

Shared Challenges and Opportunities in Ending Child Marriage in South Asia: The Case of India and Bangladesh

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Abstract

This research seeks to explain shared challenges and opportunities in ending the high rate of child marriage in two South Asian countries, namely India and Bangladesh. Both countries are listed with the highest absolute numbers of child marriage in the world with 15.6 million and 4.4 million cases respectively recorded in 2019. By analyzing 20 papers published in the last 10 years, this study identifies a couple of similarities in factors that drive the prevalence of child marriage in India and Bangladesh. Studies pointing to the importance of government and non-government interventions as well as the efforts in improving education as strategies to combat the trend of underage marriage. The findings offer generalizability to the wider region and beyond. It is also important to note that some policy recommendations can be applicable to be implemented in countries with similar socioeconomic status.

Keywords

Child marriage, Bangladesh, India, developing countries, South Asia.

Biographies

Farah Salsabila Firdaus attained her bachelor's degree in International Relations from the Bina Nusantara (Binus) University, Jakarta, Indonesia. Her research interests centered on child marriage and comparative studies.

Ella S. Prihatini teaches International Relations at Bina Nusantara (Binus) University, Jakarta, Indonesia. She received her PhD in political science and international relations from the University of Western Australia (UWA). She holds a BA in International Relations (University of Gadjah Mada/UGM, Yogyakarta) and Master of Development Practice (University of Queensland/UQ, Brisbane). Her research interests focus on women's political participation, digital diplomacy, comparative studies, and electoral politics in Indonesia. She also serves as an honorary research fellow at the University of Western Australia (UWA), Perth.