Using global data to examine child marriage, IPV and legal protection

Rachel Kidman, PhD

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Child and Early Marriage

- unintended pregnancy
- maternal and infant mortality
- sexually transmitted infections
Study Aim: Are women who enter into child marriages at increased risk of physical and/or sexual intimate partner violence?
Methods

• **Data source**
  – 34 Demographic and Health Surveys from 2005 and 2013
  – Must contain domestic violence module

• **Sample**
  – 59,157 women aged 20-24 years in domestic violence sample

• **Variables**
  – Age of marriage or cohabitation (<15, 15-17, 18+)
  – Past-year physical and/or sexual IPV

• **Analyses**
  – Logistic regression models restricted to 39,898 married/cohabitating women
Child Marriage & Past-year IPV

Physical
- Married <15 years: 26%
- Married 15-17 years: 26%
- Married 18+ years: 18%

Sexual
- Married <15 years: 10%
- Married 15-17 years: 9%
- Married 18+ years: 6%

Physical and/or Sexual
- Married <15 years: 29%
- Married 15-17 years: 29%
- Married 18+ years: 20%
Globally: strong and consistent associations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Model 1 (Unadjusted ORs)</th>
<th>Model 2 (Adjusted ORs)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Married &lt;15</td>
<td>Married 15-17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Past Year Physical IPV</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.62 (1.51-1.74)</td>
<td>1.55 (1.47-1.63)</td>
<td>1.43 (1.33-1.55)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Model 2 is adjusted for controlled for age, primary education, rural residence and wealth quintile.
Still (mostly) consistent by region...

### Model 2 (Adjusted ORs)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Region</th>
<th>Married &lt;15</th>
<th>Married 15-17</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Americas</td>
<td>1.78 (1.50-2.12)</td>
<td>1.51 (1.34-1.71)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>East Asia &amp; Pacific</td>
<td>2.88 (1.55-5.38)</td>
<td>1.58 (1.09-2.29)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Europe and Central Asia</td>
<td>1.70 (0.37-7.75)</td>
<td>1.91 (1.46-2.51)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South Asia</td>
<td>1.56 (1.37-1.79)</td>
<td>1.44 (1.30-1.60)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eastern and Southern Africa</td>
<td>1.31 (1.09-1.57)</td>
<td>1.42 (1.26-1.60)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>West and Central Africa</td>
<td>1.31 (1.12-1.52)</td>
<td>1.25 (1.11-1.40)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

...but greater variability by country

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Region</th>
<th>Past Year Physical and/or Sexual IPV</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>9 of 34 countries</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Past Year Physical and/or Sexual IPV
Disadvantage persists into adulthood

Model 2 (Adjusted ORs)
Married <15                  Married 15-17

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Cohort</th>
<th>Past Year Physical and/or Sexual IPV</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Age 20-24</td>
<td>1.41 (1.30-1.52)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age 25-29</td>
<td>1.18 (1.10-1.26)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age 30-34</td>
<td>1.09 (1.01-1.17)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age 35-39</td>
<td>1.17 (1.08-1.27)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Take Home

• Women who marry as children are more likely to experience physical and/or sexual IPV

• We still need to know what works to combat child marriage
  – Implementation and enforcement of laws?
  – Changing norms and values?
  – Expanding educational and economic opportunities?

• We still need to know how to protect those who marry early
  – Many of the above interventions may work to prevent IPV
National marriage laws: Necessary but not sufficient?

Rachel Kidman, Jody Heymann
Background

• International conventions have attached enormous importance to national marriage policies to combat child marriage

• This study was undertaken to evaluate the promise of minimum-age-of-marriage laws specifically
What is the minimum legal age of marriage for girls?

Source: WORLD Policy Analysis Center, Marriage Database, 2013
What is the minimum legal age of marriage for girls with parental consent?

Source: WORLD Policy Analysis Center, Marriage Database, 2013
What is the minimum legal age of marriage for girls when all exceptions are taken into account?

Source: WORLD Policy Analysis Center, Marriage Database, 2013

Note: This variable includes exceptions to the minimum age that permit earlier marriage with parental consent, under religious or customary law, with court or other government approval, and/or when a girl is pregnant or has given birth.
Study Aim

To quantify the causal impact of minimum-age-of-marriage laws on marriage before age 15 and before age 18.
Methods

• Data sources
  – Demographic and Health Surveys in sub-Saharan Africa
  – WORLD and MACHEquity databases with marriage policy for 1995-2014

• Sample
  – 100,226 women aged 20-24
  – 22 countries with repeated observations and no protective policy at the first observation

• Individual exposure to protective policy
  – 18+ as the minimum-age-of-marriage with no exceptions for parental consent
  – Based on the laws active when the girl turned 15

• Analyses
  – Multinomial fixed effects models, controlling for key covariates
  – Model 1 examined the impact of policy change across all countries; Model 2 used separate indicators for each country.
Weighted prevalence of child marriage among women 20-24 who turned 15 years old in the indicated year; countries experiencing a change in policy during the observation period (dotted line) are compared to those countries without a change (solid line). Arrows indicate year of policy change.
Multinomial fixed effects models predicting the impact of new policies on child marriage

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Model</th>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Married by 15 (RRR 95% CI)</th>
<th>Married by 15-17 (RRR 95% CI)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>All countries</td>
<td>0.97 (0.84 - 1.11)</td>
<td>1.06 (0.96 - 1.17)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Model 1</td>
<td>Benin</td>
<td>1.24 (1.00 - 1.55)</td>
<td>1.07 (0.91 - 1.25)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>DRC</td>
<td>1.04 (0.14 - 7.64)</td>
<td>0.74 (0.09 - 6.09)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Ethiopia</td>
<td>0.92 (0.71 - 1.19)</td>
<td>0.97 (0.78 - 1.20)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Namibia</td>
<td>1.17 (0.52 - 2.62)</td>
<td>1.15 (0.66 - 2.00)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Nigeria</td>
<td>1.08 (0.84 - 1.39)</td>
<td>1.24 (1.03 - 1.48)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sierra Leone</td>
<td>0.66* (0.50 - 0.89)</td>
<td>0.94 (0.76 - 1.15)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Take Home

• The passage of minimum-age-of-marriage laws alone is not enough to influence the deeply entrenched practice of child marriage

• Their potential may only be realized with greater attention to implementation and enforcement

• National policies that seek to address risk factors (eg, education) may have a more substantive impact on child marriage and its consequences
Thank you

Please feel free to contact me with questions:
  rachel.kidman@stonybrook.edu
Child Marriage: Percentage of Women Aged 20 to 24 Who Were First Married or in a Union Before Age 18

Based on DHS, MICS and other national household surveys.
Indian Data is from the 2005-2006 NFHS.