve registration of births and marriage system provide additional resources
- c. Birth and marriage registration systems should be simpler, accessible and easy to use, especially in rural areas.
- d. Expand capacity at all levels to strictly enforce laws on child marriage prevention.
- e. Information and communication technologies need to be used constructively and effectively, to educate the public on the legal age of marriage and compulsory registration of birth and marriage, through a combination of educational and entertainment programs. Both traditional and newer forms of media need to build positive images of women and break stereotypes on gender roles, tasks and responsibilities, to increase the value of girl child and bring about social change.
- f. There is need to scale up program efforts and elicit wider support to end child marriage, by building alliances among different stakeholders and bringing them together under one platform. There is a need of linking and synchronizing different policies on child girls.

Here desired outcomes will be:

- a. Higher level coordination across departments and programs.
- b. Child marriage issue becomes emphasized.

## Chapter Five: Data Presentation and Analysis

### 5.1 Introduction

Primary data is collected by using the previously modeled research methodology. Bangladesh has its very complex geo-social dynamics especially in rural areas. The researcher has demonstrated his experiences regarding the accessibility of government processes, social challenges. These experiences can be reused by future researchers who will study on the effectiveness of mobile court to restrain child marriage. A sincere and categorical survey was performed on the victims of child marriage, people in the mobile court operation and related stakeholders. This chapter also depicts a quantitative analysis of the collected data.

### 5.2 Data Analysis: Group 'A'

The researcher collected primary data from 3 groups (A, B, C) of Ishwarganj Upazilla. The compositions of group "A" are the persons who were saved from child marriage through mobile court operation. They are the service recipient and members of demand side. It is very much pertinent to understand the respondent's socio-cultural combination. They are 11 in numbers of which 8 respondents are female and 3 respondents are male. The average age of these respondents are 16.09 years. Their educational backgrounds are: 1 person illiterate, 1 person below primary school level, 6 persons up to primary school level and 3 persons up to secondary school certificate (SSC) level. Now 7 of them are continuing their study, 2 are engaged in farming and rests 2 are engaged in non-government job and household work. The average age of these respondents is 15.50 years when their guardian attempted to settle their marriage. But all of them were aware about the permitted minimums age for marriage in Bangladeshi law. These 11 respondents express their opinion regarding child marriage from their own point of view through a structured questioner. These are analyzed below:

### 5.2.1 Early Marriage - Good and Beneficial:

Does early marriage is good and beneficial? To answer this question all 11 respondents, opine that early marriage is not good and beneficial. In support of their stand, they identify the following detrimental factors of child marriage. Child marriage leads to child mother. So, a child mother faces danger of health hazards even mother's death. She becomes unable to bear the burden of a family. She falls under pressure physically and mentally and ultimately destroys her life.

### 5.2.2 Child marriage - a social curse.

Out of 11 respondents everybody agrees that child marriage is a social curse. In defense of their stand, they say that child marriage causes maternal death, child death and induce population growth. It destroys social harmony, creates chaos in the family and destroys the prospect of a child.

### 5.2.3 Agree with the early marriage initiative taken by guardian.

To response this question 2 respondents informed that they agreed with guardian's decision and wanted to be married. They inform us that bride was financially solvent and her father was economically poor. 9 respondents inform that they did not agree with the guardian's decision. They did not want to marry because they wanted to continue their study and become self-dependent. They are not mentally and physically ready to marry.

### 5.2.4 Feeling when marriage is being stopped.

Out of 11 respondents 9 respondents became very happy when their marriage was stopped by mobile court operation. 2 respondents express their feeling as happy. But 1 respondent inform that she became very sad when her marriage is being stopped by mobile court. 8 respondents make amnestied their guardian for taking initiative of early marriage.

### 5.2.5 Reasons behind the initiative of victims' marriage.

Out of 11 respondents of category "A", 64% respondents regard poverty as a prime cause for child marriage. And 18% respondents say that illiteracy is the main driving force

behind child marriage. 9% respondents viewed social insecurity while 9% respondents viewed family pressure as the cause of child marriage. Sometimes, more than one factor becomes the cause for child marriage. In the following table and graph the distribution of factors are shown:

Table 6: Reasons behind Child Marriage

Cause	No. of Respondents	percentage
Poverty	7	64
Illiteracy	2	18
Social insecurity	1	9
Eve teasing	0	0
Family Pressure	1	9
Religious bindings	0	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>100</b>

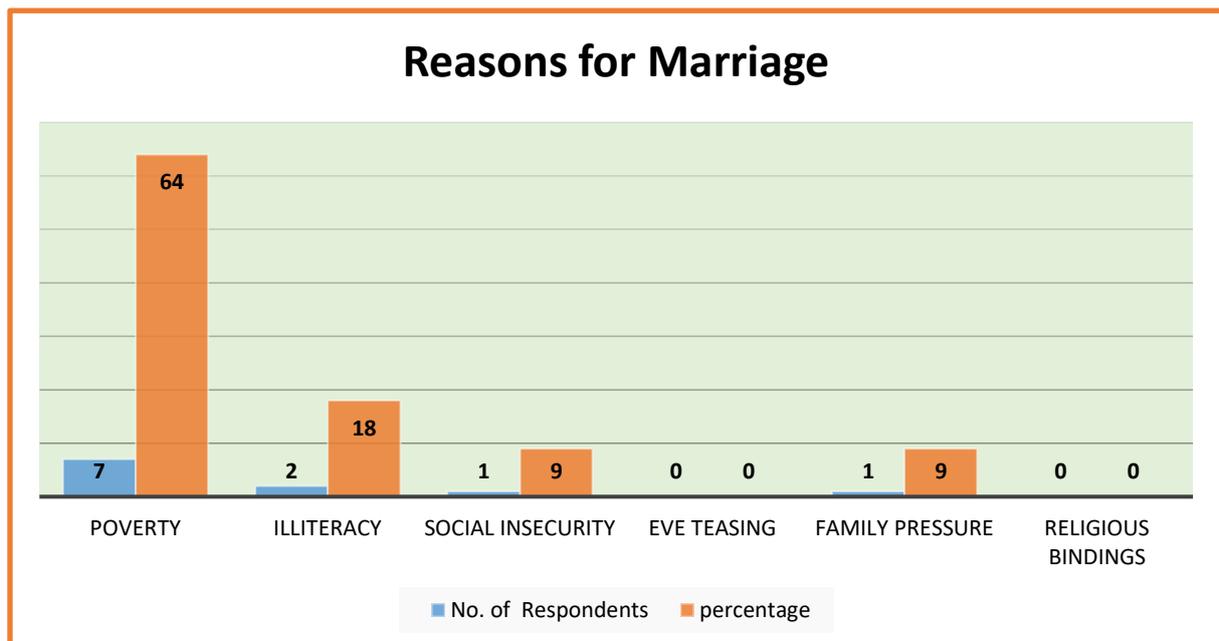


Figure: 4 Reasons for Marriage

5.2.6 Ever heard about Mobile Court operation or Mobile Court Act-2009 before marriage initiative.

9 respondents inform that they heard about mobile court operation or Mobile Court Act-2009 before their marriage initiative. Rest 2 did not hear about mobile court. Interestingly out of 11 respondents, 10 respondents did not ever hear about “child marriage restraint act-1929”. To answer the question how did they communicate with the competent executive magistrate court to conduct mobile court to stop their marriage, they inform us many ways. They communicate with Upazilla Nirbahi Officer through mobile phone call, through educational institute, through school teacher, through student cabinet of their school, through neighbor and few did not communicate. They informed about mobile court operation, especially on child marriage issue from various sources. And 2 respondents informed through miking and poster, 1 respondent informed through student council, 5 respondents came to know through educational institutions and rest 3 respondents informed from television, government officer and neighbor.

Table 7: Ways of being informed about Mobile Court Operation

Serial No.	Ways of being informed	No of Respondents	Percentage
1	Meeting	0	0
2	Seminar	0	0
3	Miking and poster	2	18
4	Student council	1	9
5	Educational institutions	5	46
6	Others (Television, Government Officer and Neighbor)	3	27
	<b>Total</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>100</b>

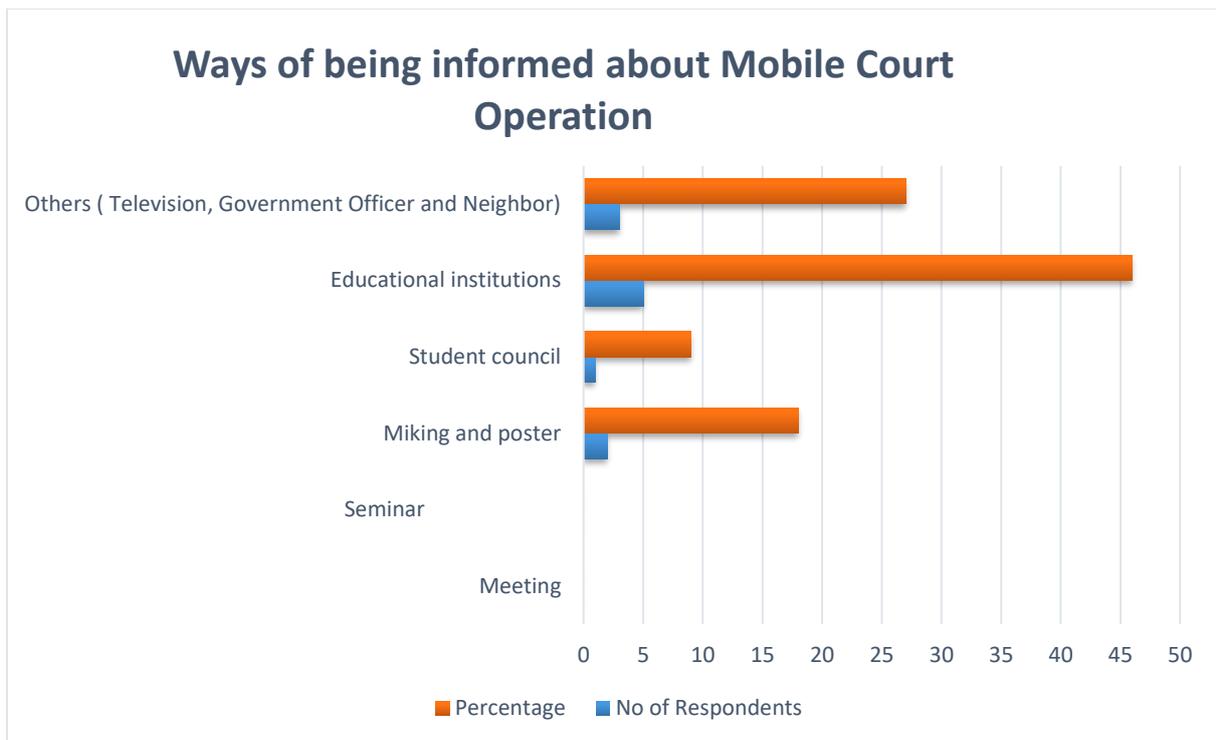


Figure: 5 Ways of being informed about mobile court operation

5.2.7 Except Mobile Court Child marriage could be stopped by other initiatives or mechanism.

Could child marriage be stopped by initiatives other than Mobile Court? To answer this question 8 respondents, opine that no other initiatives except “Mobile Court” could be able to stop their marriage. And 8 of them confessed that stoppage of their marriage through mobile court was beneficial for them. Out of 11 respondents 5 respondents informed that their guardian got frustrated and alarmed at the initiative of mobile court for stoppage of their marriage. 6 respondents informed that their guardians could understand their mistake.

5.2.8 Mobile Court Act-2009 is an effective tool to stop child marriage.

To assess the effectiveness of mobile court to stop child marriage, this statement was asked all 11 respondents opine that Mobile Court Act -2009 is an effective tool to stop

child marriage. They termed Mobile Court Act-2009 as a people friendly act rather coercive act. Even they give suggestion to improve the performance of mobile court operation. They agreed that Ishwarganj Upazilla was a child marriage prone Upazilla. And due to concerted efforts under taken by Upazilla Nirbahi Officer to stop child marriage, the scenario is changing. Now this Upazilla is a child marriage free Upazilla. Moreover, they suggest increasing campaign about mobile court to increase awareness of people about the adverse impact of child marriage. They urge to employ mobile court messenger in all villages so that they can channelize the message of child marriage to the executive magistrates or competent courts. Proper enactment of this law can combat against the curse of child marriage. Continuous and relentless mobile court operation and commitment of public representatives may reduce the higher rate of child marriage in Bangladesh.

### 5.3 Data Analysis: Group 'B'

The researcher collected primary data from 3 groups (A, B, C) of Ishwarganj Upazilla. Group "B" was composed of the persons who were involved in mobile court operation to stop child marriage. They are service provider and members of supply side. It is very much pertinent to understand the respondent's profile and background. They are 10 in numbers of which 3 respondents are female and 7 respondents are male. All of them are government officer working at Ishwarganj Upazilla. They played different role while conducting mobile court operation such as executive magistrate, prosecutor, plaintiff, law enforcing agency and witness. These 10 respondent's average year of doing their job in this work station is 1.29 years. They started their journey to make Ishwarganj as a child marriage free Upazilla for 1.5 years back under the leadership of Upazilla Nirbahi Officer (UNO). They provide their rigorous and continuous effort in conducting mobile courts. These 10 respondents express their opinion regarding child marriage from their own point of view through a structured questionnaire. These are analyzed below:

#### 5.3.1 Child marriage - a social curse.

All the 10 respondents opine that child marriage is a social curse. They say that child marriage discourages girls to continue study. It affects physical and mental health of girls.

They become pregnant with a teen body. On many occasions, it may cause death to both mother and her child. It causes maternal death, child death and induces population growth. It destroys social harmony, creates chaos in the family and destroys the prospect of a child. A child mother or father fails to bear the burden of the family. It hampers the economic growth and destroys social harmony in the society. It has negative impact on social respect and empowerment of women.

### 5.3.2 Ishwarganj Upazilla was a child marriage prone Upazilla.

Except 1 respondent other 9 respondents stated that Ishwarganj was a child marriage prone Upazilla. 2 years back, child marriage was a common place here. They identify and explain the cause of higher rate of child marriage in this upazilla which are shown in the following table:

Table 8: Causes of higher rate of child marriage

<b>Cause</b>	<b>Explanation</b>
Lack of law enforcement,	In past legal action against child marriage was not enough. The child marriage restraint act 1929 was not fully operational. Penalties for child marriage are imprisonment for one month or a fine of up to 1,000 taka (\$ 11.76) or both.
Poverty and Illiteracy	This area is not an industrial area rather agrarian area. Average income of people is very low. Guardian of boy tries to earn money from dowry which insists them to marry his son at early age. On the contrary due to poverty guardian of a girl tries to marry his child at early age to save the cost of fooding. The literacy rate of this Upazilla is only 35.2 %. Though they are not literate they fail to make the cost benefit analysis properly. Poverty and illiteracy have direct link to child marriage.
Eve teasing	Guardians feel afraid to send their daughters to school for eve teasing. They try to get their daughters married earlier.
Unconsciousness	Ignorance of people regarding detrimental effects impacts of child marriage.
Lack of social safety	Parents want their daughter to be safe from sexual abuse. So, they try to get their daughters married earlier.
Religious bindings	Sometimes family members and guardians create pressure on child to marry at early age. Guardians found it as a religious obligation and try to fulfill it.

### 5.3.3 Factors and forces that bring the change regarding child marriage.

Now Ishwarganj is a child marriage free Upazilla. Due to rigorous drive against child marriage the rate downsizes to zero. They apply multidimensional technique to stop child marriage. Here the 10 respondents identify the factors and forces with percentage which were applied to combat against child marriage:

Table 9: Factors and forces that bring change

Factors and forces	Average Percentage (Total 100%)
Mobile court	26.00 %
Initiatives of UNO in terms of administrative action	30.10 %
Local leaders' positive role	14.30 %
Awareness of guardians	10.60 %
Reducing poverty	07.40 %
Social change/socio economic development	04.60 %
Facilitated Primary and secondary education	07.00 %

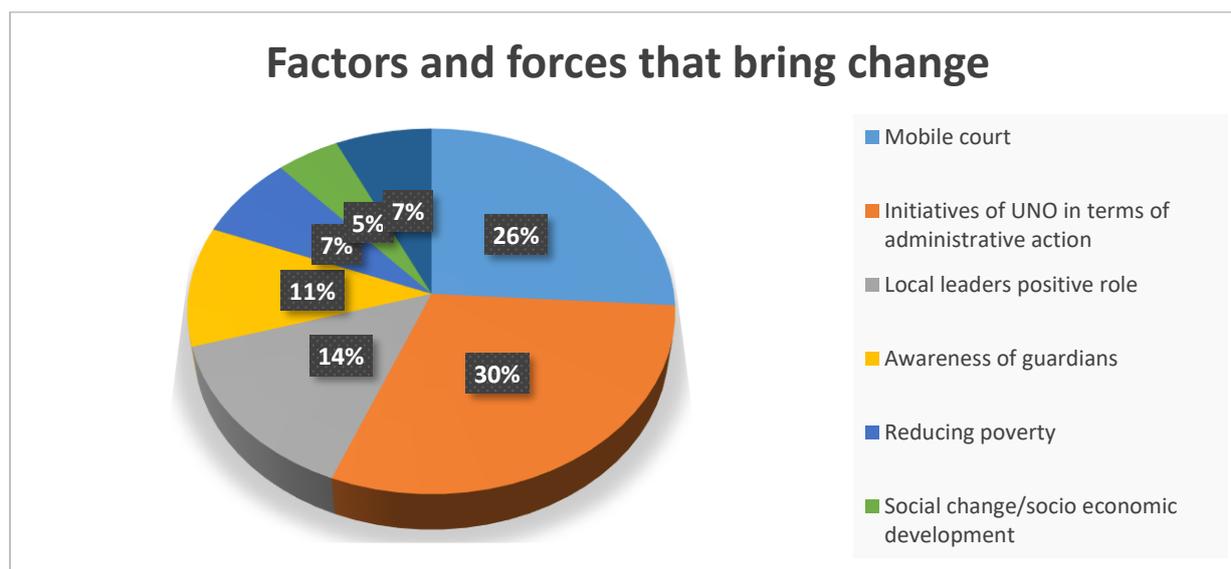


Figure: 6 Factors and forces that bring change

The respondents ranked the factors and forces which bring the change regarding child marriage. On the above chart we find that 26 % effects of mobile court acts as catalyst against child marriage. A highest 30.10 % effect of Initiatives of UNO in terms of

administrative action is used for stopping child marriage. Here we find that administrative and executive magisterial power of UNO bring the major changes which shift an Upazilla from Child marriage prone to child marriage free Upazilla.

#### 5.3.4 Mobile court is the most vital factor to restrain the propensity of child marriage.

To judge the effectiveness of mobile court to stop child marriage this question was made to the respondents. Out of 10 respondents 8 respondents opine that mobile court -2009 act is the most vital cause/factor to restrain the propensity of child marriage. All of the respondents of group 'B' termed mobile court act-2009 as a people friendly act rather coercive act. They believe that service seekers (Childs) are benefitted by mobile court. They also say that they get support from local leaders while conducting mobile courts on child marriage. But sometimes they observe the double standard role of rural elites. 90 % respondents agree that continuous mobile court operation will able to keep Ishwarganj Upazilla child marriage free. It is proved that 'The Child marriage Restraint Act – 1929' act has failed to create an effective role to reduce child marriage. The government understood the failure. To overcome this problem government included this law under the schedule of mobile court act 2009. After that mobile court attains a neo-dimension and a radical paradigm shift in the enforcement of laws in Bangladesh to restrain the propensity of child marriage. As a result, Ishwarganj Upazilla is now child marriages free Upazilla.

#### 5.3.5 Challenges of Mobile Court operation to stop child marriage.

The members of group 'B' engaged with mobile court operation. In conducting mobile court, they face many obstacles. They consider these obstacles as challenges. The challenges are:

- Sometimes people react without reason and logic. Poor people's negative attitude towards mobile court is a considering factor.
- Elite groups of the society try to put pressure against mobile court. Role of elites are not positive all the time.
- Childs (boy/girl) do not have birth registration. So, it becomes difficult to fix the actual age of child.

- Distance between victims' house and Upazilla headquarter, remote place, time constraint, vehicle constraint and manpower constraint are the major hindrances against the success of mobile court.
- Social harassment of victim is also a considering factor.

### 5.3.6 Suggestions to make the mobile court operation successful in the issue of child marriage.

All the respondents give suggestions to make the mobile court operation successful in the issue of child marriage. These are:

- The law “Child Marriage Restraint Act-1929” against child marriage was instituted in 1929. Penalties for child marriage are imprisonment for one month or a fine of up to 1,000 taka (\$ 11.76) or both. This legal action/punishment is not enough. That is why law has updated and upgrades in 2017 with the same alignment of the law “Women and Child Special Act – 2000”. But still this act is not fully practiced in full swing. Moreover, it has loop holes with special provisions.
- Activating the educational institution in the awareness movement. To build up people's awareness seminar, meeting, miking, poster and leaflet can be used. Disseminate the real message through village leader, imam, purohit and local government representatives.
- “Child Marriage Restraint Act-1929” was in action to stop child marriage. This act has failed to create an effective role to reduce child marriage. The government understood the failure. To overcome this problem government included this law under the schedule of Mobile Court Act 2009. Mobile court brings a neo-dimension and a significant paradigm shift in the enforcement of laws in Bangladesh to restrain the propensity of child marriage. So, creation of distinct and dedicated cell of mobile court is an ultimate necessity. Increase the number of executive magistrates, support services, manpower for the court and necessary vehicle. All officers of the nation building department should be involved in this

movement. Mobile court conducts their operation in social friendly approach/manner.

#### 5.3.7. Loopholes or drawbacks in Mobile Court Act-2009

All the respondents agree that this law is a people friendly act rather coercive act. The respondents are personally involved in mobile court operation. While conducting mobile court they perceive some loop holes in Mobile Court Act-2009. In this act, in case accused refuse to admit his/her fault punishment cannot be given. So, clauses can be added to give judgment in case of refusal. Adequate numbers of executives are not available. Executive magistrates and mobile courts should increase. Scope of punishment should be increased. Logistics to conduct mobile court should readily available.

#### 5.3.8 Loopholes or drawbacks in Child Marriage Restraint Act-1929.

All the respondents agree that Child marriage Restraint Act, 1929 was in action to stop child marriage. But it was not practiced in full esteem. This act has failed to create an effective role to reduce child marriage. According to the act penalties for child marriage are imprisonment for one month or a fine of up to 1,000 taka (\$ 11.76) or both. This legal action/punishment is not enough. So, punishment should be increased. The law should be updated and upgraded to the resent context.

#### 5.4 Data Analysis: Group 'C'

The researcher collected primary data from 3 groups (A, B, C) of Ishwarganj Upazilla. The compositions of group "C" are related stakeholders associated with marriage and mobile court. They are the representative of different segment of the society who influences marriage program and mobile court. They also play vital role while conducting mobile court. The composition of this group is 1 political leader, 2 local government leaders (Union parishad chairman), 2 kazis, 2 teachers, 2 representatives of student council and 2 journalists. They are 11 in numbers of which all are male. They live in Ishwarganj since many years. Interestingly all of them were aware about the permitted minimum age for marriage in Bangladeshi law. These 11 respondents express their opinion regarding child marriage from their own point of view through a structured questioner. These are analyzed below:

#### 5.4.1 Child marriage a social curse.

Out of 11 respondents everybody agrees that child marriage is a social curse. Why it is curse - to specify the cause they say that child marriage discourages girls to continue study. It affects girls both mentally and physically. They become pregnant with a teen body which hampers conjugal life. It occurs death of both mother and children. It causes maternal death, child death and induces population growth. It destroys social harmony, causes social decadence, creates chaos in the family and destroys the prospect of a child. A child mother or father fails to bear the burden of the family. It hampers the economic growth and destroys social harmony in the society. It has negative impact on social respect, empowerment of women and ultimately leads to poverty.

#### 5.4.2 Ishwarganj Upazilla was a child marriage prone Upazilla.

All 11 respondents stated that Ishwarganj was a child marriage prone Upazilla. Just before 2 years back, child marriage was a common happening here. They identify and ranked cause of higher rate of child marriage in this upazilla which are shown in a table below:

Table 10: Causes of child marriage in Ishwarganj Upazilla

Cause	Percentage (Total 100%)
Poverty	30.00 %
Illiteracy	24.00 %
Social insecurity	17.27 %
Eve teasing	09.04 %
Family Pressure	08.06 %
Religious bindings	08.45 %
Others (please mention) ....	03.18 %

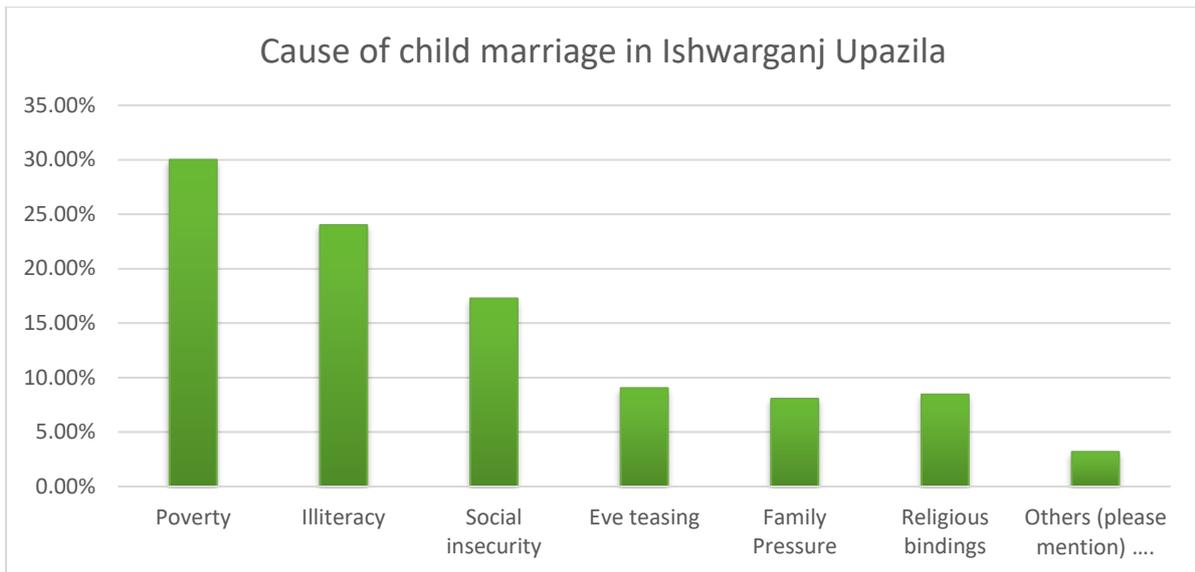


Figure: 7 Causes of Child Marriage in Ishwarganj Upazilla

This area is not an industrial area rather agrarian area. Average income of people is very low. Guardian of a boy tries to earn money from dowry which insists them to marry his son at early age. On the contrary due to poverty guardian of a girl tries to give marry his child at early age to save the cost of fooding. The literacy rate of this Upazilla is only 35.2 %. Though they are not literate they fail to make the cost benefit analysis properly. The respondents ranked the factors which make Ishwarganj as a child marriage prone Upazilla. Sometimes more than one factor becomes the cause for child marriage. On the above chart we find that Poverty and illiteracy has direct link to child marriage. The respondents blame poverty as the top most cause (30%) for child marriage. They identify illiteracy as the second highest (24.00 %) cause for child marriage. The respondents give third preference to social insecurity. Except 1 respondent rest of all postulates that, now the status of Ishwarganj is child marriages free.

#### 5.4.3 Factors and forces that bring change regarding child marriage.

Now Ishwarganj is a child marriage free Upazilla. Due to rigorous drive against child marriage the rate downsizes to zero. They apply multidimensional technique to stop child marriage. Here the 10 respondents identify the factors and forces with percentage which were applied to combat against child marriage:

Table 11: Percentage of factors and forces that bring change regarding child marriage

Factors and forces	Percentage (Total 100%)
Mobile Court	23.66 %
Initiatives of UNO in terms of administrative action	29.18 %
Local leaders' positive role	17.54 %
Awareness of guardians	11.45 %
Reducing poverty	07.63 %
Social change/socio economic development	04.18 %
Facilitated Primary and secondary education	06.36 %

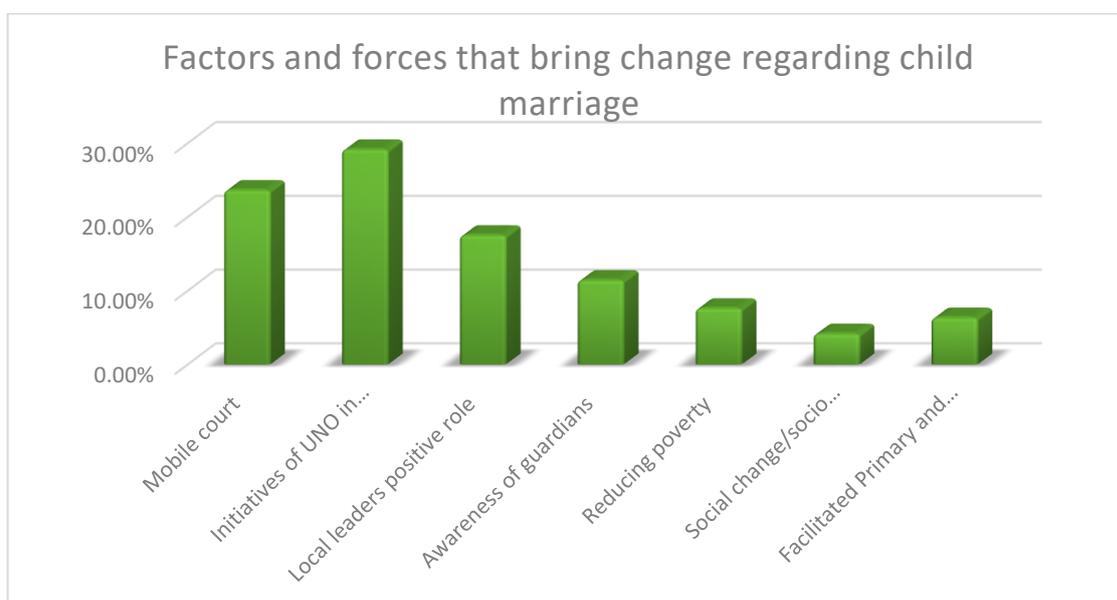


Figure: 8 Percentage of factors and forces that bring change regarding Child Marriage

The respondents ranked the factors and forces which bring the change regarding child marriage. On the above chart we find that 23.66 % effects of mobile court acts as catalyst against child marriage. A highest 29.18 % effect of initiatives of UNO in terms of administrative action is used for stopping child marriage. Here we find that administrative and executive magisterial power of UNO bring the major changes which shift an Upazilla from Child marriage prone to child marriage free Upazilla.

5.4.4 Ways of being informed about mobile court operation, especially on child marriage issue.

Out of 11 persons 4 respondents inform that they heard about mobile court operation or mobile court act-2009 through miking and poster. 3 respondents acquainted with mobile court from seminar. 2 respondents came to know about mobile court from meeting. And rest 2 respondents heard about mobile court from educational institutions. Interestingly out of 11 respondents 8 respondents heard about “Child Marriage Restraint Act-1929” but no activities were not observed under this law.

Table 12: Ways of being informed regarding mobile court operation for group B

Serial No.	Ways of being informed	No of Respondents	Percentage
1	Meeting	2	18.19 %
2	Seminar	3	27.27 %
3	Miking and poster	4	36.36 %
4	Student council	0	0 %
5	Educational institutions	2	18.18 %
6	Others (Television, Government Officer and Neighbor)	0	0 %
	<b>Total</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>100</b>

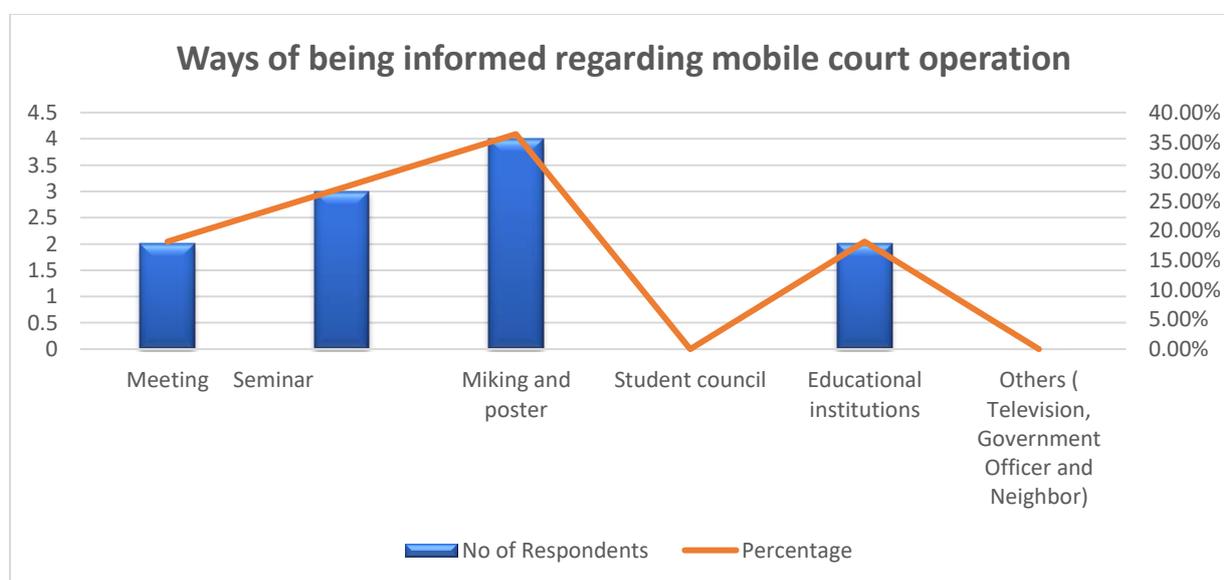


Figure: 9 Ways of being informed regarding mobile court operation for group B

5.4.5 Mobile court is the most vital cause/factor to restrain the propensity of child marriage.

To judge the effectiveness of mobile court to stop child marriage this question was made to the respondents. Out of 11 respondents 9 respondents (82 %) opine that mobile court - 2009 act is the most vital cause/factor to restrain the propensity of child marriage. All of the respondents of group 'C' postulate "Mobile Court Act-2009" is a people friendly act rather coercive act. They believe that service seekers (Childs) are benefitted by mobile court. They also say that they provide support while conducting mobile courts on child marriage. 90.90 % respondents agree that continuous mobile court operation will able to keep Ishwarganj Upazilla child marriage free. It is proved that 'The Child Marriage Restraint Act – 1929" act has failed to create an effective role to reduce child marriage. The government understood the failure. To overcome this problem government included this law under the schedule of Mobile Court Act- 2009. After that mobile court brings a neo-dimension and a significant paradigm shift in the enforcement of laws in Bangladesh to restrain the propensity of child marriage. As a result, Ishwarganj Upazilla is now child marriages free Upazilla.

5.4.6 Challenges of mobile court operation to stop child marriage.

The members of group 'C' closely observe mobile court operation. While conducting mobile court they perceive many obstacles. These obstacles reduce the success of mobile court. Whatever, they identify the following challenges of mobile court:

- Sometimes people conduct marriage ceremony secretly. They react without reason and logic and express anxiety. Peoples negative attitude and resistance towards mobile court is a considering factor.

- Elite groups of the society try to put pressure against mobile court. Role of elites are not positive all the time.
- Childs (boy/girl) do not have birth registration. So, it becomes difficult to fix the actual/eligible age of child.
- Distance between victims house and Upazilla headquarter, remote place, time constraint, vehicle constraint and manpower constraint are the major hindrances against the success of mobile court. Information gap or misinformations are challenges for mobile court.
- Social harassment of victim is also a considering factor. Stakeholder's noncooperation and lack of information provider hindrances the prospect of mobile court.

5.4.7 Suggestions to make the mobile court operation make more successful in the issue of child marriage.

All the respondents give suggestions to make the mobile court operation successful in the issue of child marriage. These are:

- To stop child marriage a movement should develop. Meeting, seminar, miking, banner, potter, leaflet and rally can used for awareness building.
- Activating the educational institution in the awareness movement. To build up student's awareness seminar, meeting, miking, poster and leaflet can be used. Disseminate the real message through village leader, imam, purohit and local government representatives.

- “Child Marriage Restraint Act-1929” was in action to stop child marriage. This act has failed to create an effective role to reduce child marriage. The government understood the failure. To overcome this problem government included this law under the schedule of mobile court act 2009. Mobile court brings a neo-dimension and a significant paradigm shift in the enforcement of laws in Bangladesh to restrain the propensity of child marriage. So, creation of distinct and dedicated cell of mobile court is an ultimate necessity. Increase the number of executive magistrates, support services, manpower for the court and necessary vehicle. All officers of the nation building department should be involved in this movement.
- Employ union wise messenger who can provide information to the mobile court timely. He also disseminates the message of the government to people. Thus, information network can be established.
- Mobile court conducts their operation with joint collaboration of local public leaders. Media may play active role in combating child marriage.

#### 5.4.8 Role of executive magistrates (UNO, AC land and assistant commissioner) in conducting mobile court on child marriage.

To answer this question all the 11 respondents express their opinion that they are highly satisfied about the performance of executive magistrates (UNO, AC land and assistant commissioner) in conducting mobile court on child marriage. They agree that Ishwarganj Upazilla was a child marriage prone Upazilla. And due to committed efforts of Upazilla Nirbahi Officer and Assistant Commissioner (land) to stop child marriage the scenario has changed. Now this Upazilla is a child marriage free Upazilla. They urge to employ mobile court messenger in all villages so that they can channelize the message of child marriage to the executive magistrates or competent courts. Continuous and relentless mobile court operation and commitment of public representatives may reduce the higher rate of child marriage in this country.

## 5.5 Case Studies

### Case Study 1

Tania Akter (18 years) lived in Ishwarganj Upazilla, Mymensingh. Her father is Md. Rafik Miah and mother is Mst. Shahida Akter. She reads in class eight in Mollikpur Laxmiganj Highschool. 04 months back her marriage was settled while she was not 18. Bride works in a Sweater making factory. Her father is an agriculture worker. Due to financial insolvency her father is reluctant to educate her daughter. So her guardian initiated her marriage ceremony. The teachers and students of her school forbid her father not to arrange the marriage ceremony as she is not 18 years old. Then her father postponed the program and gets away for the fear of mobile court. She thinks under aged marriage is not suitable and worthy. It is harmful.

Her father is a day labor who works neighbor's house. Mobile court has stopped her marriage ceremony. Now she is 18 years. She wants to marry when will become self-dependent. The problem is that her neighbors laugh at as her marriage ceremony has broken. Their ridiculous attitude hurt her. Except this she does not feel any problem.

### Case Study 2

Her name is Mahmuda Akter, age 16. Father and mother are alive. Her father is a fisherman. Mother is housewife. She was a student of Bissheshori Pilot High School in class 7. Her guardian arranged her marriage ceremony 8 months back. Bride lives in Mymensingh. He possesses a grocery shop. The shop was huge. Bride was a graduate. Her father's monthly income is only 9/10 thousand taka. They are 6 brothers and 2 sisters. It's a huge family. It is too tough to maintain the expense of family with limited income. Though bride was potential so her father decided to give marriage. Moreover, it saves the expense of her educational cost. She thinks marriage would be better. On that very day teacher of her school, police and mobile court came to her house and stopped the marriage ceremony. Though her marriage ceremony has broken so she feels shy. Her friends tease with her. As a result, her father incurs loss of 3 lac taka almost. Her father did not know the

eligible age for marriage. So, they face the loss. She thinks that before 18 years marriage is not wise full. Marriage should be given at the proper age. Though her marriage ceremony was arranged so she became upset.

### Case Study 3

Name: Beauty Akter (16 years), Father: Nurul Islam, Mother: Kolpona Akter.

She is a student of class 10. Her marriage ceremony was fixed at 12-08-20016. Father and mother are alive. Father is a trolley driver and mother is housewife. To whom her marriage was settled his name was Alamgir Hossain. Alamgirs father is an owner of ice-cream factory. They were rich and educated. And Beauty's family is very poor and passes their life in hardship. Alamgir's family is rich and he is a prospective boy. They committed to continue the study of Beauty. So her guardian agreed to give marriage in spite of her under age. She gave her consent at the condition of continuing her study. But her neighbors informed it to the mobile court and ceremony was postponed. Police came to their home when bride party had reached. Now my age is 16 years. The results of estoppel of her marriage are:

- Villagers treat her as a sinister girl.
- Somebody believes that she was engaged with affair.
- Beauty destroys their honor and pride.
- The cost for arrangement on that occasion went into astray. They face monetary loss.

The researcher asked her whether she finds any benefit. With a smile he answers, yes. I can continue my study.

#### Case Study 4

Iasmin Akter (19 years) lived in Shimrail, Ishwarganj, Mymensingh. Her father is Habul Miah and mother is Salema Khatun. Her marriage was arranged at 2014. She was agreed to the decision of her marriage. Then she was 17 years old. Her marriage was postponed. But her family did not face any social problem due to that. Her father is a rikshaw puller. Mother is a maid servant. At present her family does not get any proposal for marriage though she is eligible for marry now. Her mother makes broom. She helps her mother to make broom. They can make 15 to 20 brooms per day. Thus, they earn 150 taka (2 Dollar) in a day. Now she helps her family to increase earnings by doing this. She wants to be self-dependent. She seeks the support from Government.

#### Case Study 5

Taslina Akhter (17.5 years) lived in Dottapara, Ishwarganj, Mymensingh. Shohid Miah and Shomola Khatun is her father and mother. Her marriage ceremony was arranged at 16th September, 2016. That time her age was 17 years and 9 months. Meyor, Ishwarganj Pourashova forbid her guardians not to give marry her. Her guardians and relatives could understand their mistakes. They stopped the marriage suo-motu. No problem at all. Her guardians will give her marry after 18. Now she worked as a maid servant at Dhaka. Now she is ok. But her mother feels deep misery for estoppels of marriage. Now her mother is at demise stage. Her mother wants to give marry Taslima before her death. Taslima feels agony for her mother. She does not feel any social obstacle for estoppels of her marriage.

## 5.6. Secondary Data Analysis:

Table 13: Year wise number of mobile courts conducted and rate of child marriage

Year	No of Mobile Courts Conducted against Child Marriage	Rate of child marriage %	Remarks
2010	08	26	
2011	11	28	
2012	09	25	
2013	14	21	
2014	12	19	
2015	27	08	Along with mobile courts broad band awareness building program was under taken to convey the message of anti-child marriage. Meeting and seminar were held. Postar, miking, banner and leaflet was distributed. It was a social movement.
2016	29	0.05	

(Office of the UNO, Ishwarganj, 2017)

The table shows that, in 2010 the number of mobile courts conducted against child marriage was low and percentage of child marriage was high in Ishwarganj Upazilla. As number of mobile court operations increases the percentage of child marriage deceases. In 2015 the number of mobile courts conducted against child marriage was 27 and percentage of child marriage was 08 %. The then Upazilla Nirbahi Officer and executive magistrate started social movement along with mobile court. Mobile court act, 2009 gave

the executive magistrates magisterial power to stop child marriage. Upazilla Nirbahi Officer (UNO) and Assistant Commissioner (Land) also apply their administrative power, image and capability against child marriage. They are successful to create a movement against child marriage. In the study area it is found that now people are conscious of the harmful effect of child marriage. Meeting, Seminar, motivational campaign, active participation of student council, information network and over all exemplary punishment given by mobile court make the people conscious and aware about detrimental effect of child marriage. As a result, in 2016 the percentage of child marriage in Ishwarganj Upazilla came down near to zero (0.05 %). This change is achieved due to mobile court operation. Proper implementation of the Mobile Court Act-2009 can deter the magnitude and ramifications of child marriage.

#### 5.7. End Note:

The collected information demonstrates how the dynamics between the mobile court operations and percentage of child marriage have been changed. Primary data strongly suggests that the continuous and relentless mobile court operation can contribute to reducing higher rate of child marriage. Analysis of primary data revealed that most of the children who were saved from the marriage were satisfied with the active, effective and timely initiative of executive magistrate's mobile courts. Victims of child marriage opined that, none but mobile court can save them from child marriage. Mobile court act, 2009 gives the executive magistrates power to stop child marriage and to punish those who are involved in child marriage. Secondary data also shows that as number of mobile court operations increases, the percentage of child marriage decreases.

## Chapter Six: Conclusion

### 6.1 Introduction

This chapter contains the findings of this study sourced from survey interactions. The obtained data also contains the cause of child marriage, detrimental effects of child marriage, and effectiveness of mobile court in combating against child marriage. So, a holistic evaluation of the “mobile court act 2009” can be possible by analyzing the findings. After analyzing the findings, this chapter also contains some policy implications drawn based on the researcher’s experiences and the collected data. It also indicates scopes of further research to analyze the deep-rooted cause and consequences of child marriage in a broader perspective.

### 6.2 General Findings

The study has examined the extent to which the mobile court operation became effective to restrain the propensity of child marriage in Bangladesh. It was also revealed that as number of mobile court operations increases the percentage of child marriage deceases. Mobile Court Act, 2009 gave the executive magistrates magisterial power to stop child marriage. Upazilla Nirbahi Officer (UNO) and Assistant Commissioner (Land) also apply their administrative power, image and capability against child marriage. They are successful to create a movement against child marriage. In the study area it is found that except mobile court, child marriage could not be stopped by other initiatives or mechanisms. From 11 respondents, 82 % (9 Persons) respondents opine that Mobile Court Act -2009 is the most vital factor to restrain the propensity of child marriage. From both service providers and service seekers perspective it is proved that “Mobile Court Act-2009” is an important and effective means against child marriage. Most of the respondents of all cluster termed “Mobile Court Act-2009” as a people friendly act rather coercive act.

### 6.3 Specific Findings

Child marriage is a social curse. Why it is a curse? - to answer the question the respondents informed that child marriage discourages girls to continue study. It affects girls both mentally and physically. They become pregnant with a teen body which

hampers conjugal life. It occurs death of both mother and children. It causes maternal death, child death and induces population growth. It destroys social harmony, causes social decadence, creates chaos in the family and destroys the prospect of a child. A child mother or father fails to bear the burden of the family. It hampers the economic growth and destroys social harmony in the society. It has negative impact on social respect, empowerment of women and ultimately leads to poverty.

#### 6.3.1 Root causes of child marriage:

The respondents of this study from service recipient's cluster also informed that poverty, illiteracy, social insecurity, eve teasing, family pressure, religious bindings and early puberty etc are the root causes of child marriage. It has also economic interpretation. Guardian of a boy tries to earn money from dowry which insists them to marry his son at early age. On the contrary due to poverty guardian of a girl tries to give marry his child at early age to save the cost of foods.

#### 6.3.2 Correlation of illiteracy and poverty with child marriage.

Illiteracy and poverty have inverse correlation with child marriage Out of 11 respondents of category "A" 64% respondents make responsible poverty as a prime cause for child marriage. And 18% respondents say that illiteracy is the main driving force for child marriage. 9% respondents viewed as social insecurity and 9% respondents viewed as family pressure is the cause of child marriage. Not only single factor, sometimes more than one factor become the cause for child marriage. The researcher found that Poverty and illiteracy has direct link to child marriage. The respondents of cluster 'C' blame poverty as the top most cause (30%) for child marriage. They identify illiteracy as the second highest (24.00 %) cause for child marriage.

#### 6.3.3 Institutionalize effort to prevent child marriage.

Basically, ministry of women and child affairs is mandated to prevent child marriage. The researcher found that Upazilla women affairs officer has very limited logistics and authority to prevent child marriage. In practice he/she collects the information of child marriage and informs it to the executive magistrates. Being informed, the executive magistrate conducts mobile court to prevent child marriage. There Upazilla women affairs officer plays his role as a prosecutor. The study found that initiatives of UNO in terms of administrative action, local leader's positive role, awareness of guardians,

reducing poverty, social change/socio economic development and facilitated Primary and secondary education are the factors and forces which reduce child marriage.

#### 6.3.4 Other mechanism to prevent child marriage.

To stop child marriage a social movement should develop. Meeting, seminar, miking, banner, potter, leaflet and rally can use for awareness building. Activating the educational institution in the awareness building movement is necessary. To build up student's awareness seminar, meeting, miking, poster and leaflet can be used. The real message should disseminate through village leader, imam, purohit and local government representatives to the general people. These mechanisms are effective to prevent child marriage. In Ishwarganj Upazilla, Upazilla Nirbahi Officer and executive magistrate utilizes these mechanisms along with mobile court. That is why Ishwarganj upazilla is now a child marriage free Upazilla.

#### 6.4 Further Research Area

Because of time and resource constraint the researcher covers only one research site i.e., Ishwarganj under this study. In future, research can be conducted in other geographical parts of Bangladesh to come up with the holistic findings. Besides, further studies can be conducted to evaluate the "Mobile Court Act-2009" in combating child marriage from national policy perspective.

#### 6.5 Concluding Remarks

There is critical need to prioritize interventions through evidence-based monitoring, and identify different entry points of intervention at different levels within an overall framework, which integrate and converge at a common goal of ending child marriage. It is imperative that norms regarding attitudes to girls change and the value of girls' child is enhanced. Prevention of child marriage is not the end product; rather, the goal is to enhance the value of girl child and bring about greater gender equality and justice in all spheres of life.

#### 6.6 Policy Implications

Some policy implications have notified in the light with the recommendations came from the respondents as well as experiences gathered during the study. These implications can

help the decision or policy makers to restrain the propensity of child marriage in Bangladesh.

#### 6.6.1 Logistics for Mobile Court.

Distance between victims' house and Upazilla headquarter, remote place, time constraint, vehicle constraint and manpower constraint are the major hindrances to the success of mobile court. Information gap and miss information are challenges for mobile court. Union wise messenger can be employed who can provide information to the mobile court timely. Thus, information network can be established. Not only that, mobile court can be conducted with joint collaboration of local public leaders. Media may play active role in combating child marriage.

#### 6.6.2 Distinct Mobile Court Cell.

Mobile court brings a neo-dimension and a significant paradigm shift in the enforcement of laws in Bangladesh to restrain the propensity of child marriage. So, creation of distinct and dedicated cell of mobile court is an ultimate necessity. The number of executive magistrates, support services, manpower for the court and necessary vehicle should be increased. All officers from all department at Upazila level should be involved in this movement.

#### 6.6.3 Policy Regarding Social Initiatives.

To stop child marriage a social movement should develop. Meeting, seminar, miking, banner, potter, leaflet and rally can use for awareness building. Activating the educational institution in the awareness movement is necessary. To build up student's awareness seminar, meeting, miking, poster and leaflet can be used. The real message should disseminate through village leader, Imam, Purohit and local government representatives to the general people. Both traditional and newer forms of media need to build positive images of women and break stereotypes on gender roles, tasks and responsibilities, to increase the value of girl child and bring about social change.

#### 6.6.4 Legal Reform.

To educate the public on the legal age of marriage and compulsory registration of birth and marriage information and communication technologies need to be used constructively and effectively, a combination of educational and entertainment programs. Additional

resources have to be invested to improve registration of births and marriage. It is very important to make the birth and marriage registration systems simpler, accessible and easy to use, especially in rural areas. The child marriage prevention law and compulsory registration of all births and marriage need to be strictly enforced and punitive measures against those who violate the laws or commit an act of violence against women need to be made more stringent.

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## Questionnaires & Check-list

### Questionnaires & Check-list in English

#### Questionnaire Set: A

#### For the person who saved from child marriage through mobile court operation

#### (Demand side/service recipient)

Serial No: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Upazilla: \_\_\_\_\_

1. Name: .....

2. Sex:  Male  Female

3. Age: ..... Years

4. Educational background:

Upto HSC  Upto SSC  Upto Primary school  Below Primary   
Illiterate

5. Occupation: .....

6. Do you think early marriage is good and beneficial?

Good  Not good

If good, please mention the reason.

Ans. ....

If not good, please mention the reason.

.....

7. Do you think child marriage is a social curse?

Yes

No

If yes, please mention the reason.

Ans. ....

If no, please mention the reason.

Ans. ....

8. What was your age when your guardian attempted to settle your marriage?

Ans.

9. Do you know the permitted minimum age for marriage in Bangladeshi law?

Yes

No

If yes, please mention the permitted minimum age.

For male ..... years  
years

For female .....

10. Did you agree with the early marriage initiative taken by your guardian?

Yes  No

If yes, please mention the reason.

Ans. ....

If no, please mention the reason.

Ans. ....

11. What was your feeling when your marriage being stopped?

Very Happy  Happy  Very Sad  Sad

12. Do you make amnestied your guardian for taking initiative of early marriage?

Yes  No

13. What was the reason behind the initiative of your marriage?

Poverty  Illiteracy  Social insecurity  
 Eve teasing  Family Pressure  Religious bindings  
 Others (please mention) ....

14. Do you ever heard about mobile court operation or mobile court act-2009 before your marriage initiative?

- Yes             No

15. How do you informed about mobile court operation, especially on child marriage issue?

- From meeting             From seminar             Through miking and poster  
 From student council    From educational institutions    others (please mention)  
....

16. How did you communicate with the competent executive magistrate court to conduct mobile court to stop your marriage?

17. Do you ever heard about the law “child marriage restraint act-1929”.

- Yes             No

18. Do you think except **mobile court** child marriage could be possible to stop by other initiatives or mechanism?

- Yes             No

19. Do you think stoppage of your marriage through mobile court is beneficial for you?

- Yes             No

20. Do you think that your guardian become hopeless and anxious towards mobile court for stoppage of your marriage?

21. Do you think mobile court act-2009 is an effective tool to stop child marriage?

22. Do you think mobile court act-2009 is a

- Coercive act       People friendly act

23. What is your suggestion to stop child marriage?

24. What is your suggestion to make mobile court operation more effective, especially on child marriage issue?

*Thanks for your valuable time and information. Your information will be used for academic purpose. Thanks for your cooperation.*

**Questionnaires & Check-list**  
**Questionnaires & Check-list in English**

**Questionnaire Set: B**

**For the person who involved in mobile court operation to stop child marriage**

**(Supply side/service recipient)**

Serial No: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Upazilla: \_\_\_\_\_

1. Name (optional).....

2. Designation: .....

3. How long are you been here? .....

4. Do you think child marriage is a social curse?

Yes

No

If yes, please mention the reason.

Ans. ....

If no, please mention the reason.

Ans. ....

5. Do you think that Isshorganj Upazilla is a child marriage prone Upazilla?

- Yes  No

6. If yes, please mention the cause higher rate of child marriage in this upazilla.

Cause	Explanation

7. At present, what is the status of this Upazilla regarding child marriage?

- High rate of child marriage  Moderate rate of child marriage  
 Low rate of child marriage  Child marriage free Upazilla

8. What factors and forces bring the change regarding child marriage? Please mention with percentage.

Factors and forces	Percentage (Total 100%)
Mobile court	
Initiatives of UNO in terms of administrative action	
Local leaders' positive role	
Awareness of guardians	
Reducing poverty	
Social change/socio economic development	
Facilitated Primary and secondary education	

9. Do you involved in mobile court operation?

- Yes  No

10. If yes, what is your role in conducting mobile court?

- Executive Magistrate  Law enforcing agency  Prosecutor  Plaintiff  Witness

11. Do you think mobile court is the most vital cause/factor to retrain the propensity of child marriage?

- Yes  No

12. Do you think people are informed about the law “mobile court act 2009”?

- Fully informed  Partially informed  Just heard  Not ever heard

13. Do you think people viewed mobile court as an effective tool against Child marriage?

- Yes  No

14. Do you think people consider/treat mobile court act -2009 as a

- People friendly act  Coercive act

15. Do you get any support from local leaders while conducting mobile courts on child marriage? Please mention.

16. Do you think service seekers (Childs) are benefitted by mobile court?

17. What are the challenges of mobile court operation to stop child marriage? Please mention.

18. Do you think continuous mobile court operation will able to keep Isshorganj Upazilla child marriage free?

Yes

No

19. What is your suggestion to make the mobile court operation successful in the issue of child marriage?

20. Do you observe any loop hole or drawbacks in mobile court act-2009? Please mention.

21. Do you observe any loop hole or drawbacks in child marriage restraint act-1929? Please mention

*Thanks for your valuable time and information. Your information will be used for academic purpose. Thanks for your cooperation.*

**Questionnaires & Check-list**  
**Questionnaires & Check-list in English**

**Questionnaire Set: C**

**Questionnaire for related stakeholders in marriage and mobile court**  
**(Political leaders, Local government leaders, Kazi, Teachers, Representative of student council, journalist and civil society)**

Serial No: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Dwelling place/Upazilla: \_\_\_\_\_

1. Name (optional).....

2. Designation: .....

3. How long are you been here? .....

4. Do you think child marriage is a social curse?

Yes

No

If yes, please mention the reason.

Ans. ....

If no, please mention the reason.

Ans. ....

5. Do you think that Isshorganj Upazilla was a child marriage prone Upazilla?

- Yes  No

6. If yes, please mention the cause of higher rate of child marriage in this upazilla.

Cause	Percentage (Total 100%)
Poverty	
Illiteracy	
Social insecurity	
Eve teasing	
Family Pressure	
Religious bindings	
Others (please mention) ....	

7. At present, what is the status of this Upazilla regarding child marriage?

- High rate of child marriage  Moderate rate of child marriage  
 Low rate of child marriage  Child marriage free Upazilla

8. What factors and forces bring the change regarding child marriage? Please mention with percentage.

Factors and forces	Percentage (Total 100%)
Mobile court	
Initiatives of UNO in terms of administrative action	
Local leaders positive role	
Awareness of guardians	
Reducing poverty	

Social change/socio economic development	
Facilitated Primary and secondary education	

9. Do you know the permitted minimum age of marriage in Bangladeshi law?

- Yes  No

If yes, please mention the permitted minimum age.

- For male ..... years  For female ..... years

10. How do you informed about mobile court operation, especially on child marriage issue?

- From meeting  From seminar  Through miking and poster
- From student council  From educational institutions  Others (please mention) ....

11. Do you think mobile court is the most vital cause/factor to retrain the propensity of child marriage?

- Yes  No

12. Do you think people are informed about the law “mobile court act 2009”?

- Fully informed  Partially informed  Just heard  Not ever heard

13. Do you think people viewed mobile court as an effective tool against child marriage?

- Yes  No

14. Do you think people consider/treat mobile court act -2009 as a

Society friendly act

Coercive act

15. Do you think stoppage of child marriage through mobile court is beneficial for society?

Yes

No

16. Do you ever heard about the law “child marriage restraint act-1929”.

Yes

No

17. What are the challenges of mobile court operation to stop child marriage? Please mention.

18. Do you think continuous mobile court operation will able to keep Isshorganj Upazilla child marriage free?

Yes

No

19. What is your suggestion to make the mobile court operation make more successful in the issue of child marriage?

20. Do you satisfied about the role of executive magistrates (UNO, AC land and assistant commissioner) in conducting mobile court on child marriage?

*Thanks for your valuable time and information. Your information will be used for academic purpose. Thanks for your cooperation.*

প্রশ্নপত্র এবং চেকলিস্ট

প্রশ্নপত্র এবং চেকলিস্ট (বাংলায়)

প্রশ্নপত্র সেট-ক

বাল্য বিবাহের অভিশাপ থেকে মোবাইল কোর্টের মাধ্যমে যারা সুরক্ষা পেয়েছে তাদের জন্য প্রণীত প্রশ্নপত্র

(সেবা গ্রহীতাদের জন্য)

ক্রমিক নং: \_\_\_\_\_

তারিখ : \_\_\_\_\_

উপজেলা : \_\_\_\_\_

১। নাম : .....

২। লিঙ্গ :  পুরুষ  মহিলা

৩। বয়স : ..... বছর

৪। শিক্ষাগত যোগ্যতা :

এইচ.এস.সি পর্যন্ত  এস.এস.সি পর্যন্ত  পঞ্চম শ্রেণী পর্যন্ত  পঞ্চম শ্রেণীর নিচে  অশিক্ষিত

৫। পেশা : .....

৬। আপনি কি মনে করেন বাল্য বিবাহ ভাল এবং উপকারী?

ভাল  ভাল নয়

যদি ভাল হয়, তাহলে কারন উল্লেখ করুন।

উত্তর : .....

যদি ভাল না হয়, তাহলে কারন উল্লেখ করুন।

উত্তর : .....

৭। আপনি কি মনে করেন, বাল্য বিবাহ একটি সামাজিক অভিশাপ?

হ্যাঁ  না

যদি হ্যাঁ হয়, তাহলে কারন উল্লেখ করুন।

উত্তর : .....

যদি না হয়, তাহলে কারন উল্লেখ করুন।

উত্তর : .....

৮। আপনার অভিভাবক যখন আপনার বিবাহের উদ্যোগ গ্রহন করে তখন আপনার বয়স কত ছিল?

উত্তর : .....

৯। বাংলাদেশের আইনে বিবাহের জন্য ন্যূনতম অনুমোদিত বয়স কত? আপনি তা জানেন কি?

হ্যাঁ  না

যদি জানেন তবে অনুমোদিত বয়স উল্লেখ করুন।

পুরুষের জন্য ..... বছর  মহিলাদের জন্য ..... বছর

১০। বাল্য বয়সে আপনার বিবাহের উদ্যোগকে কি আপনি সমর্থন করেছিলেন?

হ্যাঁ  না

যদি হ্যাঁ হয়, তাহলে কারন উল্লেখ করুন।

উত্তর : .....

যদি না হয়, তাহলে কারন উল্লেখ করুন।

উত্তর : .....

১১। বাল্য বয়সে আপনার বিবাহের উদ্যোগ ভেঙ্গে গেলে আপনার অনুভূতি কেমন ছিল?

খুব খুশী  খুশী  খুব দুঃখিত  দুঃখিত

১২। বাল্য বয়সে আপনার বিবাহের উদ্যোগ গ্রহণের জন্য আপনি কি অভিভাবকদের দায়ী করেন?

হ্যাঁ  না

১৩। আপনার বিবাহের উদ্যোগ গ্রহণের পিছনে কারন কি ছিল?

দারিদ্র্য  অশিক্ষা  সামাজিক অনিরাপত্তা  ইভ টিজিং

পারিবারিক চাপ  ধর্মীয় বাধ্যবাধকতা  অন্যান্য (যদি থাকে)

১৪। আপনার বিবাহের উদ্যোগ গ্রহণের পূর্বে আপনি কখনও মোবাইল কোর্ট অভিযান বা মোবাইল কোর্ট আইন-২০০৯

সম্পর্কে শুনেছেন বা জানতেন?

হ্যাঁ  না

১৫। বাল্য বিবাহ প্রতিরোধের জন্য মোবাইল কোর্ট অভিযান করা হয় – বিষয়টি আপনি কিভাবে জানলেন?

সভার মাধ্যমে  সেমিনারের মাধ্যমে  মাইকিং ও পোস্টারের মাধ্যমে  
 স্টুডেন্ট কাউন্সিলের মাধ্যমে  শিক্ষা প্রতিষ্ঠানের মাধ্যমে  অন্যান্য (যদি থাকে)

১৬। দায়িত্ব প্রাপ্ত এক্সিকিউটিভ ম্যাজিস্ট্রেট কর্তৃক মোবাইল কোর্টের মাধ্যমে বাল্য বিবাহ বন্ধের জন্য আপনি কিভাবে যোগাযোগ করেছিলেন?

উত্তর :

১৭। আপনি কি কখনও “বাল্য বিবাহ প্রতিরোধ আইন ১৯২৯” সম্পর্কে শুনেছেন বা জানতেন?

হ্যাঁ  না

১৮। আপনি কি মনে করেন মোবাইল কোর্ট ছাড়া অন্য কোন উদ্যোগ বা প্রক্রিয়ায় আপনার বিবাহ বন্ধ করা সম্ভব হত?

হ্যাঁ  না

১৯। মোবাইল কোর্টের মাধ্যমে আপনার বাল্য বয়সের বিবাহ বন্ধ করায় আপনি কি উপকৃত হয়েছেন?

হ্যাঁ  না

২০। আপনার বিবাহ বন্ধ হওয়ায় আপনার অভিভাবক কি মোবাইল কোর্টের প্রতি আশাহত ও রাগান্বিত হয়েছিলো বলে মনে করেন?

উত্তর :

২১। আপনি কি মনে করেন “মোবাইল কোর্ট আইন-২০০৯” বাল্য বিবাহ বন্ধে একটি কার্যকরী ব্যবস্থা/আইন?

উত্তর :

২২। আপনি কি মনে করেন, মোবাইল কোর্ট আইন-২০০৯ একটি-

নিপীড়নমূলক আইন       জনবান্ধব আইন

২৩। বাল্য বিবাহ বন্ধে আপনার পরামর্শ কি?

উত্তর :

২৪। বাল্য বিবাহ বন্ধের জন্য মোবাইল কোর্ট অভিযানকে কিভাবে আরও বেশী সফল ও কার্যকরী করা যায়?

উত্তর :

আপনার সহযোগিতার জন্য ধন্যবাদ।

প্রশ্নপত্র এবং চেকলিস্ট

প্রশ্নপত্র এবং চেকলিস্ট (বাংলায়)

প্রশ্নপত্র সেট-গ

বিবাহ ও মোবাইল কোর্টের সাথে সম্পৃক্ত পক্ষ ও ব্যক্তিবর্গের জন্য

(রাজনৈতিক নেতৃবৃন্দ, স্থানীয় সরকারের নেতৃবৃন্দ, কাজী, শিক্ষক, স্টুডেন্ট কাউন্সিলের প্রতিনিধি, সাংবাদিক ও সিভিল

সোসাইটি)

ক্রমিক নং : \_\_\_\_\_

তারিখ : \_\_\_\_\_

আবাসস্থল/উপজেলা: \_\_\_\_\_

১। নাম : .....

২। পদবী : .....

৩। আপনি কত বছর যাবৎ এখান বাস করেন?

উত্তর :

৪। আপনি কি মনে করেন বাল্য বিবাহ একটি অভিশাপ?

হ্যাঁ  না

যদি হ্যাঁ হয়, তাহলে কারন উল্লেখ করুন।

উত্তর : .....

যদি না হয়, তাহলে কারন উল্লেখ করুন।

উত্তর : .....

৫। আপনি কি মনে করেন ঈশ্বরগঞ্জ উপজেলা একটি বাল্য বিবাহ প্রবণ উপজেলা?

হ্যাঁ  ন

৬। যদি হ্যাঁ হয়, তবে এ উপজেলায় বাল্য বিবাহের উচ্চ হারের কারন উল্লেখ করুন।

কারন সমূহ	শতকরা হার (মোট ১০০%)
দারিদ্র্য	
অশিক্ষা	
সামাজিক অনিরাপত্তা	
ইভ টিজিং	
পারিবারিক চাপ	
ধর্মীয় বাধ্যবাধকতা	

অন্যান্য (যদি থাকে)	
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৭। বর্তমানে বাল্য বিবাহের ক্ষেত্রে এ উপজেলার পরিস্থিতি কি?

- বাল্য বিবাহের উচ্চ হার  বাল্য বিবাহের মাঝারী হার
- বাল্য বিবাহের নিম্নহার  বাল্য বিবাহমুক্ত উপজেলা

৮। কি কি কারণ ও উদ্যোগ বাল্য বিবাহ রোধে কার্যকরী?

কারণ ও উদ্যোগ	শতকরা হার (মোট ১০০%)
মোবাইল কোর্ট	
উপজেলা নির্বাহী অফিসারের প্রশাসনিক উদ্যোগ	
স্থানীয় নেতৃবৃন্দের ইতিবাচক ভূমিকা	
অভিভাবকদের সচেতনতা	
দারিদ্র্যহ্রাস	
সামাজিক ও অর্থনৈতিক পরিবর্তন	
সুবিধায়ুক্ত প্রাথমিক ও মাধ্যমিক শিক্ষা	

৯। বাংলাদেশী আইনে বিবাহের অনুমোদিত ন্যূনতম বয়স কত? আপনি জানেন কি?

- হ্যাঁ  না

যদি হ্যাঁ হয়, তাহলে অনুমোদিত বয়স উল্লেখ করুন।

পুরুষের জন্য ..... বছর  মহিলাদের জন্য ..... বছর

১০। বাল্য বিবাহ প্রতিরোধের জন্য মোবাইল কোর্ট অভিযান করা হয় – বিষয়টি আপনি কিভাবে জানলেন?

সভার মাধ্যমে  সেমিনারের মাধ্যমে  মাইকিং ও পোস্টারের মাধ্যমে

স্টুডেন্ট কাউন্সিলের মাধ্যমে  শিক্ষা প্রতিষ্ঠানের মাধ্যমে  অন্যান্য (যদি থাকে)

১১। আপনি কি মনে করেন মোবাইল কোর্টের কারনেই বাল্য বিবাহের প্রবণতা কমেছে?

হ্যাঁ  না

১২। আপনি কি মনে করেন, মোবাইল কোর্ট আইন-২০০৯ সম্পর্কে জনগণ অবহিত?

সম্পূর্ণ অবহিত  আংশিক অবহিত  শুধুমাত্র জানে  কখনোই শুনেনি

১৩। বাল্য বিবাহ প্রতিরোধে মোবাইল কোর্ট আইন কি একটি কার্যকরী আইন?

উত্তর :

১৪। আপনি কি মনে করেন মোবাইল কোর্ট আইন-২০০৯ একটি-

নীপিড়ন মূলক আইন  জনবান্ধব আইন

১৫। মোবাইল কোর্টের মাধ্যমে বাল্য বিবাহ বন্ধের বিষয়টি কি সমাজের জন্য উপকারী?

হ্যাঁ  না

১৬। আপনি কি কখনও “বাল্য বিবাহ প্রতিরোধ আইন ১৯২৯” সম্পর্কে জেনেছেন?

হ্যাঁ  না

১৭। মোবাইল কোর্টের মাধ্যমে বাল্য বিবাহ বন্ধের চ্যালেঞ্জ সমূহ কি?

উত্তর :

১৮। আপনি কি মনে করেন, নিরবিচ্ছিন্ন মোবাইল কোর্ট অপারেশনের মাধ্যমে ঈশ্বরগঞ্জ উপজেলাকে বাল্য বিবাহ যুক্ত রাখা

সম্ভব?

হ্যাঁ  না

১৯। বাল্য বিবাহ বন্ধে মোবাইল কোর্ট অপারেশনকে আরও বেশী কার্যকরী করতে আপনার মতামত কি?

উত্তর :

২০। আপনি কি বাল্য বিবাহ বন্ধের জন্য মোবাইল কোর্ট পরিচালনায় এন্সিকিউটিভ ম্যাজিস্ট্রেটগণের (ইউএনও, সহঃ

কমিশনার ভূমি ও সহকারী কমিশনার) ভূমিকায় সন্তুষ্ট?

উত্তর :

**আপনার সহযোগিতার জন্য ধন্যবাদ।**