

Professional Stakeholders' Perceptions of Child Marriage in Lebanon among Syrian Refugees

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WHY IS THIS RESEARCH IMPORTANT?

- Ongoing crises such as displacement of people, the COVID-19 pandemic, and increasing poverty rates continue to exacerbate child marriage in some nations despite previous successes at decreasing child marriage rates
- Child marriage was deemed by international treaties to be a violation of human rights and a profoundly damaging practice to children that perpetuates other harmful practices.
- Syrian refugees in Lebanon (1.5 million) who fled the war in Syria brought the practice of child marriage with them thus increasing the rates of child marriage within the borders of Lebanon.
- It is important to understand the professional stakeholders' perception of child marriage in Lebanon and explore the gaps between perceptions and interventions.

HOW WAS THIS RESEARCH CONDUCTED?

- Face to Face, in-depth semi-structured interviews were conducted with professional stakeholders.
- Among the 28 participants interviewed were social workers, social service agency directors and coordinators, religious leaders, lawyers, refugee service employees, government officials and international human rights NGOs.
- Inclusion criteria were that stakeholders were professionals who have offices in Lebanon and who have an interest in the child marriage practice within their professional positions.
- The interpretive Description (ID) methodological approach was used.
- Document analysis was conducted, field notes were recorded, and reflexive journaling was carried out to provide a dataset of reflections during the research process.

WHAT WERE THE KEY FINDINGS?

- Poverty and financial burden of girls are major causal pathways to child marriage among refugees.
- Due to the conflict in Syria and the unsafe conditions of the refugee camps, the risk of sexual violence, rape, and kidnapping increased leading child marriage to become a coping mechanism to uphold girls' dignity and protect family honor.
- Religious beliefs and cultural norms were cited as leading causal pathways to child marriage.
- The lack of awareness about the risks associated with child marriage contributes to the perpetuation of this practice.
- There is a lack of alignment between the perceived causes of child marriage and the proposed or used interventions.

This research brief was created by the Hub for Engaged Action Research (HEAR) Lab at the University of Houston Graduate College of Social Work.

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Child marriage is a tragic human rights abuse that affects 600 million girls worldwide.

ACTION STEPS

Advocating for a minimum age of marriage law as well as the criminalization of child marriage in Lebanon in addition to focusing on educating girls.

Implementing efforts to alleviate poverty among the Syrian refugees in Lebanon as well as providing more safety especially in schools and en-route to schools.



CONTINUE READING

Full Article

doi.org/10.1016/j.childyouth.2022.106592

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