



**IMPACT OF COVID-19  
ON  
INDIAN SOCIETY:  
CHALLENGES & OPPORTUNITIES**

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# Impact of Lockdown on Girl Child Marriages: The West Bengal Scenario

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## Abstract

A child is a human being below the age of eighteen years. The family is the primary agent of socialization and the 'care giving unit' of a child. In the family, a child lives freely, feels safe and protected from abuse and exploitation. However, sometimes the family becomes the offender in a child's life, especially in case of a girl child. The status of a girl child continues to be a fundamental question for the Indian society. In an Indian family girls grow up looking upon themselves as inferior and subservient and as a 'burden' and a 'liability' to the parents and so they are married off quickly at an early age.

In India, out of around 120 million adolescent girls, 12 million girls get married every year. This figure rose further from the month of March 2020, after the global outbreak of COVID-19 and the subsequent imposition of the lockdown.

Here in this paper, I would like to take up this problem of girl child marriage, and discuss how during the lockdown it emerged as one of the concerning issues by reviewing the scenario of West Bengal.

**Keywords:** *Child, girl child, girl child marriage, Indian family*

## Introduction

A social problem is a situation confronting a group or a section of society which inflicts injurious consequences that can be handled only collectively. The status of a child, especially girl child, constitutes an important problem in most parts of India and has emerged as a fundamental question for the Indian society.

The question arises that who is a child? A child is any human being below the age of eighteen years (The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child). The concept of childhood is attached with a child which everyone has to pass through. It is the time for the children to be in school and to play with friends, to grow strong and confident with the love and encouragement of their family and an extended community of caring adults. It is a precious time in which they live freely, feel safe and protected from abuse and exploitation. So, it is the space between birth and the attainment of adulthood.

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