UTTAR PRADESH
CHILD MARRIAGE AND TEENAGE PREGNANCY

(AGE GROUP 15-19 YEARS)

FACTSHEET

Based on NFHS-4 (2015-16)

Introduction

In India, statistically, the incidence of child marriage has been declining slowly over time, but the number of girls and boys getting married before their respective legal age (18 years for girls and 21 years for boys) remains large with 12.1 million child marriages reported by Census of India, 2011 ("**Census 2011**"). The causes of child marriage are complex and varied, based on various customs and traditions across contexts, and remain rooted in existing socio-cultural norms.

> *" Encouraging and ensuring continuation of education of girls beyond the elementary level, delays their marriage."*
>
> *Young Lives, 2017*

Besides this, economic and regional factors play a significant role in determining the magnitude of child marriage. While Census 2011 allows us to investigate the incidence of child marriage, data from the National Family Health Survey 2015-16 ("**NFHS-4**") highlights prevalence[1] of child marriage. Though it is acknowledged that child marriage persists amongst both boys and girls, this factsheet analyses prevalence of child marriage and teenage pregnancy only amongst girls in the age group of 15-19 years in the State of Uttar Pradesh using NFHS-4 data. This factsheet also examines factors related to child marriage and teenage pregnancy at the State and district level.

National Statistics

An overall comparison at the national level of the prevalence of child marriage amongst 15-19-year-old girls between National Family Health Survey 2005-06 ("**NFHS-3**") and NFHS-4 shows a considerable decrease. The prevalence of child marriage as per NFHS-3 is 26.5% and as per NFHS-4, it has reduced to 11.9% (14.1% in rural areas and 6.9% in urban areas).

It is important to note that the prevalence of child marriage differs substantially across the States of India. As per NFHS-4, there are 12 States in India that show a higher prevalence of child marriage than the national average (11.9%). Furthermore, there are 13 States in India where more than 80% of the child marriages took place in rural areas (within their respective States), including Uttar Pradesh.

It is observed that at the national level, child marriage is more prevalent amongst girls from bottom wealth tercile households (16.6%) and least prevalent amongst girls belonging to the top wealth tercile households (5%). Similarly, educational level is also negatively associated with the prevalence of child marriage amongst girls of this age-group, i.e. higher the level of education, lower is the chance of child marriage.

Findings show that the completion of secondary education is much lower amongst married teenage girls than unmarried girls in the age group of 15-19 years across all States. Analysis related to teenage pregnancy reveals that 39.4% of child brides[2] aged 15-19 years have given birth to at least one child, with the highest prevalence in Goa (69.4%), Mizoram (65.6%) and Nagaland (65.5%).

[1.] Prevalence refers to "*the total number of individuals in a population who have a disease or health condition at a specific period of time, usually expressed as a percentage of the population*". Whereas, incidence refers to "*the number of individuals who develop a specific disease or experience a specific health-related event during a particular time period (such as a month or year)*". (School of Public Health. Prevalence and Incidence Defined. Retrieved from Harvard University)

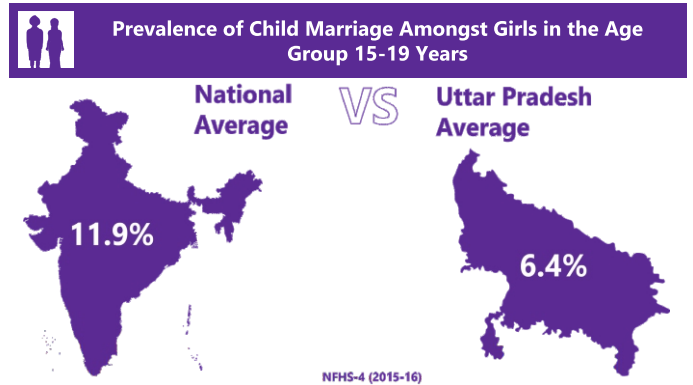[2.] Girls married before 18 years of age.

Uttar Pradesh

Uttar Pradesh is situated in the northern part of India. It is the fourth-largest State of India by area (240,928 km²) divided into 75 districts and supporting a population of 199.8 million. The literacy rate of the State stands at 69.7%[3].

Uttar Pradesh ranks 35th amongst all Indian States and Union Territories in the Human Development Index with a score of 0.596 in 2018[4]. The pace of poverty reduction in the State has been slower than the rest of the country.

Poverty is still widespread in the State, the central and eastern districts, in particular, have very high levels of poverty[5].

According to NFHS-4, 54% of households in Uttar Pradesh do not use sanitation facilities and only 11% have piped water in their dwelling/yard/plot(s). Of the total population of Uttar Pradesh, 11.4% is in the age group of 15-19 years and the overall infant and under-five mortality rates are 64 and 78 (per 1,000 live births), respectively.

Uttar Pradesh is amongst the top twenty States with a high prevalence of child marriage among girls aged

Prevalence of Child Marriage Amongst Girls in the Age Group 15-19 Years

National Average **VS** Uttar Pradesh Average

11.9%

6.4%

NFHS-4 (2015-16)

15-19 years at 6.4%, which is lower than the National average of 11.9%. In absolute numbers, this still amounts to large numbers of girls getting married. While there are a plethora of reasons why large numbers of young adolescents are married before the legal age, this factsheet does not examine causality and only provides descriptive analysis related to child marriage and teenage pregnancy amongst the girls in the age group of 15-19 years in Uttar Pradesh.

Child Marriage (District Level Findings)

Data collected from 71 districts[7] across Uttar Pradesh suggests that the prevalence of child marriage differs substantially across districts. While 28 districts have a higher prevalence of child marriage amongst girls aged 15-19 years than the State average (6.4%), 43 districts fall below this average. The districts with the highest prevalence of child marriages are Shrawasti (36.5%), Bahraich (26.7%), and Siddharth Nagar (23.1%), whereas lowest prevalence is found in Kanpur Nagar (1%).
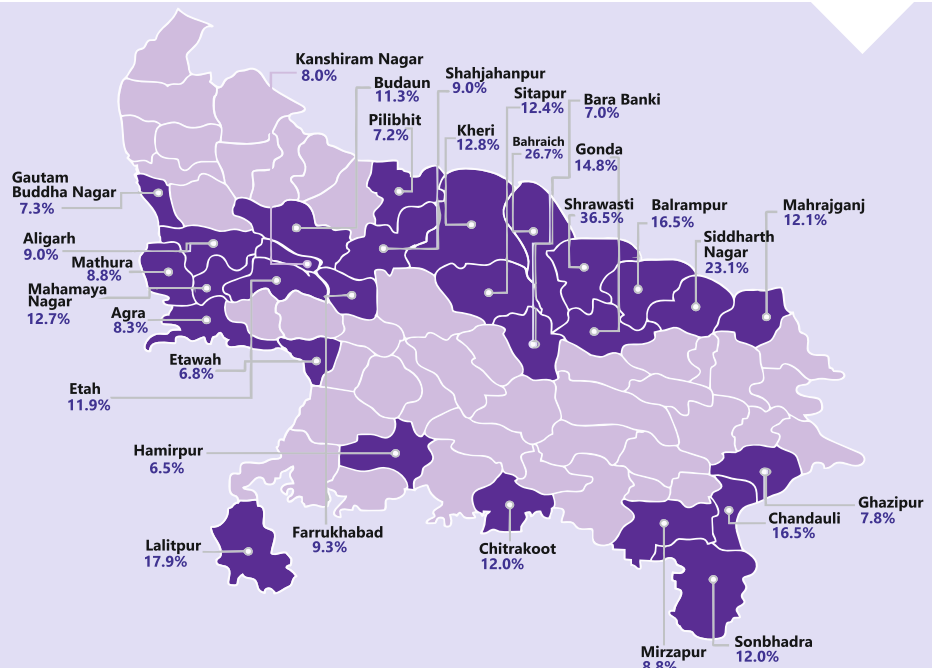

43 districts in Uttar Pradesh show higher prevalence of Child Marriage than the State Average of **6.4%**

Top Three Districts with the Highest Prevalence of child marriages in the 15-19 age group

Shrawasti **(36.5%)**

Bahraich **(26.7%)**

Siddharth Nagar **(23.1%)**

Kanshiram Nagar 8.0%
Budaun 11.3%
Shahjahanpur 9.0%
Sitapur 12.4%
Bara Banki 7.0%
Pilibhit 7.2%
Kheri 12.8%
Bahraich 26.7%
Gonda 14.8%
Gautam Buddha Nagar 7.3%
Shrawasti 36.5%
Balrampur 16.5%
Mahrajganj 12.1%
Aligarh 9.0%
Mathura 8.8%
Siddharth Nagar 23.1%
Mahamaya Nagar 12.7%
Agra 8.3%
Etawah 6.8%
Etah 11.9%
Hamirpur 6.5%
Ghazipur 7.8%
Chandauli 16.5%
Lalitpur 17.9%
Farrukhabad 9.3%
Chitrakoot 12.0%
Mirzapur 8.8%
Sonbhadra 12.0%

3. Government of Uttar Pradesh. (2016). *Social Demography.*
4. Radbound University. *Subnational Human Development Index (4.0).*
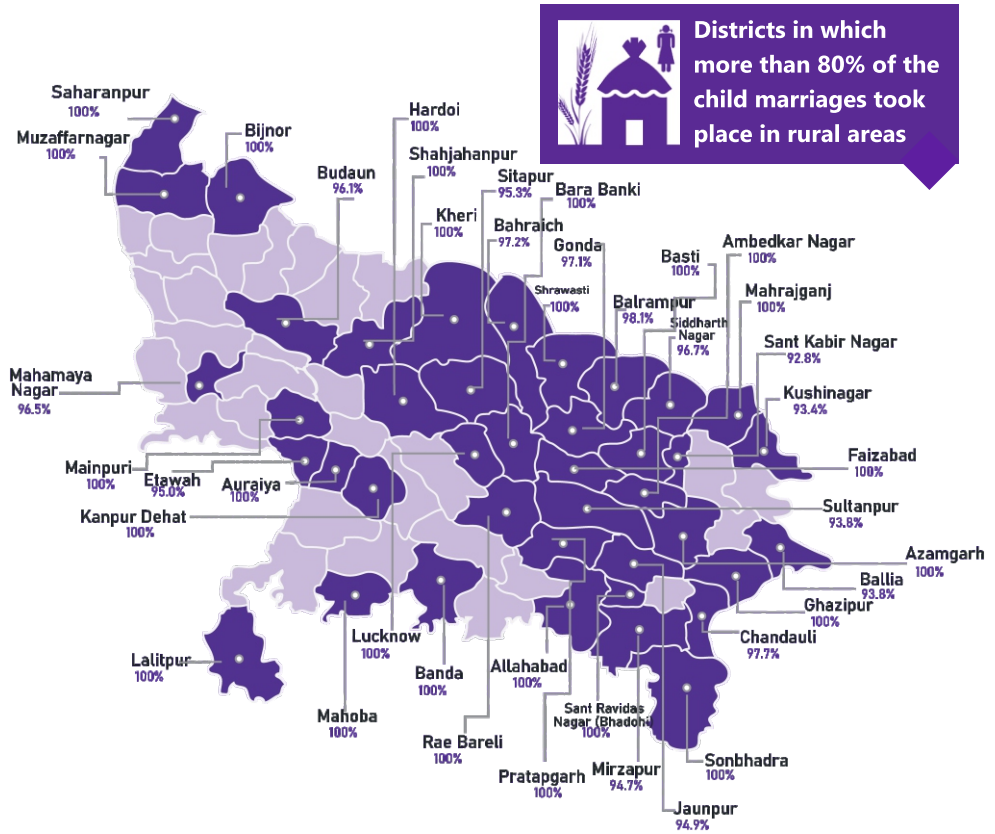5. The World Bank. (2016). *Uttar Pradesh: Poverty, Growth & Inequality.* The World Bank Group.
6. International Institute for Population Sciences (IIPS) and ICF. (2017). *National Family Health Survey (NFHS-4), India, 2015-16:* Uttar Pradesh. Mumbai: IIPS.
7. As the NFHS-4 sampling frame was based on Census 2011, the data is presented according to 71 districts, instead of the current 75 districts.

Location

Among all Indian States, Uttar Pradesh features at the fifth position with 91.1% of the child marriages in rural areas.

Findings reveal that the prevalence of child marriage in the age group of 15-19 years is significantly higher in rural areas across all districts of Uttar Pradesh, except Meerut (33.5%), Ghaziabad (36.7%) and Kanpur Nagar (36.9%). In 26 districts, all child marriages took place in rural areas. It is relevant to note that there are 13 States in India, where more than 80% of child marriages took place in rural areas. These findings are important, since any intervention or campaign planned to prevent child marriage in Uttar Pradesh must focus on rural areas, primarily.

Districts in which more than 80% of the child marriages took place in rural areas

Saharanpur 100%
Bijnor 100%
Muzaffarnagar 100%
Hardoi 100%
Budaun 96.1%
Shahjahanpur 100%
Sitapur 95.3%
Bara Banki 100%
Kheri 100%
Bahraich 97.2%
Gonda 97.1%
Basti 100%
Ambedkar Nagar 100%
Mahrajganj 100%
Shrawasti 100%
Balrampur 98.1%
Siddharth Nagar 96.7%
Sant Kabir Nagar 92.8%
Kushinagar 93.4%
Mahamaya Nagar 96.5%
Faizabad 100%
Sultanpur 93.8%
Mainpuri 100%
Etawah 95.0%
Auraiya 100%
Azamgarh 100%
Ballia 93.8%
Ghazipur 100%
Kanpur Dehat 100%
Chandauli 97.7%
Lalitpur 100%
Lucknow 100%
Banda 100%
Allahabad 100%
Sant Ravidas Nagar (Bhadohi) 100%
Mahoba 100%
Rae Bareli 100%
Sonbhadra 100%
Pratapgarh 100%
Mirzapur 94.7%
Jaunpur 94.9%

Wealth Index

Percentage of Girls in the Age Group 15-19 Years by Household Wealth Index

	Bottom Tercile	Middle Tercile	Top Tercile
Unmarried Girls	88.8	89.3	93.5
Girls Married before age 18	8.3	7.0	3.2

The relationship between child marriage amongst girls and household wealth index[8] is significantly strong. It is evident from the findings that girls from the poorest households are wealthier households. At State level, 8.3% of the girls aged 15-19 years from bottom wealth tercile households are married as child brides compared to 7% girls from the middle wealth tercile households and 3.2% from the top wealth tercile households

In nine districts more than 75% of the child marriages took place amongst the bottom wealth tercile households.

100% Fatehpur	88.7% Sonbhadra	87.8% Banda	80.2% Kheri	80.2 Shrawasti	79.8% Bahraich	78.3% Sitapur	77.9% Balrampur
77.6% Chitrakoot							

In four districts more than 70% of child marriages took place amongst the middle wealth tercile households.

79.2% Saharanpur	75.8% Gorakhpur	72.0% Jyotiba Phule Nagar	70.3% Lucknow

In four districts more than 60% of child marriages took place amongst the top wealth tercile households.

73% Ghaziabad	63.1% Kanpur Nagar	62.8% Bulandshahr	60.1% Meerut

These findings have immense policy implications, indicating that households across all wealth terciles must be addressed in order to reduce child marriage.

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[8] The wealth terciles are estimated based on the State level wealth index cut-offs to highlight the disparities within the State.

Educational Attainment

Education is essential for developing a sense of agency in young adults, especially in girls. It instils within them a confidence in their abilities and self-efficacy that can push them to achieve their goals. The established correlation between child marriage and the educational attainment of girls suggests that higher the level of education, lower is the chance of girls getting married before the legal age. In this context, the completion of secondary education amongst girls is found to be significant in delaying the age at marriage.
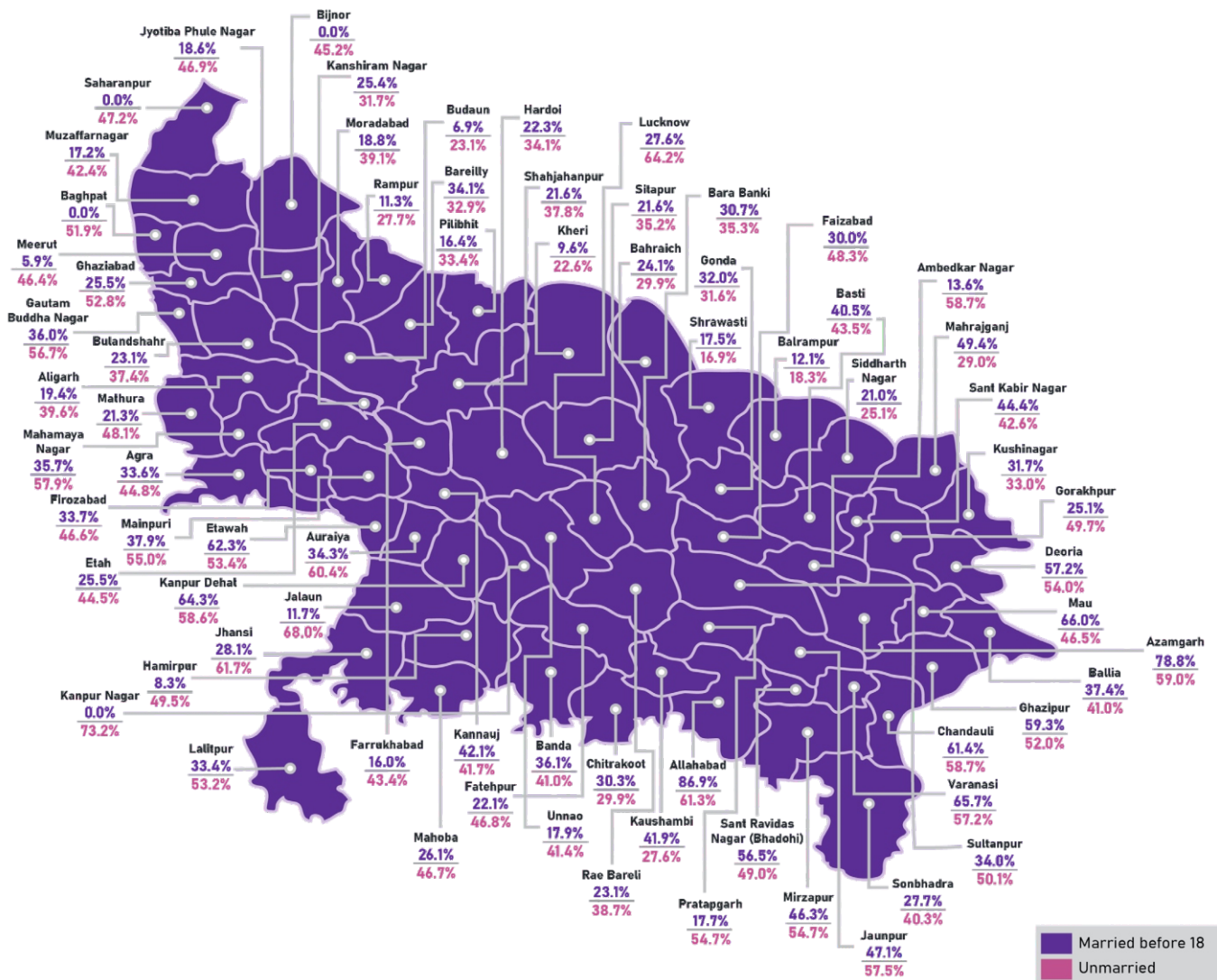
Findings show that the completion rate of secondary education is, generally, higher amongst unmarried girls (15-19 years) than married girls. Overall, in Uttar Pradesh, the secondary school completion rate amongst unmarried girls is 45 %, while it is 29.9% amongst girls married before the legal age. Considerable variation is noticed in this relation across districts. For example, in Kanpur Nagar district there is a wide gap in the secondary school completion rate amongst unmarried girls (73.2%) and girls married before the legal age (0%). Whereas, in Kushinagar district, a small difference is noticed in the secondary school completion rate amongst unmarried girls (33%) and girls married before the legal age (31.7%). Interestingly, in 18 districts, a higher proportion of girls married before the legal age had completed secondary education as compared to unmarried girls in the age group of 15-19 years. This finding requires further exploration and is beyond the scope of this factsheet.

Making secondary school completion a fundamental right, and ensuring girls from poor households are provided residential secondary schools may be considered as necessary steps to prevent early marriage in Uttar Pradesh.
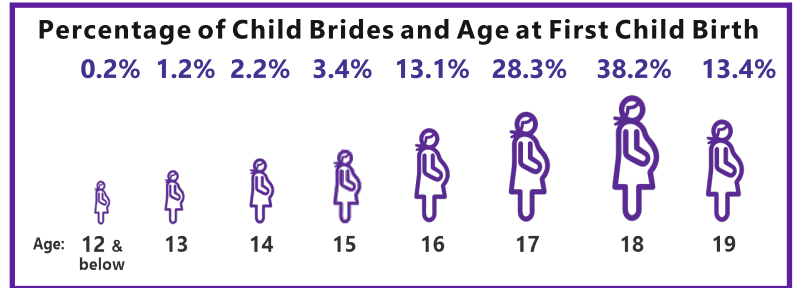
Completion of Secondary Education by Marital Status Among 15-19 Years Old Girls in Different Districts of Uttar Pradesh
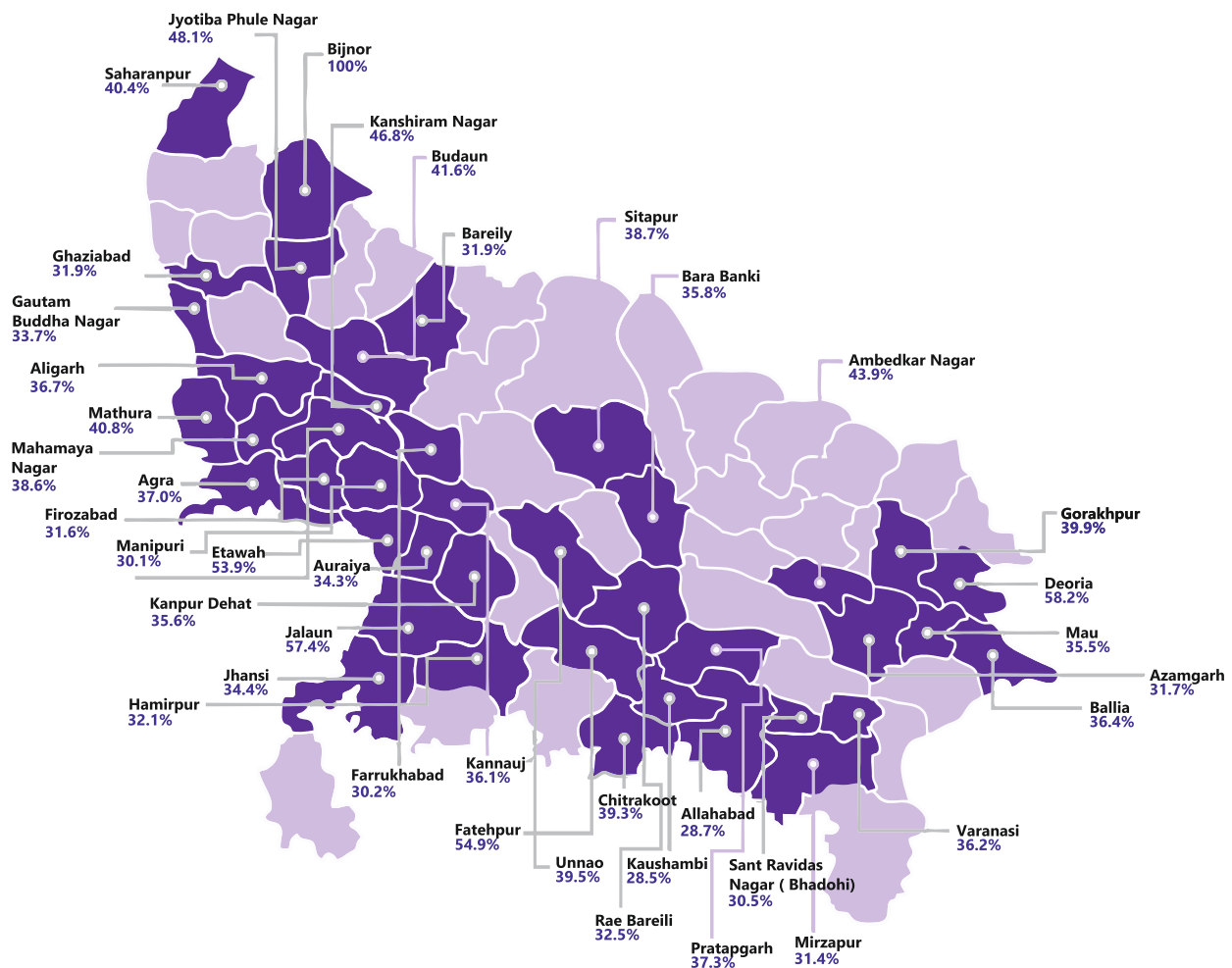
Pregnancy Amongst Child Brides

In the context of child marriage, it is important to study when these child brides gave birth to their first child. Research in this area has revealed that child marriage is associated with teenage pregnancy. Amongst girls married before the legal age in the age-group of 15-19 years in Uttar Pradesh, 28.2% of the child brides are found to have given birth to at least one child by age of 19 years, according to NFHS-4.

Percentage of Child Brides and Age at First Child Birth

0.2%	1.2%	2.2%	3.4%	13.1%	28.3%	38.2%	13.4%

Age: 12 & below, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19

Children Born to Child Brides

Further analysis of number of children born to child brides reveals that 24.4% of child brides had given birth to one child, while 3.5% had given birth to two children and less than one percent (0.3%) had given birth to more than two children by the age of 19 years.

Findings reveal that in 39 districts more than 30% of child brides have one child or more, with the highest prevalence in Bijnor (100%),followed by Deoria (58.2%) and Jalaun (57.4%).

Jyotiba Phule Nagar 48.1%
Saharanpur 40.4%
Bijnor 100%
Kanshiram Nagar 46.8%
Budaun 41.6%
Sitapur 38.7%
Ghaziabad 31.9%
Bareily 31.9%
Bara Banki 35.8%
Gautam Buddha Nagar 33.7%
Aligarh 36.7%
Ambedkar Nagar 43.9%
Mathura 40.8%
Mahamaya Nagar 38.6%
Agra 37.0%
Firozabad 31.6%
Gorakhpur 39.9%
Manipuri 30.1%
Etawah 53.9%
Auraiya 34.3%
Deoria 58.2%
Kanpur Dehat 35.6%
Mau 35.5%
Jalaun 57.4%
Azamgarh 31.7%
Jhansi 34.4%
Ballia 36.4%
Hamirpur 32.1%
Kannauj 36.1%
Farrukhabad 30.2%
Chitrakoot 39.3%
Allahabad 28.7%
Varanasi 36.2%
Fatehpur 54.9%
Unnao 39.5%
Kaushambi 28.5%
Sant Ravidas Nagar (Bhadohi) 30.5%
Rae Bareili 32.5%
Pratapgarh 37.3%
Mirzapur 31.4%

Girls' Body Mass Index

Analysis of Body Mass Index (BMI) shows that close to one-third of the child brides (33%) in the age group of 15-19 years in Uttar Pradesh are underweight (below 18.5 kg/m^2). There are 32 districts where underweight among child brides, in the age group of 15-19 years, is more than the State average. The highest prevalence of low BMI for girls married before the legal age is found in Saharanpur (100%).

Conclusion

- As per NFHS-4 (2015-16), 6.4% of the 15-19-year-old girls are married before the age of 18 years in Uttar Pradesh, with variations across districts.
- There are 28 districts in Uttar Pradesh that show a higher prevalence of child marriage than the State average.
- Prevalence of child marriage amongst girls is found to be more common in rural areas than in urban areas.
- Wealth index of the households is significantly related to child marriage amongst girls in Uttar Pradesh. Poorer the households, higher the chance of girls getting married early.
- Findings show that in 53 of the 71 districts the completion rate of secondary education is higher amongst unmarried girls aged 15-19 years.
- Higher level of education is, generally, associated with lower prevalence of child marriage.
- Child marriage leads to early pregnancy which may cause poor health status of both, mothers and the children.

CHILD MARRIAGE AND TEENAGE PREGNANCY IN UTTAR PRADESH AT A GLANCE

In **60 districts**, more than **80%** of the child marriages amongst girls took place in rural areas.

The completion rate of secondary education amongst girls (15-19 years) who got married before the legal age is **29 %**, whereas, the completion rate is significantly higher amongst unmarried girls, i.e. **45%**, of the same age group.

In **32 districts**, the prevalence of underweight (based on BMI data) amongst girls married before the legal age is more than the State average .

Of the child brides, **28.2%** had already given birth; **24.4%** had one child and **3.8%** had two or more children by the age of 19 years.

This factsheet has been prepared by Young Lives India, New Delhi.

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Photo Credit: Young Lives / Sarika