THE ROLE OF FAITH NORMS IN CHILD MARRIAGE

A CASE STUDY OF SELECTED AREAS IN MINDANAO, PHILIPPINES

WORLD VISION DEVELOPMENT FOUNDATION
AUGUST 2023

The role of faith norms in child marriage: A case study of selected areas in Mindanao, Philippines

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ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF FIGURES

LIST OF TABLES

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This research focuses on child marriage in Marawi and Cotabato located in Bangsamoro Region, an autonomous region in the Southern Philippines with a predominant Muslim population. The objectives are to understand perceptions and motivations behind the high prevalence of child marriage in the region, evaluate the influence of faith norms and religious leaders, and identify effective strategies to reduce child marriage in collaboration with World Vision Philippines and relevant stakeholders.

Key findings of the study are as follows:

- Children in certain communities, especially girls, face a significant risk of early marriage. Despite the perception of freedom of choice in marriage, there is a contradiction between this belief and the reality of early marriages.

- Despite the prevalence of strong religious commitment across various aspects, faith norms alone, do not endorse child marriage. In particular, higher levels of religiosity linked to faith beliefs, personal religious practices, intellectual interest in religion, and societal religiosity are associated with a greater understanding of the detrimental impacts of child marriage. This implies that individuals with stronger religious beliefs, active private religious practices, intellectual engagement with religion, or perception of heightened religiosity in their society are more likely to be aware of the harmful consequences of child marriage.

- In Marawi, child marriage is driven by religious, social, and cultural norms, aiming to reduce financial burden and safeguard family honor. In Cotabato, personal choices, aspirations, and circumstances influence child marriage prevalence. Recognizing these distinctions is vital for effective interventions in both regions.

- Child marriage is a complex issue influenced by various factors. While faith norms play a role, they are not the sole drivers behind it. Poverty, limited education, gender inequality, traditional customs, and legal frameworks all contribute to child marriage. To address this problem effectively, we need to consider and address these interconnected factors.

- Faith and religious leaders hold immense influence and are respected for their spiritual knowledge. Equipping them with an understanding of the consequences of early marriage allows them to guide their communities effectively. By promoting open discussions, this will encourage critical thinking and informed decision-making. Emphasising factors such as readiness and education helps individuals make better choices, leading to healthier relationships, stronger families, and societal prosperity.

- Assessments in Marawi and Cotabato revealed that Marawi is starting to take initiatives (stage 6) in preventing child marriage, while Cotabato is in the preparation stage (stage 5). Both communities recognize the role of faith but lack resources. Accessible resources and partnerships among community organisations, authorities, and religious leaders are needed to improve prevention.

The proposed recommendations enhance the relevance and applicability of the research findings in programming interventions aimed at addressing child marriage in the country, specifically within the context of the World Vision Development Foundation (WVDF) and its local stakeholders and partners. WVDF can enhance its programming interventions by prioritizing the value of this research and incorporating the following key activities:

Advocacy and awareness – An advocacy campaign on child marriage is essential. This initiative will raise awareness through community meetings, workshops, events, and media. It will emphasize prevention, highlight consequences, challenge social norms, and foster empowerment to prevent child marriage.

Parental dialogue initiative – This initiative will support peer counseling and knowledge sharing among parents to prevent child marriage. Through open discussions, parents exchange experiences, challenges, and explore preventive measures like education, empowerment, legal reforms, and community awareness. This will foster empathy, expand dialogue, and strengthen parents' commitment to prevent child marriage, influencing attitudes and practices.

Interfaith capacity building and training – Interfaith training programs will educate and empower religious leaders to combat child marriage by providing accurate information and fostering critical thinking. The training will cover legal frameworks, conventions, cultural beliefs, and dispel myths, while respecting diverse perspectives.

Utilizing visual media and social network platforms – This initiative will utilize documentaries, films, and social media platforms like Facebook, YouTube, and TikTok to raise awareness particularly among the youth (or at-risk population) about child marriage, sharing impactful stories and fostering support. Additionally, WVDF strives to inspire children and young individuals to become active participants in these endeavours, affording them opportunities to engage meaningfully and lend their voices and experiences. This collective effort is poised to bolster awareness and actions aimed at thwarting child marriage within their communities.

Youth employment training – This program will empower at-risk youth and young parents affected by child marriage through tailored initiatives, including employment training, entrepreneurship guidance, and job placements. It will aim to break the cycle of limited opportunities, creating self-sufficiency and positive community contributions.

1.1. Harnessing the transformative power of faith for child well-being

World Vision (WV) incorporates faith-based approaches into its programs, like Channels of Hope Child Protection (CoH CP) and Celebrating Families,[1] to transform beliefs, behaviors, and community norms. The aim is to empower individuals and communities to enhance child well-being and create a protective environment. Faith is central due to its transformative power, providing purpose and moral values. WV engages religious leaders and organizations, leveraging existing networks to raise awareness, educate, and empower individuals to actively protect children.

WV's previous research[2][3] with Queen Margaret University (QMU) and Coventry University demonstrated that their faith-based models can positively impact the protective environment of families and communities. However, there is still a lack of understanding regarding how faith contributes to community-level norm changes and its relationship with behavior change. To address this, WV launched a study on the role of faith in social and behavior change, aiming to develop the concept of "faith norms" and design tools for measuring them in the context of child well-being.

Child marriage was chosen as a case study due to: 1) existing research supporting the impact of CoH CP and CF on challenging norms and behavior, 2) strategic importance to WV's goals, and 3) existing measurement efforts in WV national offices. This allows World Vision to assess the effectiveness of CoH CP and CF in addressing child marriage. A pilot study was conducted in 2020 in Mozambique and Bangladesh. As a result, World Vision was able to develop a Faith Norms in Social and Behaviour Change (FNSBC) Tool.

In 2022, World Vision opted to introduce a tool in its selected Asian offices, including the Philippines, which agreed to participate in the study. The main purpose of this study is to further strengthen and validate the developed tool. The tool will be made field-ready for World Vision offices, enabling them to effectively assess the role of faith in their programming across various contexts. The study aims to enhance understanding of how faith influences their work and its impact in different settings.[4]

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[1] Channels of hope for child protection. Faith and Development. World Vision International. Available at: https://www.wvi.org/church-and-interfaith-engagement/channels-hope-child-protection#:~:text=The%20goal%20of%20Channels%20of,promote%20peace%20and%20overcome%20violence%3B (Accessed: May 17, 2023)
[2] Barrett, H & Niyonkuru, P. Jailobaeva, K., and Eyber, C. (2022). The Role of Faith Norms in Child Marriage: Bangladesh
[3] Eyber, C. and Kachale, B., Shields, T. and Ager, A. (2018). The role and experience of local faith leaders in promoting child protection: A Case Study from Malawi. Intervention, Vol. 16 (1). 31-37.
[4] Jailobaeva, K., Barrett, H., and Niyonkuru, Pascal. (2022). The Role of Faith Norms in Child Marriage: Mozambique

CHAPTER 2 | Context

2.1. Child marriage situation in the Philippines: An overview

Child marriage remains a significant concern in the East Asia and Pacific region, as indicated by the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) Global Database.[5] Countries such as Indonesia, the Philippines, and Thailand rank high in terms of the total number of girls involved in child marriages globally. In the Philippines, approximately 15 percent of Filipino girls, totaling 726,000 child brides, are married before the age of 18, with 2 percent marrying before the age of 15.

Disturbingly, a recent report[6] from the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) highlighted that the Philippines has seen limited progress in reducing the percentage of women married between the ages of 15 and 19 over the past five decades. In contrast, countries like the Republic of Korea and Indonesia have achieved substantial reductions in this aspect. This underscores the urgent need for targeted efforts and interventions in the Philippines to combat and diminish the prevalence of early marriage among women.

Figure 1. Women aged 20-24 years old who were married or in a union before 15 and before age 18 (%), UNICEF Global Database; DHS and MICS
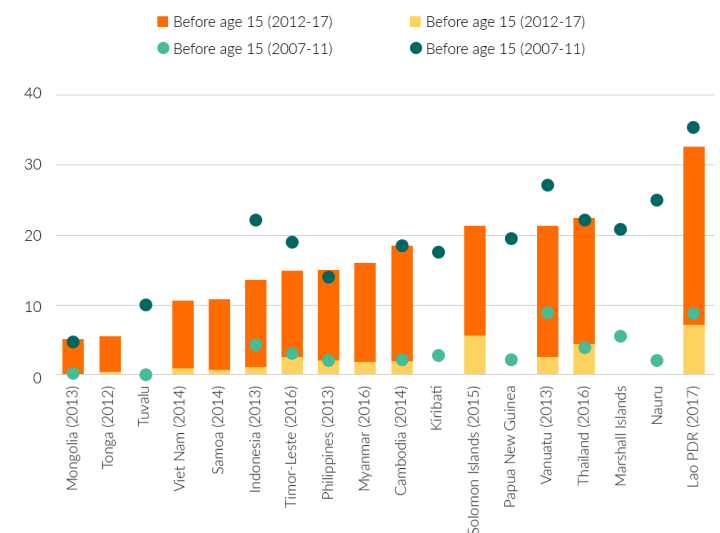
Source: UNICEF Global Database; DHS and MICS

2.1.1. PHILIPPINES IMPLEMENTS TOTAL BAN ON CHILD MARRIAGE

After extensive efforts by lawmakers and advocates, child marriage has been completely prohibited in the Philippines. In 2021, President Rodrigo Duterte signed a law that bans child marriage, aiming to safeguard children from abusive practices and unwanted responsibilities. The law, known as Republic Act No. 11596[7] or "An Act Prohibiting the Practice of Child Marriage and Imposing Penalties for Violations Thereof," was enacted on December 10, 2021 as per documents released by the Government of the Philippines.

According to this law, it is affirmed that marriage should only occur when both parties give their free and full

consent, and child[8] betrothal and marriage have no legal validity. If found guilty, public officials who violate this law can be dismissed from their positions and may face permanent disqualification from holding office, as determined by the courts.

The law treats the facilitation and solemnization of child marriage, as well as the cohabitation of an adult with a child outside of wedlock, as public offenses. This means that concerned individuals can initiate legal cases against the perpetrators. RA 11596 also repeals or modifies decrees and other measures inconsistent with the new law, including the Presidential Decree No. 1083,[9] also known as the Code of Muslim Personal Laws, Filipino Muslims which allowed child marriage for members of that faith, and the

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[5] Child Marriage and Teenage Pregnancy: Key issues in East Asia and the Pacific. UNICEF
[6] Empowering Maranao Girls against Child Marriage. 2019. UNFPA
[7a] Parrocha, A. (2022). Duterte signs aw criminalizing child marriage. Available at: https://www.pna.gov.ph/articles/1164695
[7b] Nicholls, A. (2022) IRR on law prohibiting child marriage signed, cnn. Available at: http://www.cnnphilippines.com/news/2022/12/7/irr-law-prohibiting-child-marriage.html (Accessed: 17 May 2023).
[8] *"Child"* refers to any person under eighteen (18) years of age, or any person eighteen (18) years of age or over but who is unable to fully take care and protect oneself from abuse, neglect, cruelty, exploitation or discrimination because of a physical or mental disability or condition. Section 3: Definition of Terms, Republic Act No. 11596: An Act Prohibiting The Practice of Child Marriage and Imposing Penalties for Violations thereof. Official Gazette of the Republic of the Philippines. Available at: https://www.officialgazette.gov.ph/downloads/2021/12dec/20211210-RA-11596-RRD.pdf (Accessed: 17 May 2023).
[9] Presidential decree no. 1083, S. 1977: Govph (1977) Official Gazette of the Republic of the Philippines. Available at: https://www.officialgazette.gov.ph/1977/02/04/presidential-decree-no-1083-s-1977-2/ (Accessed: 17 May 2023).

Indigenous Peoples Rights Act of 1997 or RA 8371[10] that issues Certificates of Tribal Marriages that sometimes involve minors and children.

Furthermore, Section 13 of the new law stipulates that any decrees that contradict this new measure are repealed or modified. After one (1) year of transitory period, in December 2022,[11] multiple government agencies, including the Department of Social Welfare and Development, Commission on Human Rights, Department of Justice, United Nations Population Fund, and Oxfam Philippines, jointly signed the implementing rules and regulations (IRR) for a new law that prohibits and penalizes child marriage.

As in other contentious pieces of legislation, the next challenge is its effective implementation. In the world of conflicting laws, the challenge now is to make them work well. Atty. Anna Tarhata Basman,[12] a Member of Parliament, talked about this issue on January 26, 2022, in response to a new law called RA 11596. She highlighted a key point: Many Muslim communities disagree with the law for two main reasons. First, they want BARMM to have the power to make decisions within its borders and even for people outside the region. Second, they want to make sure that everyone, no matter their religion, can freely practice their beliefs in our country.

It's important to know that the freedom of BARMM to make its own choices is not only written in the main law but also comes from years of fighting for the right to decide for themselves. This journey ended with an important agreement, the Comprehensive Agreement on the Bangsamoro,[13] and the creation of a government with a parliament. This idea is really important and shows up in many of BARRM's rules, laws, and decisions, even creating the idea of being fair and equal.

This defiance of the law's tenets became highly visible in a recent incident. Roughly a month after the Anti-Child Marriage law came into effect, members of the Bangsamoro Transition Authority (BTA) took a definitive position. There were reports[14] were a formal resolution has been released, entreating former President Rodrigo Duterte, beseeching him to withhold approval from a newly sanctioned measure aiming to prohibit child marriages. Additional reports indicate that certain BTA members have asserted that the Bangsamoro community collectively opposes the law, contending that child marriage holds cultural significance within the Muslim culture.

Nonetheless, the National Commission on Muslim Filipinos is one of the primary entities designated to carry out the implementation and promote public awareness of RA 11596. This undertaking is a collective endeavor, involving cooperation among governmental entities, civil society organizations, and representatives from indigenous groups, Muslim communities, as well as women and children.

2.1.2. CHALLENGING CHILD MARRIAGE NORMS IN BANGSAMORO AUTONOMOUS REGION IN MUSLIM MINDANAO (BARMM) AND INDIGENOUS COMMUNITIES

A recent survey conducted in 2017[15] found that around 16.5% of young women aged 20-24 in the Philippines were married before the age of 18. The organization Girls Not Brides, which works to end child marriages, reported[16] that the majority of these marriages take place in the Bangsamoro Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (BARMM), where women can legally marry at a very young age under the 1977 Code of Muslim Personal Laws in which Article 16[17] states that with regard to the provision of minimum age limits for marriage:

[10] Republic Act No. 8371: An Act to Recognize, Protect and Protect the Rights of Indigenous Cultural Communities /Indigenous Peoples, Creating a National Commission on Indigenous Peoples, Establishing, Implementing Mechanisms, Appropriating Funds therfore, and for other purposes. Official Gazette of the Republic Act of the Philippines. Available at: https://www.officialgazette.gov.ph/1997/10/29/republic-act-no-8371/ (Accessed: 17 May 2023)

[11] DSWD spearheads IRR signing of anti-child marriage law, Department of Social Welfare and Development. Available at: https://www.dswd.gov.ph/dswd-spearheads-irr-signing-of-anti-child-marriage-law/ (Accessed: 24 June 2023).

[12] Basman, A.T. (2022). Bangsamoro Speaks: On prohibiting the practice of child marriage: Questions of Autonomy and Religious Freedom. Mindanao Speaks: This is our Mindanao. Available at: https://www.mindanews.com/mindaviews/2022/01/bangsamoro-speaks-on-prohibiting-the-practice-of-child-marriage-questions-of-autonomy-and-religious-freedom/ (Accessed: 17 May 2023)

[13] Ching, M.P.R. (2018). The history and implications of the Bangsamoro Organic Law. CNN Philippines. Available at: https://www.cnnphilippines.com/life/culture/2018/08/21/bangsamoro-organic-law-essay.html (Accessed: 17 May 2023)

[14] Subingsubing, K. (2022). CHR slams Bangsamoro body for move vs anti-child marriage law. Inquirer.net. Available at: https://newsinfo.inquirer.net/1546734/chr-slams-bangsamoro-body-for-move-vs-antichild-marriage-law#ixzz8Aj69UeJr (Accessed: 17 May 2023)

[15] National Demographic and Health Survey. 2017. Philippine Statistics Authority

[16] Empowering maranao girls against child marriage (2019) UNFPA Philippines. Available at: https://philippines.unfpa.org/en/news/empowering-maranao-girls-against-child-marriage (Accessed: 17 May 2023).

[17] Muslim, JM. And Ummah, R. (2021). Differences in Muslim and National Laws on Minimum Age Restrictions for Marriage in the Philippines. Proceedings from the 4th Proceedings of the 4th International Colloquium on Interdisciplinary Islamic Studies in conjunction with the 1st International Conference on Education, Science, Technology, Indonesian and Islamic Studies. Available at: DOI 10.4108/eai.20-10-2021.2316347 (Accessed: 17 May 2023)

"(1) Any Muslim male at least fifteen years of age and any Muslim female of the age of puberty or upwards and not suffering from any impediment under the provisions of this Code may contract marriage. A female is presumed to have attained puberty upon reaching the age of fifteen.

(2) However, the Shari'a District Court may, upon petition of a proper guardian, order the solemnization of the marriage of a female who though less than fifteen but not below twelve years of age, has attained puberty.

(3) Marriage through a guardian by a minor below the prescribed ages shall be regarded as betrothal and may be annulled upon the petition of either party within four years after attaining the age of puberty, provided no voluntary cohabitation has taken place and the guardian who contracted the marriage was other than the father or paternal grandfather."

In summary, the Code of Muslim Personal Laws in the Philippines stipulates a minimum marriage age of 15 for both genders within the Muslim community. However, for females who have reached puberty, marriage is permissible at the age of 12 with guardian consent.

BARMM, also known as the Bangsamoro Region, is an autonomous region in the southern Philippines with a significant Muslim population. Child marriage is not only common among the Moro (Muslim tribes)[18] but also certain Indigenous communities in the region, according to a UNICEF report.[19] The *Lumad*,[20] the indigenous cultural communities in Mindanao, have also been found to practice early marriage.[21]

The acceptance of child marriage within these groups is influenced by social factors like religion and cultural beliefs. Despite arguments that child marriage perpetuates gendered poverty cycles, it remains deeply entrenched in cultural traditions and, in some communities, is even seen as recommended or mandated by faith.

Although child marriage is prevalent among both Muslim tribes and *Lumad* groups in Mindanao, the research specifically focused on the former. This decision is based on the fact that Muslim tribes constitute the majority of the population in the two major cities, Marawi and Cotabato, located in the Bangsamoro Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (BARMM), where World Vision Philippines carries out its operations.

2.1.2.1. Marawi City: Rebuilding after devastating conflict

Marawi, officially known as the Islamic City of Marawi, is a city classified as a 4th class component and serves as the capital of Lanao del Sur province in the Philippines. With a population of 207,010 people based on the 2020 census,[22] Marawi is situated along the shores of Lake Lanao. The city is predominantly inhabited by the Maranao people and stands as one of the largest urban centers in the country where Muslims (Moros) reside. Considered as the center of Islamic culture in the Philippines, Marawi is home to several Islamic educational institutions and mosques, and adherence to Islamic customs and values are highly prevalent.[23]

Tragically, Marawi experienced significant devastation during the Battle of Marawi, which occurred on May 23, 2017.[24] During this period, militants associated with the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant infiltrated the city, leading to a large-scale urban conflict. It took five months of intense bombardment and street-by-street combat to eliminate the *Maute* rebels, who were linked to the so-called Islamic State. The intense fighting and aerial bombing in Marawi caused a major humanitarian crisis, displacing around 300,000 people, leaving them homeless. About 200,000 sought shelter in evacuation centers, while the rest stayed in their homes. The siege resulted in estimated damages and losses of $348 million, with a minimum of $1.5 billion needed for the city's rehabilitation.[25]

[18] Bangsamoro tribes (2020) Bureau on Cultural Heritage - BARMM. Available at: https://bch.bangsamoro.gov.ph/bangsamoro-cultural-heritage/bangsamoro-tribes-muslim/ (Accessed: 17 May 2023).

[19] Nortajuddin, A. (2020) Child brides in Philippines' bangsamoro, The ASEAN Post. Available at: https://theaseanpost.com/article/child-brides-philippines-bangsamoro (Accessed: 17 May 2023).

[20] Jocano, F Landa. Filipino Indigenous Ethnic Communities: Patterns, Variations, and Typologies. Punlad Research House, Inc. Quezon City: 1998

[21] Cagoco-Guiam, Rufa. 2003. The Impact of Early Marriage Practices: A Study of Two Indigenous Communities in South-Central Mindanao (T'boli and Blaan) From a Human and Child Rights Perspective. Mindanao State University, General Santos City, Philippines.

[22] Marawi, Province of Lanao del Sur. PhilAtlas. Available at: https://www.philatlas.com/mindanao/barmm/lanao-del-sur/marawi.html (Accessed: 17 May 2023).

[23] Alonto, A.M. (2019) A brief history: The islamic city of marawi. ABS-CBN News. Available at: https://news.abs-cbn.com/ancx/culture/spotlight/01/01/19/a-brief-history-the-islamic-city-of-marawi (Accessed: 17 May 2023).

[24] Philippines: 'battle of marawi' leaves trail of death and destruction (2022) Amnesty International. Available at: https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/press-release/2017/11/philippines-battle-of-marawi-leaves-trail-of-death-and-destruction/ (Accessed: 17 May 2023).

[25] Hall, I.D.R., Joshi, S. and Tarapore, A. (2018) The Marawi Siege and after: Managing NGO-Military Relations, Lowy Institute. Available at: https://www.lowyinstitute.org/the-interpreter/marawi-siege-after-managing-ngo-military-relations (Accessed: 17 May 2023).

The violence in Marawi disrupted the Muslim tradition of male-female segregation, which forced parents to marry off their children as a way to protect family honour amidst chaotic conditions.[26] Displacement increases the risk of girls being forced into marrying relatives, as revealed by a recent study by Plan International.[27] Families uprooted by conflicts, like the Marawi Siege, often rely on relatives for shelter. In Lanao del Sur, parents obliged their daughters to marry host family sons as a gesture of gratitude for the support received. Some of the young girl respondents in the study also mentioned that following the Marawi Siege, families arranged marriages for their daughters and young female relatives under the instruction of their clan leaders. This was done with the intention of expanding their clans and gaining greater influence.

The city was extensively destroyed, forcing 98% of the population to evacuate. A study[28] showed that Marawi's internally displaced persons (IDPs) took two common routes during evacuation: traditional centers and home-based setups. Their decision depended on cultural norms and family responsibilities. Maranao IDPs, driven by the principle of "marhatabat" (honour or pride), frequently chose home-based evacuation to maintain family and clan honour, taking shelter with relatives rather than in evacuation centres.

Despite promises of compensation and reconstruction, few affected residents have received funds and portions of the city, specifically the Most Affected Areas (MAA, which consists of 24 barangays), remained deserted almost six years later. President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. appointed a compensation board in January 2023, but only less than 1% of the 17,793 displaced households have had their homes rebuilt, while major infrastructure projects progress. These projects include transportation infrastructure, digital connectivity, flood control, health-related initiatives and power and energy, among others.[29]

2.1.2.2. Cotabato City: A melting pot of cultures and diversity

Cotabato City is a coastal independent component city in the South Cotabato, Cotabato, Sultan Kudarat, Sarangani, and General Santos (SOCCSKSARGEN) region, commonly associated with the province of Maguindanao. It serves as the regional center of the Bangsamoro Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao.[30] The city spans 176.00 square kilometers (67.95 square miles) and had a population of 325,079 according to the 2020 Census, accounting for 6.63% of the region's total population.

On December 15, 2020, Cotabato City officially became part of the Bangsamoro Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (BARMM), following a majority vote in favour of inclusion during the 2019 autonomy plebiscite.

The indigenous people in the Cotabato Basin are categorized into three main language groups: Maguindanaons, Iranuns, and Teduray.[31] Although Maguindanaon speakers are the most numerous and are the primary focus of the current study, understanding all three groups is crucial for grasping historical and present-day political dynamics. Cotabato City is widely recognized for its ethnic diversity, consisting not only of indigenous inhabitants but also immigrants from different parts of the Philippines, with the majority being Christians.

As reported by Philippine Statistics Authority (PSA) on 2015, 76.15% of the people of Cotabato City are adherents of Sunni Islam.[32] Nonetheless, Christians in Cotabato City are accepting of and can co-exist with certain Muslims who exhibit similar cultural characteristics to Christian Filipinos. These characteristics include speaking Tagalog or English, adopting Westernized clothing, and, for men, drinking alcohol. However, most Christians in the area do not speak any indigenous language and don't have much knowledge of Muslim customs, despite living in Cotabato for many generations.

[26] Santos, A.P. (2019) Child marriages spike in violence-hit Marawi City – DW – 07/12/2019, dw.com. Available at: https://www.dw.com/en/child-marriages-spike-in-philippines-violence-marred-marawi-city/a-49567088 (Accessed: 17 May 2023).

[27] Plan International. (2022). Our Voices, Our Future: Understanding Risks and Adaptive Capacities to Prevent and Respond to Child Marriage in the Bangsamoro Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (BARMM)

[28] Veloso, D.T.M. (2022). Safety and Security Issues, Gender-Based Violence and Militarization in the Time of Armed Conflict: The Experiences of Internally Displaced People From Marawi City. Frontiers in Human Dynamics, Volume 3 -2021. Available at: https://doi.org/10.3389/fhumd.2021.703193 (Accessed: 17 May 2023).

[29] Marcos Jr. vows to continue past Admin's over 70 infra projects, Philstar.com. Available at: https://www.philstar.com/headlines/2023/03/19/2252824/marcos-jr-assures-continuation-past-admins-over-70-infra-projects (Accessed: 17 May 2023).

[30] Cotabato City. Province of Cotabato. PhilAtlas. Available at: https://www.philatlas.com/mindanao/r12/cotabato-city.html (Accessed: 17 May 2023).

[31] McKenna, T.M. (1998). Chapter 2: People and Territory in Cotabato, Muslim Rulers and Rebels: Everyday Politics and Armed Separatism in the Southern Philippines. University of California Press. Available at: https://publishing.cdlib.org/ucpressebooks/view?docId=ft0199n64c;brand=ucpress (Accessed: 17 May, 2023)

[32] Philippine Statistics Authority. (2017). Autonomous Region of Muslim in Mindanao. Available at: https://rssoarmm.psa.gov.ph/release/54739/factsheet/muslim-population-in-mindanao-%28based-on-popcen-2015%29 (Accessed: 17 May 2023).

While Cotabato City has a diverse religious composition, with a large Christian minority and followers of other faiths, the Islamic influence is significant and contributes to the city's unique cultural identity.

2.1.3. SOME CLARIFICATIONS FOR THE INDIGENOUS CULTURAL COMMUNITIES (ICCS) IN MINDANAO

Tribal Religions in Mindanao belong to very diverse indigenous cultural communities (ICC). Broadly speaking, the ICC in Mindanao can be found in the following overlapping regions:[33]

Table 1. Indigenous cultural communities in Mindanao Philippines

Mindanao region	Specific provinces	ICC
South Central Mindanao	Davao, Bukidnon, Cotabato	Bagobo, Tagakaolo, Teduray, Manobo, Kulaman, Blaan, T'boli
Eastern Mindanao	Agusan, Bukidnon, Davao, Surigao	Mandaya, Ata, Mansaka, Dibabawon
North Central Mindanao	Bukidnon	Bukidnon/Higaonon
Western Mindanao and the Sulu Islands	Zamboanga, Cotabato, Lanao	**Maguindanao**[a], **Iranun**[a], **Maranao**[b], **Tausug**[a], Samal, Yakan, Kalibugan, Subanen

[a] – ICC affiliation of study respondents in Cotabato
[b] – ICC affiliation of study respondents in Marawi

It is important to note, however, that the Moro (or Muslim Tribes) that includes the Maguindanao, Maranao, Tausug, Samal, Bajau, Yakan, Ilanon/ Iranun, Sangir, Melabugnan and Jama Mapun do not consider themselves part of the ICCs but rather as separate Filipino Muslim ethno-linguistic groups in Mindanao.[34] On the other hand, the non-Moro Indigenous Peoples (IP) usually consider themselves as part of the collective term identified as Lumads.

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[33] The Lumad of Mindanao. (1970). Filipinas Heritage Library. Available at: https://www.filipinaslibrary.org.ph/articles/the-lumad-of-mindanao/ (Accessed: 17 May 2023).
[34] Moro Muslims. World Directory of Minorities and Indigenous Peoples. Minority Rights Group International

3.1. Objectives of the study

The research specifically focused on child marriage within Muslim Tribes in Mindanao, particularly in the cities of Marawi and Cotabato. These cities are located in the Bangsamoro Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (BARMM) where World Vision Philippines operates. This study aimed to examine the relationship between religions, faith, and child marriage, focusing on the Maguindanao and Maranao tribes in Mindanao.

More specifically, the research aimed to achieve the following objectives:

1. Gain insight into the perceptions, attitudes, and practices related to child marriage among specific communities in Mindanao.

2. Determine the motivations behind child marriage in these communities, specifically examining whether they are driven by religious or cultural beliefs (faith norms).

3. Evaluate the influence of faith norms and religious/faith leaders on the prevalence of child marriage within the selected communities in Mindanao.

4. Identify effective strategies that can be incorporated into World Vision Philippines programming interventions, involving faith leaders, communities, and relevant stakeholders, to reduce the occurrence of child marriage in Mindanao.

3.2. Limitations of the study

Considering the diverse religious groups and communities in Mindanao, the study primarily focuses on the geographical areas where World Vision Philippines is actively operating. It also considers areas with high instances of child marriage, particularly within the Bangsamoro Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (BARMM) where residents in the region's predominantly Muslim zones have an estimated 83% of individuals aged 15 to 17 entered into marriage, while 17% of these marriages involved individuals aged 9 to 14.[35]

World Vision Philippines is presently involved in community initiatives within two major cities in the BARMM region: Cotabato City and Marawi. However, the organization's faith-based interventions, like the CoH CP and CF, have seen limited engagement from faith leaders and local residents, particularly in Marawi and Cotabato City. As a result, the research team's focus had to be shifted toward previously uninvolved community members and faith leaders. Consequently, this study was then oriented as a scientific research exploration into the relationship between faith norms and the prevalence of child marriage, rather than an assessment of the effectiveness of World Vision's CoH CP and CF programs in deterring such practices.

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[35] Santos, A.P. (2019) Child marriages spike in violence-hit Marawi City – DW – 07/12/2019, dw.com. Available at: https://www.dw.com/en/child-marriages-spike-in-philippines-violence-marred-marawi-city/a-49567088 (Accessed: 17 May 2023).

3.3. Significance of the study

While faith norms are considered part of social norms, World Vision's work has shown that specified attention is required to understand how faith norms facilitate positive behaviour change, particularly in child protection. Each faith norms ecosystem is unique, influenced by religious beliefs, denominations, and strength of faith.

Measuring faith norms and associated behaviour change is complex due to their interplay with local culture, traditional practices, social and gender norms, as well as the wider political and legal contexts. Recognising power structures within faith norms ecosystems and the dynamics of behaviour change is vital to understanding and measuring changes within communities. Ultimately, social and behaviour change occurs when individuals and families perceive approval and support from their reference groups for their changed behaviour.

This research, through the implementation of the Faith Norms and Social Behavioral Change (FNSBC) tool, aimed to evaluate and measure the ecosystem of faith norms with respect to the practice of child marriage, in order to obtain a deepened understanding of the possible relationship between them.

CHAPTER 4 | Methodology

4.1. Overview of the conceptual framework

The study's conceptual framework was developed through a rapid literature review,[36] which aimed to identify pertinent studies and measures/tools on faith, faith norms, the interplay between faith and social norms, and social and behavior change. The review showed that religious beliefs, attitudes, practices, and interpretations of religious texts are closely linked to norms surrounding gender, marriage, family reputation and honor, patriarchal structure, sexuality, reproductive health of adolescents, parenting, and protection.[37] [38] [39] These interconnected factors directly or indirectly contribute to child marriage.

In Figure 2, the complexity of the relationship between faith and child marriage is presented. It highlights the various dimensions involved and the challenges in separating it from other social norms and relationships.

Religion shapes attitudes and social norms related to gender, reproductive health, and marriage, impacting the acceptance of child marriage. However, local context matters, as communities with the same religion but different settings may hold contrasting views on child marriage. Consequently, "faith" better captures the varied personal convictions and practices with religious or spiritual significance.

To study the relationship between faith, norms, and child marriage, it is essential to analyze the religious context at both individual and group levels, considering factors like religious affiliation, attendance, salience, scriptural beliefs, and cultural context.[40] [41] Similarly, examining norms requires a comprehensive approach, including descriptive and injunctive norms *(behaviours that one is expected to follow*

Figure 2. Inter-relation between religious beliefs, attitudes and practices and other norms around gender, sexuality, parenting, and child marriage (Jailobaeva & Niyonkuru, 2021, pg. 12)
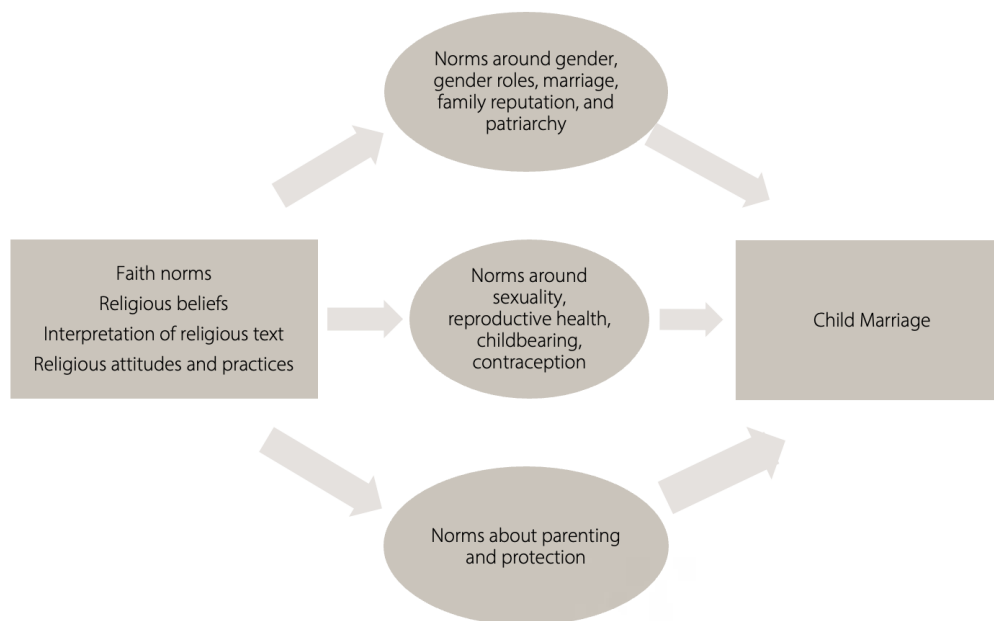
[36] Jailobaeva, K & Niyonkuru, P. (2021). Rapid Review of Literature on Faith, Norms and Child Marriage. Unpublished report for World Vision International

[37] Christian Aid. (2018). Religion and Time of Marriage: The role of faith leaders in advancing the cause of adolescent girls.

[38] Dean, et. Al. (2018). "He is suitable for her, of course he is our relative": a qualitative exploration of the drivers and implications of child marriage in Gezira State, Sudan. BMJ Global Health, 4, 1264. https://doi.org/10.1136/bmjgh-2018-001264

[39] Gemignani, R., & Wodon, Q. (2015). Child Marriage and Faith Affiliation in Sub-Saharan Africa: Stylized Facts and Heterogeneity. Review of Faith and International Affairs, 13(3), 41-47. https://doi.org/10.1080/15570274.2015.1075752

[40] Huber S, Huber OW. (2012). The Centrality of Religiosity Scale (CRS). Religions, 3:710-24.

[41] Uecker JE. (2014). Religion and early marriage in the United States: Evidence from the add health study. J. Sci. Study Religion. [Internet] [cited 2021 May 19]; 53:392-415. Available from: https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/25045173

Figure 3. Framework for investigating links between religion, faith and child marriage (Jailobaeva & Niyonkuru, 2021, pg. 14)
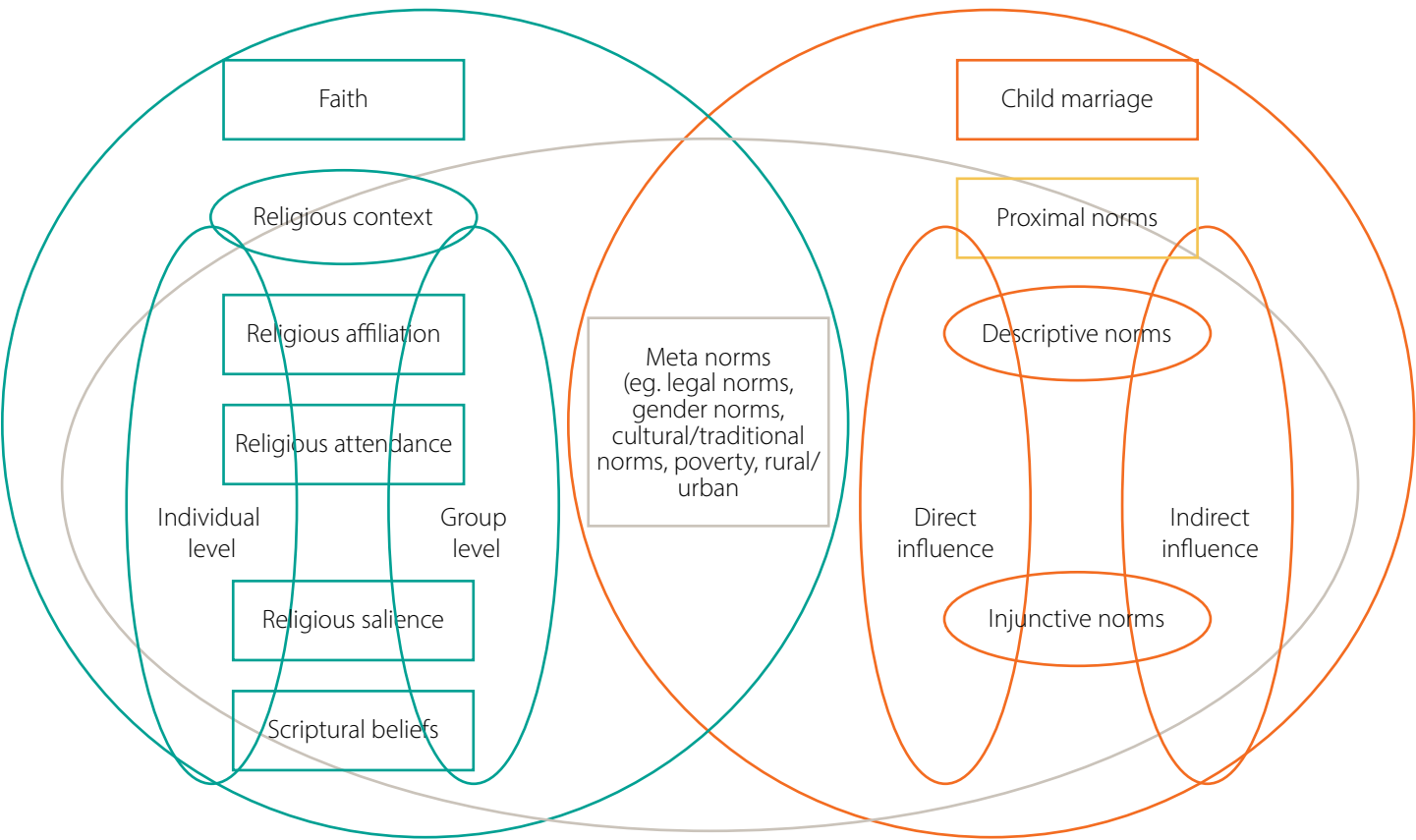
and expects others to follow in a given social situation), direct and indirect influences, and societal meta norms *(shared standards of acceptable behavior by groups or that govern behavior in groups and societies)*. By exploring these aspects, we can gain insight into how faith and norms influence child marriage dynamics.

A conceptual framework was developed during the pilot study, as illustrated in Figure 3. It represents the intricate and interconnected nature of faith and child marriage, emphasizing the significance of examining individual and group influences and norms within the measurement tool. This framework was used in this research that aims to assess the role of faith norms in facilitating social and behavioral changes.

4.2. Study design

Using the previously mentioned conceptual framework requires employing a mixed methods approach that specifically targets the practice of child marriage (CM). This approach combines quantitative and qualitative methodologies and tools (outlined in detail below). By adopting a mixed methods approach, the focus of this study was broadened to encompass both community and reference groups, as well as individual social and faith norms that either promote or discourage child marriage practices. It enabled the examination of faith norms in relation to the mutual expectations within a reference group, as well as the roles, expectations, support, and potential consequences imposed by influential individuals.

Table 2 presents an overview of the data collection methods employed, the number of participants sampled, and the sampling criteria used in the selected areas in Marawi and Cotabato City. It is important to note that these methods and criteria varied depending on the specific context in which the tool was implemented and adjusted accordingly.

Table 2. Summary of both quantitative and qualitative research methods and tools implemented

Component	Data collection method and numbers	Population sampling criterion
Quantitative	Household Survey *(see Appendix 1 for the copy of the questionnaire)*	• Community members (adults aged 18 years or over) randomly selected in the community (i.e., population based) • Community members who married their daughter off before the age of 18 purposefully selected • Faith leaders
Qualitative	Focus Group Discussions • Focus Group Discussion or FGD *(see Appendix 2 for the copy of the FGD Tool)* • Including Community Readiness to Prevent Child Marriage Assessment *(see Appendix 3 for the copy of the Community Readiness Assessment Tool)* • Including Influential People Mapping *(see Appendix 4 for the copy of the Influential People Mapping Tool)*	• Community members (adults and adolescents aged 16-18 years old) selected by age, gender, and marital status • Gender balance • Being a parent or grandparent of children under 16
	Individual Semi-Structured Interviews with Influential People	Faith/religious leaders and other influential community members as identified by Community Members in the Influential People Mapping activity

4.2.1. QUANTITATIVE COMPONENT

4.2.1.1. Survey questionnaire

The survey questionnaire was created by referring to the literature review conducted at the beginning of the research. Established, standardized, and validated scales were utilized as a foundation for the quantitative measurement. To illustrate, the section focusing on religiosity and faith included questions adapted from the Centrality of Religiosity Scale.[42] This approach ensured the reliability and acceptability of the questions, as they had already been used in previous studies and proven effective in different contexts.

The questionnaire was pilot-tested in a separate study done in August 2021 in urban and rural areas of Bangladesh with diverse participants, including CoH/CF program participants and community members from different faith backgrounds.

The survey questions were categorized into multiple sections for tabulation and data analysis such as:

• Socio-demographic questions (e.g. gender, age, religion, income-generating activity)
• Faith beliefs and experiences
• Individual religiosity
• Societal religiosity
• Role of faith leaders and faith congregations
• Faith norms around child marriage
• Proximal norms *(referring to the immediate and direct social expectations, standards, or behaviors that individuals encounter within their immediate or close social circles)* around child marriage from the perspective of faith and culture
• Reference groups

4.2.1.2. Survey participant categories

In each study site, a random sample of groups was determined and considered for the survey. The sample was further subdivided into three categories: a.) community members, b.) faith leaders, and c.) community members who let their daughters marry before the age of 18. While existing literature acknowledges that child marriage can also impact boys, the scope of this research focused on caregivers who permitted the marriage of their daughters before the age of 18, due to constraints in timeline, cost, and available resources.

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[42] Huber S, Huber OW. (2012). The Centrality of Religiosity Scale (CRS). Religions, 3:710-24.

Figure 4. Target respondents per category group and study site for Child Marriage Research Survey
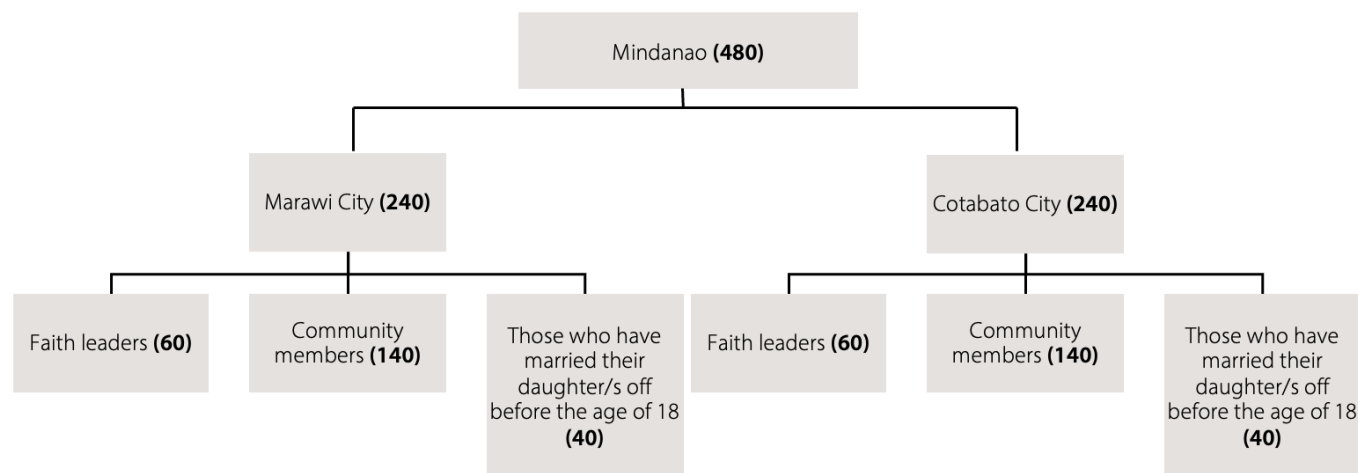
4.2.1.3. Sampling strategy

To determine the final sample size for both study sites, we considered factors such as cost, accuracy, and the need for an adequate number of respondents in each sub-group for meaningful sub-group analysis. The recommended approach by Parasuraman et al. (2006)[43] was followed, resulting in a total sample size of 480 participants. Figure 4 illustrates the breakdown of target respondents for the survey per category and per study site.

A systematic approach was used to identify a random sampling of community members in both study sites. Meanwhile, community members who married off their daughters before the age of 18 were purposefully located and identified. For the faith leaders, a convenience sampling was implemented to hit the necessary target for the said sub-group.

4.2.2. QUALITATIVE COMPONENT

4.2.2.1. Focus group discussions (FGDs)

This research component aimed to gather qualitative data on the connections and impact of faith and religion on the occurrence of child marriage. It also aimed to identify the factors that facilitate or hinder efforts to prevent child marriage. It focused on gaining understanding on how faith and religion shape community attitudes, beliefs, and

behaviors related to child marriage, as well as exploring how faith and religion can contribute to promoting social and behavioral change within the community.

Focus group discussions (FGDs) involved inviting participants to discuss their opinions, beliefs, and identities related to child, early, and forced marriage (CEFM). FGDs offered insights into community norms and beliefs surrounding CEFM, which allowed us to identify issues in challenging and changing these norms. They provided valuable information on a certain community's social and faith-based perspectives on CEFM, and how those perspectives are negotiated within the community. A total of 80 respondents, representative of the indicated sample criterion mentioned above, participated during the qualitative data gathering of the study. Around 16 FGDs were conducted (see Figure 5 for complete breakdown of respondents).

The data obtained from the FGDs and Semi-Structured Interviews (SSIs) was analyzed based on three main themes and ten relevant sub-themes. This was done to comprehensively assess, understand, and evaluate the relationship between faith and social behavior in the context of child marriage in the selected area. The main themes and corresponding sub-themes utilized for analysis are outlined below:

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[43] To find an appropriate sample size for the survey, the formula suggested by Parasuraman and colleagues (2006) was used: n= (1.962*S2)/H2 where n is the sample size; 1.96 corresponds to the commonly accepted confidence level in social science research of 95%, S2 is sample variance which indicates the degree of variability in the population and H is the precision level which indicates the acceptable magnitude of the margin of error. This survey questionnaire mostly uses the 5-point Likert type scale in the survey questionnaire, and the level of 0.2 was chosen as a tolerated precision level to meet the objectives of the project. Furthermore, the sample size is sensitive to the level of standard deviation in the population. If it is assumed that the standard deviation of a sample would be equal or less then 1, the following minimum required sample size is estimated: n= (1.962*12)/0.12 =384 respondents. Based on the sample size of 384 respondents, it can be asserted with 95% confidence that the true population mean will be within ± 0.1 of the sample mean. The sample size can be round up to 400 individuals to account for any losses of incomplete date during the data analysis.

- Trend of the practice of child marriage
    - Perceived extent of the practice of child marriage
    - Perceived reasons behind the persistence of the practice of child marriage
    - Perceived reasons behind the decrease of the practice of child marriage

- Faith/religion-based influences on the continuous/ending the child marriage
    - Perceived importance of faith/religion to the continuation/ending of child marriage
    - Perceived faith-based reasons for the continuation of child marriage
    - Perceived faith/religion-based rewards/benefits/advantages of undertaking child marriage
    - Perceived faith/religion-based sanctions/disadvantages of not performing child marriage

- Faith-based activities to end the child marriage
    - Perceived source of information on child marriage
    - Perceived faith-based/religious interventions/campaigns to end child marriage
    - Perceived other interventions/activities

4.2.2.1.1. Mapping of influential people

During the focus group discussions (FGDs), participants were asked about their reference groups, and the influential organizations or individuals that affected their decision-making process regarding child marriage. Specifically, they discussed the sources of information and advice that their community relies on, with a focus on the role of faith-based organizations and leaders. The participants identified the top five influential people or organizations and ranked them accordingly. This information was analyzed across different focus groups to determine the most influential entities in the community. It also helped to assess whether different demographic groups relied on different influencers regarding child marriage in their respective communities.

4.2.2.1.2. Community readiness to prevent child marriage

The final activity of the focus group discussions (FGDs) was the assessment of community readiness to prevent child marriage. This evaluated the role of faith and dynamics within the community's willingness to change a social convention. This assessment utilized the six Dimensions of Change to determine the community's stage of readiness for behavior change (see Table 3). The community is categorized using a traffic light system. Red indicates that the Dimension of Change hinders behavior change, amber

indicates that the community challenges the status quo within that Dimension of Change, and green indicates that the Dimension of Change supports and facilitates behavior change.

This activity involved participants assessing the applicability of six statements within their community context, with each statement corresponding to one of the six Dimensions of Change. For every statement pertaining to each Dimension of Change, participants were tasked to contemplate its pertinence to their community. A field researcher verbally presented each statement and participants were then given time to contemplate or discuss. Subsequently, the researcher guided participants to express their assessment by selecting one of three face cards, as outlined below:

- Smiley face = Agree with the statement. This is happening in our community.
- Neutral face = Agree somewhat with the statement. This is happening to a certain extent in our community.
- Sad face = Disagree with the statement. This is not happening in our community.

The researcher documented the votes using a designated template. In instances where substantial discussion or lack of consensus arose, the researcher was prompted to record the rationale articulated by participants during the debate or disagreement. Each statement was assigned a score corresponding to the face card chosen by participants. These individual scores for each statement were subsequently aggregated and averaged based on the total number of participants. This process yielded scores ranging from one (1) to nine (9) for each dimension. To determine the comprehensive readiness to change, the scores from all six dimensions were totaled and then divided by six (6), producing a final community readiness to combat child marriage score within the one to nine (1-9) range (see Table 4).

Table 3. Community readiness to change behavior in child marriage: Dimensions of Change

Dimension of change	Statement	COM-B classification
Dimension A	Community knowledge concerning linkages between faith/religion and child marriage	Capability
Dimension B	Community faith-based and religious belief systems and attitudes towards child marriage	Motivation
Dimension C	Faith-based/religious community efforts and interventions, to prevent child marriage	Opportunity
Dimension D	Community knowledge of the faith-based/religious efforts and interventions to end child marriage	Capability
Dimension E	The attitudes and practices of faith and religious leaders as well as other influential people towards ending child marriage	Motivation
Dimension F	Community knowledge of, and access to, faith-based/religious resources to support efforts and interventions to prevent child marriage	Opportunity

4.2.2.2. Semi-structured interviews (SSIs)

Based on the results of the mapping of influential people, the identified individuals underwent individual semi-structured interviews (SSIs). A total of 30 respondents, evenly divided between Cotabato City and Marawi City, were subjected to the SSIs. Respondents were predominantly male, but their profile encompassed a diverse spectrum of influential archetypes, including faith leaders, community stalwarts, parental figures, and educators, among other distinct roles.

These interviews aimed to examine the connections between faith, religion, and child marriage in the community, specifically from the perspectives of faith leaders, religious figures, and other influential individuals. The SSIs delved into the attitudes and practices regarding child marriage endorsed by these influential figures. Additionally, the interviews provided an opportunity for the influential individuals to share any relevant activities or interventions they had been involved in to address child marriage, and to assess their effectiveness.

Table 4. Scoring and stage of readiness used in Community Readiness to Prevent Child Marriage Assessment

Scores of each Dimension of Change	Average of cumulative Dimension of Change scores	Translates to Stages of Community Readiness to Change
Scores of: 1-3.99 = Red (barrier to change) 4-6.99 = Amber (some change is happening) 7-9 = Green (change is happening)	Stage of Readiness: 0-0.99 = stage 1 1-1.99 = stage 2 2-2.99 = stage 3 3-3.99 = stage 4 4-4.99 = stage 5 5-5.99 = stage 6 6-6.99 = stage 7 7-7.99 = stage 8 8-9 = stage 9	**Stage 1 = No Community Awareness:** The linkages between faith/religion and Child Marriage are accepted without question. The harmful nature of and laws banning Child Marriage not known. Child Marriage is an unchallenged norm. **Stage 2 = Community denial/resistance:** Some members of the community, community leaders and/or influential people recognise that there may be links between faith/religion and that Child Marriage is harmful. **Stage 3 = Vague Community Awareness:** There is some awareness of the links between faith/religion and Child Marriage, but no community motivation to challenge the links and end Child Marriage. **Stage 4 = Pre-Planning:** There is some community recognition that there are links between faith/religion and Child Marriage but efforts to end the practice lack focus. **Stage 5 = Preparation:** Community leaders/influential people start to plan to challenge the links between faith/religion and Child Marriage. **Stage 6 = Initiation of interventions/activities:** Community leaders/influential people initiate interventions/activities to break the link between faith/religion and Child Marriage. **Stage 7 = Stabilisation stage:** Community leaders/influential people openly deny the links between Child Marriage and faith/religion and support the ending of Child Marriage. **Stage 8 = Expansion Phase:** Community members and leaders/influential people work together to decouple faith/religion beliefs from Child Marriage and work together to end Child Marriage. **Stage 9 = Community Ownership:** The community rejects Child Marriage including the faith/religious arguments for its continuation. Not performing Child Marriage becomes the new norm.

Figure 5. Target respondents per category group and study site in focus group discussions (FGD) for Child Marriage Research


```
                        MINDANAO (80)
              ┌──────────────┴──────────────┐
        Marawi City (40)              Cotabato City (40)
        ┌──────┴──────┐              ┌──────┴──────┐
  Unmarried girls   Unmarried boys   Unmarried girls   Unmarried boys
  (16-18) (5)       (16-18) (5)      (16-18) (5)       (16-18) (5)
       │                │                 │                 │
  Unmarried young   Unmarried young   Unmarried young   Unmarried young
  adult women       adult men         adult women       adult men
  (>18) with no     (>18) with no     (>18) with no     (>18) with no
  children (5)      children (5)      children (5)      children (5)
       │                │                 │                 │
  Married women     Married men       Married women     Married men
  with children     with children     with children     with children
  under the age     under the age     under the age     under the age
  of 16 (5)         of 16 (5)         of 16 (5)         of 16 (5)
       │                │                 │                 │
  Grandmothers      Grandfathers      Grandmothers      Grandfathers
  with grand-       with grand-       with grand-       with grand-
  children under    children under    children under    children under
  the age of        the age of        the age of        the age of
  16 (5)            16 (5)            16 (5)            16 (5)
```

4.2.2.3. Sampling strategy

Individuals from the community were extended an invitation to engage in Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) according to specific requirements, which encompassed factors such as gender, age, marital status, being parents of children below 16 years old, and being grandparents of grandchildren below 16 years old. Participants were selected using convenience and snowball sampling.

In the end, around eight groups were identified for each study site. These groups are as follows: i.) unmarried girls (age 16-18) with no children, ii.) unmarried young adult women (age >18) with no children, iii.) married women with children under the age of 16, iv.) grandmothers with grand-children under the age of 16, v.) unmarried boys (age 16-18) with no children, vi.) unmarried young adult men (age >18) with no children, vii.) married men with children under the age of 16, viii.) grandfathers with grandchildren under the age of 16. Figure 5 illustrates the breakdown of target respondents for the FGDs per sub-group and per study site.

Apart from that, it is crucial to acknowledge that the research sought to include a wide range of participants to represent the diverse socio-cultural and socio-economic backgrounds present in the communities. The intention was not to selectively match participants based on specific criteria, but rather to capture the full breadth of socio-cultural perspectives and experiences.

4.3. Study sites

For this study, Marawi and Cotabato City were chosen as the study sites (see Map 1). These areas were selected based on specific criteria. Firstly, they were identified to have a high incidence of child marriage, which made them relevant for examining this issue. Secondly, World Vision currently operates in these locations, implementing programming related to child welfare. This ensured that the research could benefit from the existing infrastructure and resources provided by World Vision. Lastly, the religious composition of their populations fit the focus of this study, with the majority being Muslim or belonging to other tribal religious

affiliations.

Moreover, when selecting the specific barangays (smaller administrative units) within each study site, the research team considered three major factors. Firstly, *the size of the population of each barangay* was considered to ensure a representative sample. A large sample size from a large population area would provide a more accurate or representative understanding of the prevalence of child marriage in densely populated cities such as Marawi City and Cotabato City. Secondly, the team aimed to include *a mix of urban and rural barangays* to capture the diverse contexts and challenges associated with child marriage. Lastly, the *accessibility and safety* concerns of the chosen barangays were carefully evaluated, for the security of the

Map 1. Location of Philippine research study sites: Marawi City and Cotabato City

field data collectors and research team involved. This consideration was crucial to ensure that the research team could conduct their work effectively and ethically, while safeguarding the well-being of participants and researchers alike.

The summary table below details the included barangays within both study sites.

Table 5. Summary profile of barangays (or areas) identified in both study sites

Study site	Barangay	Classification	Population Count (as of Census 2020)
Marawi City	1. Lomidong	Urban	5,149
	2. Dimaluna	Urban	6,647
	3. Rorogagus Proper	Urban	5,115
	4. Bangon	Rural	2,310
Cotabato City	1. Kalanganan Mother	Urban	6,546
	2. Kalanganan II	Urban	6,578
	3. Poblacion Mother	Urban	6,074
	4. Bagua II	Urban	19,998

Out of the 8 barangays identified, only one (1) rural barangay was included in the study. This is because the research team was advised by the Local Government Unit to exclude rural barangays in Cotabato City as study sites due to security concerns. The decision was made because many of the local government units in these areas have strained relationships with the current administration, posing potential risks to the safety and well-being of the researchers and participants involved in the study.

Due to ongoing clan feuds in one of the initially chosen barangays in Marawi City, the research team made the decision to replace that barangay with another densely populated area. Although the replacement barangay was later identified as another urban area, it was selected to ensure the safety and smooth progress of the study in light of the situation.

4.4. Ethical considerations

The study obtained ethical approval from both QMU and Coventry University, and meticulously adhered to rigorous ethical protocols. World Vision Philippines led the coordination and alignment of research objectives with the LGUs in Marawi City and Cotabato City, spanning both the city and barangay levels. The approval and endorsements

secured from these governmental entities served as supplementary documentation, reinforcing the legitimacy of the research to the field researchers. These documents were invaluable during the execution of household surveys and face-to-face interviews, and provided a substantiated basis for engaging with the respondents.

Comprehensive online training was also given to all research personnel and facilitators associated with World Vision Philippines. The research unit of World Vision Philippines, under the supervision of its Programme Research Officer, took measures to ensure cultural sensitivity by translating the Participant Information Sheet and Informed Consent Form into local languages. These documents were made accessible to World Vision Philippines, study participants, and their respective communities.

The data collection team underwent thorough training, including child and adult safeguarding protocols, to uphold conduct of appropriate fieldwork activities and data quality standards. Qualitative and quantitative data collection activities were also overseen by field supervisors from World Vision Philippines. These various teams received in-person training from World Vision Philippines before conducting household surveys, focus group discussions, and interviews. Researchers from QMU and Coventry University also extended remote technical support.

To ensure comprehensive understanding and prompt mitigation of any issues, multiple debriefing sessions were conducted during and post fieldwork. These sessions prompted discussions about the research process and facilitated swift responses to any concerns that arose.

4.5. Overall analytic sample

4.5.1. QUANTITATIVE SURVEY

The final collected and gathered data resulted to a total of 509 respondents with a breakdown of 252 for Marawi City and 257 for Cotabato City. The excess data were due to the interests of additional faith leaders who voluntarily answered the survey for their perspectives and insights be included in the study.

4.5.2. QUALITATIVE APPROACH

The study successfully reached its desired number of participants for the Focus Group Discussions (FGDs), Influential People Mapping, and Community Readiness to prevent child marriage. A total of 80 participants took part in these activities, with 40 participants from Marawi City and 40 participants from Cotabato City, with a 50:50 gender balance.

In addition, for the semi-structured interviews (SSIs), the study conducted approximately 15 interviews in each location, resulting in a total of 30 interviews for the entire study. The participants for the SSIs were selected based on recommendations from the FGD respondents using the influential people mapping exercise.

Table 6. Summary list of identified influential people in Marawi and Cotabato (in ranking order), WVDF Child Marriage Survey 2023

LIST OF IDENTIFIED INFLUENTIAL PEOPLE IN MARAWI (in Ranking Order)				
Ranking	Sector	Occupation	Age	Sex
1	Religion	Aleem	40	M
2	Government	Board Member	26	M
3	Religion	Aleem	63	M
4	Religion	Aleem	60	M
5	Religion	Aleem	40	M
6	Religion	Aleemah	30	F
7	Religion	Aleem	55	M
8	School	Principal	40	F
9	Government	Attorney/Mayor	40	M
10	Community	Sultan	40	M
11	Family and Friends	Parent	52	F
12	Religion	Aleem	35 and 33	
13	Family and Friends	Parent	55	F
14	School	Teacher	20 or 30	F
15	Religion	Imam	40	M
16	Government	Politician	48	F
17	Religion	Imam	55	M
18	Religion	Ustadh	45	
19	Civil society groups	NGO		
20	Community	Datu	40	M
21	Religion	Ustadh	45	
22	Community	Chairman	52	M
23	Religion	Aleem	62	M
24	Family and Friends	Parents	40 to 50	M/F
25	Religion	Aleem	48	M
26	Religion	Ustadh	38	M
27	Government	Councilor	54	M

LIST OF IDENTIFIED INFLUENTIAL PEOPLE IN COTABATO (in Ranking Order)				
Ranking	Sector	Occupation	Age	Sex
1	Religion	Ustadz	49	M
2	Community	Kapitan	40	M
3	Community	Kapitan	57	M
4	Religion	Ustadz	23	M
5	Government	Mayor	42	M
6	Government	Commander	65	M
7	Family and Friends	Parent	59	F
8	Community	Chairman	53	M
9	Religion	Ulama	52	M
10	Community	Chairman	38	M
11	Community	Kapitan	36	M
12	Family and Friends	Parent	36	F
13	Family and Friends	Parent	43	M
14	Religion	Mufti	70	M
15	Community	Chairman	39	M
16	Religion	Ustadz	40	M
17	Family and Friends	Parent	42	F
18	Family and Friends	Parent	46	F
19	Religion	Ustadz	20	M
20	Religion	Pari	39	M
21	Family and Friends	Parent	38	M
22	School	Teacher	30	M
23	Community	Kapitan	50	F
24	Religion	Ustadz	20	M
25	Family and Friends	Parent	35	M

5.1. Quantitative survey

The quantitative survey was designed to analyse various concepts and themes through the calculation of percentages and the estimation of aggregate scores. Each section of the survey focuses on a specific concept or theme, with responses categorised accordingly.

Calculating percentages — Socio-demographic characteristics, for example, are calculated and reported as sample characteristics, providing insights into the respondents' profiles. Similarly, responses concerning norms from the perspectives of faith and culture are analysed by calculating percentages for each response category. This approach is also applied to questions related to reference groups, and the influence of faith norms and congregation members.

Calculating aggregate scores — The survey estimated aggregate scores for each concept, but before that, some sections required reverse scoring and recoding. The survey questionnaire used the Likert Scale scoring (ranging from 1 to 5) for most questions. However, the interpretation of scores varied across questions. To ensure consistency when calculating aggregate scores for each concept (e.g. knowledge of negative consequences of child marriage), it was necessary to maintain a uniform scoring direction. Following the guidance of the research advisors and consultants, a high score indicated a positive agreement for all concepts measured with the Likert Scale.

Once the scoring adjustments were completed, the values of all items within each concept were summed and divided by the number of items within that concept.

Consequently, the resulting scores ranged between 1.0 and 5.0. These scores were then categorised into three groups based on the Huber and Huber's Centrality of Religiosity Scale recommendations. The threshold points for classifying religiosity were as follows: "non-religious" (1.0 to 2.0), "religious" (2.1 to 3.9), and "highly religious" (4.0 to 5.0).

Comparing scores of different groups — After calculating the composite scores for various concepts, the analysis shifted its attention to examining the scores based on socio-demographic variables, and levels of faith commitment and religiosity. These variables included respondents' gender, individual religiosity, faith beliefs, and faith experiences. To compare different groups, such as female and male respondents, statistical tests were conducted using R. Specifically, an independent t-test and ANOVA, including the Tukey Test for post-hoc analysis, were employed to determine whether such differences between and among groups are statistically significant.

Linear regression analysis — Several regression analyses were conducted in this study to examine the factors influencing respondents' perception that faith norms do not endorse child marriage. The analyses encompassed the entire sample, along with separate analyses for female and male participants, and respondents from both research sites. The objective of these analyses was to identify the variables that could potentially predict individuals' perceptions of the lack of support for child marriage within their religious communities. The main dependent variable used in these analyses was the "Perception of Faith Norms around Child Marriage" score. Several explanatory co-

variates were incorporated into the model to assess their impact on these perceptions.

5.1.1. PROFILE OF THE RESPONDENTS: KEY SOCIO-DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS

5.1.1.1. Gender

Table 7. Percentage distribution of survey respondents' category, by gender and study site, WVDF Child Marriage Survey 2023

Category	Study Sites				All Sample (n=509)	
	Marawi (n=252)		Cotabato (n=257)			
	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male
Community member	44.8%	11.5%	41.6%	16.3%	43.2%	13.9%
Faith leader	8.3%	17.1%	1.9%	24.1%	5.1%	20.6%
Community member who let their daughter/s marry before 18	14.7%	3.6%	11.7%	4.3%	13.2%	3.9%
TOTAL	**67.9%**	**32.1%**	**55.3%**	**44.7%**	**61.5%**	**38.5%**

The majority of the respondents (61%) were female. This pattern holds true for both study sites, with Marawi having 68% female respondents and Cotabato having 55% female respondents. Not surprisingly, the majority of faith leaders who participated in the study in both Marawi (17%) and Cotabato (24%) were male. On the other hand, among community members (including those who had daughters married before the age of 18), respondents were mostly female.

5.1.1.2. Marital status

Out of the total respondents, a significant majority (88%) were married, while a smaller proportion identified as single (10%), separated (1%), or divorced (1%). It is noteworthy that in the Cotabato study site, approximately 13% of respondents reported being single, while in Marawi, this figure was less than half at nearly 5%. Overall, the study reveals a predominant marital status of married individuals among the participants from both study sites.

Table 8. Percentage distribution of survey respondents' marital status, by gender and study site, WVDF Child Marriage Research Survey 2023

Marital Status	Study Sites				All Sample (n=509)	
	Marawi (n=252)		Cotabato (n=257)			
	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male
Married officially	65.3%	26.3%	49.8%	33.9%	57.5%	30.1%
Live with a partner	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Divorced	2.0%	0.8%	0.0%	0.8%	1.0%	0.8%
Separated	0.4%	0.0%	1.6%	0.4%	1.0%	0.2%
Widowed	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Single	0.4%	4.8%	3.9%	9.7%	2.2%	7.3%
TOTAL	**68.1%**	**31.9%**	**55.3%**	**44.7%**	**61.6%**	**38.4%**

5.1.1.3. Age

Table 9. Percentage distribution of survey respondents' age group, by gender and study site, WVDF Child Marriage Research Survey 2023

Age group	Study Sites				All Sample (n=509)	
	Marawi (n=252)		Cotabato (n=257)			
	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male
16-29	17.1%	9.1%	10.9%	17.5%	13.9%	13.4%
30-39	14.7%	7.9%	11.3%	5.1%	13.0%	6.5%
40-49	19.4%	10.3%	17.1%	5.4%	18.3%	7.9%
50-59	13.9%	2.8%	9.3%	7.0%	11.6%	4.9%
60-69	2.4%	2.0%	5.4%	6.2%	3.9%	4.1%
70-79	0.4%	0.0%	1.2%	3.5%	0.8%	1.8%
TOTAL	**67.9%**	**32.1%**	**55.3%**	**44.7%**	**61.5%**	**38.5%**

Approximately 73% of the survey participants were below the age of 49, indicating a relatively young demographic within the study sample. In the case of Marawi, nearly 30% of respondents fall into the 40-49 age group, whereas in Cotabato, a similar percentage is observed among the 16-29 age group, indicating a higher proportion of younger participants in this particular study site. Only a small percentage of respondents (3%) were reported to belong to the 70-79 age group.

Table 10. Percentage distribution of survey respondents' category, by age group and study site, WVDF Child Marriage Research Survey 2023

Marital Status	Age group	All Sample (n=509)			
		Marawi (n=252)		Cotabato (n=257)	
		Female	Male	Female	Male
Faith Leaders	16-29	3.1%	17.2%	0.0%	23.9%
	30-39	3.1%	17.2%	1.5%	11.9%
	40-49	14.1%	23.4%	1.5%	9.0%
	50-59	12.5%	4.7%	3.0%	17.9%
	60-69	0.0%	4.7%	0.0%	20.9%
	70-79	0.0%	0.0%	1.5%	9.0%
Community Members	16-29	21.8%	6.4%	14.7%	15.3%
	30-39	18.6%	4.8%	14.7%	2.6%
	40-49	21.3%	5.9%	22.6%	4.2%
	50-59	14.4%	2.1%	11.6%	3.2%
	60-69	3.2%	1.1%	7.4%	1.1%
	70-79	0.5%	0.0%	1.1%	1.6%
TOTAL		**67.9%**	**32.1%**	**55.3%**	**44.7%**

When examining the respondents' categories, it is notable that faith leaders who participated in the Marawi study had a higher percentage of younger respondents (78%) compared to Cotabato, which stood at 48%, irrespective of gender. Notably, only a small portion of the faith leader respondents in Marawi were aged 50 and above. On the other hand, for community member respondents, the majority from both study sites fell below the age of 49. More specifically, a significant proportion of young respondents in both Marawi and Cotabato City were between the ages of 16-29 (28% and 30%, respectively) and 40-49 (27% for both).

5.1.1.4. Education

In terms of educational attainment, one (1) out of every four (4) respondents from both study sites had either reached or completed their high school education. This is close to the national educational attainment in the country[44] which is that 38.6% had reached or completed at most high school or secondary level (graduate: 21.7%, undergraduate: 16.8%). In terms of higher education, approximately 37% of all respondents have achieved or completed their college education.

Table 11. Percentage distribution of survey respondents' education level, by gender and study site, WVDF Child Marriage Research Survey 2023

Highest Educational Attainment	Study Sites				All Sample (n=509)	
	Marawi (n=252)		Cotabato (n=257)			
	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male
Never attended school	0.4%	0.8%	0.8%	0.4%	0.6%	0.6%
Some primary education	0.8%	1.6%	1.2%	1.2%	1.0%	1.4%
Completed primary level	0.4%	0.8%	0.8%	0.4%	0.6%	0.6%
Some elementary education	4.8%	1.6%	3.2%	3.2%	4.0%	2.4%
Completed elementary education	3.2%	4.0%	3.6%	3.6%	3.4%	3.8%
Some high school education	11.2%	4.4%	10.0%	5.6%	10.6%	5.0%
Completed high school level	19.1%	8.0%	13.5%	13.5%	16.3%	10.8%
Some college education	9.2%	4.0%	7.2%	6.0%	8.2%	5.0%
Completed college level	17.1%	6.4%	13.5%	10.0%	15.3%	8.2%
Some vocational course	1.6%	0.4%	0.0%	0.0%	0.8%	0.2%
Completed vocational course	0.0%	0.0%	1.2%	0.8%	0.6%	0.4%
Some post-graduate units	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Completed post-graduate level	0.0%	0.4%	0.4%	0.0%	0.2%	0.2%
TOTAL	**67.9%**	**32.1%**	**55.3%**	**44.7%**	**61.5%**	**38.5%**

[44] Literacy Rate and Educational Attainment Among Persons Five Years Old and Over in the Philippines. 2020 Census of Population and Housing. Philippine Statistics Authority.

On the younger end, only a smaller percentage were reported to have reached or completed elementary education (13.6%) or primary education (3.6%), while an even smaller fraction (1.2%) were reported to have never attended school at all. It is interesting to note that the survey revealed a nearly identical educational demographic profile for both study sites, suggesting that these locations share similar educational backgrounds, with the majority of the population having attained at least a high school education.[45]

5.1.1.5. Household composition

Table 12. Percentage distribution of survey respondents' household composition, by gender and study site, WVDF Child Marriage Research Survey 2023

Category	Study Sites				All Sample (n=509)	
	Marawi (n=252)		Cotabato (n=257)			
	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male
5 or less people	15.5%	12.3%	27.2%	26.5%	21.4%	19.4%
6 to 10 people	40.1%	13.9%	24.9%	15.6%	32.4%	14.7%
11 or more people	12.3%	6.0%	3.1%	2.7%	7.7%	4.3%
TOTAL	67.9%	32.1%	55.3%	44.7%	61.5%	38.5%

A nearly equal proportion of respondents indicated having five (5) or fewer household members (40%) and residents having six (6) to ten (10) individuals (47%) living in the same household. Regarding the study sites, Cotabato had a lower percentage of households with five (5) or fewer members (54%) compared to Marawi, where a significant number of respondents reported having approximately six (6) to ten (10) household members (54%). Notably, a significant number of respondents from Marawi also mentioned having households with 11 or more members (18%), while only a small fraction (6%) in Cotabato reported the same.

5.1.1.6. Economic well-being

The majority of respondents from both study sites (Cotabato and Marawi) were not involved in any income-generating activities or were unemployed. In Cotabato, two (2) out of three (3) respondents were unemployed, while in Marawi, the figure stood at around 52%. This indicated that a significant portion of the population in both areas face challenges in finding or sustaining employment.

Table 13. Percentage distribution of survey respondents' perceived financial well-being, by gender and study site, WVDF Child Marriage Research Survey 2023

Involvement to Income-Generating Activity	Study Sites				All Sample (n=509)	
	Marawi (n=252)		Cotabato (n=257)			
	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male
Yes	15.5%	17.1%	20.6%	27.2%	18.1%	22.2%
No	52.4%	15.1%	34.6%	17.5%	43.4%	16.3%
TOTAL	67.9%	32.1%	55.3%	44.7%	61.5%	38.5%

Perceived financial well-being	Study Sites				All Sample (n=509)	
	Marawi (n=252)		Cotabato (n=257)			
	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male
No difficulty at all	1.2%	0.4%	0.0%	0.4%	0.6%	0.4%
A little bit of difficulty	39.7%	20.6%	37.7%	34.6%	38.7%	27.7%
A moderate amount of difficulty	23.8%	6.0%	14.0%	8.9%	18.9%	7.5%
A lot of difficulty	3.2%	4.4%	3.5%	0.8%	3.3%	2.6%
Not managing at all	0.0%	0.8%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.4%
TOTAL	55.3%	44.7%	67.9%	32.1%	61.5%	38.5%

Considering their lack of income or employment, many respondents (66%) mentioned that they faced some degree of difficulty in managing their financial status. This suggests that even without a stable source of income, individuals in these communities strive to manage their financial obligations and make ends meet. This pattern in Marawi can be partly explained by Rivera (1960, pg. 5):[46] "…*It is traditionally customary for several related families to live together which therefore calls for long houses. A Meranaw (or a local resident in Marawi City) ventured to say that they must live in this crowded fashion for reasons of economy as it is quite expensive for each family to build its own dwelling. Besides, the whole clan likes to live together and that a large house is not only imposing but also commands prestige. The families with large long houses are people with substantial means according to their social stand…*"

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45 Education in the Philippines is compulsory for all children, and free public education is provided for pre-elementary, elementary and high school
46 Rivera, G.F. (1960). The Maranao Muslims in Lumbayao, Lanao. Philippine Sociological Review, January-April 1960, Vol. 8, No. ½. Pp. 1-9.

Furthermore, a smaller portion of respondents (26%) indicated experiencing a moderate level of difficulty in handling their financial situation, which implies that they encountered more substantial challenges compared to those who experienced only slight difficulty.

Moreover, a noteworthy percentage of participants (5.9%) revealed that they are currently facing a considerable amount of difficulty in managing their finances. This suggests that a subset of respondents was encountering severe financial hardships, likely due to a lack of income or employment opportunities.

Overall, these findings highlight the financial struggles faced by a significant number of respondents in both Cotabato and Marawi, given their limited involvement in income-generating activities or employment.

5.1.2. FAITH AND RELIGIOSITY

5.1.2.1. Tribe or ethnic affiliation

Table 14. Percentage distribution of survey respondents' Muslim tribe or ethnic affiliation, by gender and study site, WVDF Child Marriage Research Survey 2023

| Muslim Tribe Affiliation | Study Sites | | | | All Sample (n=509) | |
| | Marawi (n=252) | | Cotabato (n=257) | | | |
	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male
Meranaw	67.5%	31.7%	1.2%	0.4%	34.1%	15.9%
Tausug	0.4%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.2%	0.0%
Iranun	0.0%	0.0%	10.9%	9.0%	5.5%	4.5%
Maguind-anaon	0.0%	0.0%	43.4%	35.2%	21.9%	17.7%
Iyakan	0.0%	0.4%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.2%
TOTAL	67.9%	32.1%	55.5%	44.5%	61.6%	38.4%

In Marawi, almost all of the respondents (99%) identified themselves as Meranaw. The Meranaw people are the predominant ethnic group in Marawi and its surrounding areas. This indicates a high level of homogeneity within the respondent population in terms of ethnic identity.

On the other hand, the respondents in Cotabato represented a more diverse range of ethnic backgrounds. The majority of the respondents in Cotabato were reported to belong to the Maguindanaon ethnic group (78%). The Maguindanaon people are one of the major ethnic groups in the region. Besides that, 19% of the respondents identified themselves as Iranun, while a smaller portion (2%) identified themselves as Meranaw.

The presence of multiple ethnic groups among the respondents in Cotabato suggests a greater level of ethnic diversity in comparison to Marawi. This diversity reflects the multicultural nature of the Cotabato region, where different ethnic groups coexist and contribute to the local population. It's worth noting that these statistics are specific to the respondents surveyed and may not be indicative of the overall ethnic composition of the entire populations of Marawi and Cotabato. However, they do provide insight into the ethnic makeup of the respondents involved in this research.

5.1.2.2. Dimension of faith and religiosity by gender and study site

Across all dimensions of faith and religiosity, the study sites of Marawi and Cotabato consistently demonstrated predominantly positive percentages, regardless of gender. Specifically, when examining the aspects of faith beliefs and private practice, both locations exhibited remarkably similar scores. In fact, over 90% of individuals surveyed fell into the "high" category for these dimensions, indicating a strong level of faith and active involvement in private religious practices.

Moving beyond faith beliefs and private practice, the breakdown between the "high" and "moderate" scores varied across the remaining categories. For instance, individuals categorised as "high" scorers in dimensions such as experience of faith, public practice, interest in religious matters, and overall religiosity indicated that they possess a strong sense of faith, actively participate in public religious practices, demonstrate a genuine interest in religious topics, and display a high level of religiosity overall.

On the other hand, individuals that fell into the "moderate" category also reported experiences of faith, engagement in public religious practices, a certain degree of interest in religious matters, and a level of religious devotion. While these scores may have not reached the same intensity as those in the "high" category, they still reflected generally positive levels of faith and religiosity.

In summary, the study sites of Marawi and Cotabato exhibited consistent patterns of positive percentages across various dimensions of faith and religiosity, irrespective of gender. The majority of individuals displayed a strong faith and active private religious practices, while variations existed in the distribution of scores for other dimensions. However, even in these variations, the overall levels of faith

Table 15. Percentage distribution of survey respondents' dimension of faith and religiosity, by gender and study site, WVDF Child Marriage Research Survey 2023

Dimensions of faith and religiosity		All Sample (n=509)		Study Sites					
				Marawi (n=252)			Cotabato (n=257)		
		Female	Male	Female	Male	TOTAL	Female	Male	TOTAL
Faith beliefs	No faith	0.0%	0.2%	0.0%	0.4%	**0.4%**	0.0%	0.0%	**0.0%**
	With faith	1.4%	2.0%	1.2%	2.8%	**4.0%**	1.6%	1.2%	**2.7%**
	With strong faith	60.1%	36.3%	66.7%	29.0%	**95.6%**	53.7%	43.6%	**97.3%**
Faith experience	No experience of faith	0.6%	0.8%	0.4%	1.6%	**2.0%**	0.8%	0.0%	**0.8%**
	Experience of faith	23.4%	13.4%	17.1%	11.9%	**29.0%**	29.6%	14.8%	**44.4%**
	Strong experience of faith	37.5%	24.4%	50.4%	18.7%	**69.0%**	24.9%	30.0%	**54.9%**
Private practice	No private practice	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	**0.0%**	0.0%	0.0%	**0.0%**
	Engaged in private practice	3.5%	1.8%	1.2%	2.8%	**4.0%**	5.8%	0.8%	**6.6%**
	Engaged in strong private practice	58.0%	36.7%	66.7%	29.4%	**96.0%**	49.4%	44.0%	**93.4%**
Public practice of religion	No public practice	0.5%	0.7%	0.9%	0.0%	**0.9%**	0.0%	1.4%	**1.4%**
	Engaged in public practice	20.6%	19.3%	21.1%	19.3%	**40.4%**	20.2%	19.3%	**39.4%**
	Engaged in strong public practice	39.9%	19.0%	46.2%	12.6%	**58.7%**	33.5%	25.7%	**59.2%**
Intellectual interest	No interest	0.0%	1.6%	0.0%	3.2%	**3.2%**	0.0%	0.0%	**0.0%**
	Interest	28.9%	16.9%	25.0%	14.7%	**39.7%**	32.7%	19.1%	**51.8%**
	Strong interest	32.6%	20.0%	42.9%	14.3%	**57.1%**	22.6%	25.7%	**48.2%**
Perception of societal religiosity	Non-religious	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	**0.0%**	0.0%	0.0%	**0.0%**
	Religious	23.4%	15.9%	21.0%	16.7%	**37.7%**	25.7%	15.2%	**40.9%**
	Highly religious	38.1%	22.6%	46.8%	15.5%	**62.3%**	29.6%	29.6%	**59.1%**

and religiosity reported remained within the range of generally positive values.

5.1.2.3. Dimension of faith and religiosity by respondent category and study site

When analysing the data by respondent category, specifically community members and faith leaders, the findings revealed a consistent pattern. In both the Marawi and Cotabato study sites, there was a prevalent positive trend across all dimensions of faith and religiosity, regardless of the respondent category. More specifically, when examining faith beliefs and private practices, both community members and faith leaders in these locations exhibited remarkably similar scores. In fact, an overwhelming majority of individuals surveyed (over 90%) fell into the "high" category for these dimensions, indicating a strong level of faith and active engagement in private religious practices.

Extending beyond faith beliefs and private practices, the distribution between "high" and "moderate" scores varied across the remaining categories. For instance, individuals classified as "high" scorers in dimensions such as the

experience of faith, public practices, interest in religious matters, and overall religiosity suggests that they possess a strong sense of faith, actively participate in public religious practices, exhibit a genuine interest in religious topics, and display a high level of religiosity overall.

Conversely, respondents (either community members or faith leaders) under the "moderate" category also reported experiences of faith, engagement in public religious practices, a certain degree of interest in religious matters, and a level of religious devotion. Although these scores may not have reached the same intensity as those in the "high" category, they still reflected generally positive levels of faith and religiosity.

In summary, both community members and faith leaders in the Marawi and Cotabato study sites consistently demonstrated positive trends across various dimensions of faith and religiosity. The majority of respondents from these groups exhibited strong faith and active engagement in private religious practices, while variations existed in the distribution of scores for other dimensions. However, even within these variations, the overall levels of faith and religiosity reported consistently fell within the range of

Table 16. Percentage distribution of survey respondents' dimension of faith and religiosity, by respondent category and study site, WVDF Child Marriage Research Survey 2023

Dimensions of faith and religiosity		All Sample (n=509)		Study Sites					
				Marawi (n=252)			Cotabato (n=257)		
		CM	FL	CM	FL	TOTAL	CM	FL	TOTAL
Faith beliefs	No faith	0.0%	0.2%	0.0%	0.0%	**0.0%**	0.0%	0.4%	**0.4%**
	With faith	2.9%	0.4%	2.3%	0.4%	**2.7%**	3.6%	0.4%	**4.0%**
	With strong faith	71.3%	25.1%	71.6%	25.7%	**97.3%**	71.0%	24.6%	**95.6%**
Faith experience	No experience of faith	1.4%	0.0%	0.8%	0.0%	**0.8%**	2.0%	0.0%	**2.0%**
	Experience of faith	31.8%	4.9%	40.9%	3.5%	**44.4%**	22.6%	6.3%	**29.0%**
	Strong experience of faith	41.1%	20.8%	32.3%	22.6%	**54.9%**	50.0%	19.0%	**69.0%**
Private practice	No private practice	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	**0.0%**	0.0%	0.0%	**0.0%**
	Engaged in private practice	4.7%	0.6%	6.6%	0.0%	**6.6%**	2.8%	1.2%	**4.0%**
	Engaged in strong private practice	69.5%	25.1%	67.3%	26.1%	**93.4%**	71.8%	24.2%	**96.0%**
Public practice of religion	No public practice	0.5%	0.7%	0.0%	1.4%	**1.4%**	0.9%	0.0%	**0.9%**
	Engaged in public practice	25.2%	14.7%	22.0%	17.4%	**39.4%**	28.3%	12.1%	**40.4%**
	Engaged in strong public practice	49.7%	9.3%	52.8%	6.4%	**59.2%**	46.6%	12.1%	**58.7%**
Intellectual interest	No interest	1.6%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	**0.0%**	3.2%	0.0%	**3.2%**
	Interest	40.9%	4.9%	48.2%	3.5%	**51.8%**	33.3%	6.3%	**39.7%**
	Strong interest	31.8%	20.8%	25.7%	22.6%	**48.2%**	38.1%	19.0%	**57.1%**
Perception of societal religiosity	Non-religious	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	**0.0%**	0.0%	0.0%	**0.0%**
	Religious	32.4%	6.9%	33.9%	7.0%	**40.9%**	31.0%	6.7%	**37.7%**
	Highly religious	41.8%	18.9%	40.1%	19.1%	**59.1%**	43.7%	18.7%	**62.3%**

generally positive values.

5.1.3. DESCRIPTIVE SOCIAL NORMS AROUND CHILD MARRIAGE

5.1.3.1. Perceived prevalence of child marriage

Table 17. Perceived prevalence of child marriage in study sites, WVDF Child Marriage Survey 2023

Allowing to let their daughters get married before 18	Study Sites			
	Marawi (n=252)		Cotabato (n=257)	
	Female	Male	Female	Male
Always	1.2%	2.0%	2.4%	2.0%
Most of the time	32.9%	33.3%	34.8%	34.8%
Sometimes	33.7%	27.8%	35.2%	36.4%
Never	12.3%	16.3%	27.6%	26.4%
Do not know	14.7%	15.5%	0.0%	0.0%
Does not want to answer	5.2%	5.2%	0.0%	0.4%
TOTAL	**100.0%**	**100.0%**	**100.0%**	**100.0%**

Roughly 60% of participants from both study locations, regardless of gender, stated that their community allows for the marriage of their daughters before they reach 18 years of age. The respondents who shared this view selected the following options on the survey: "always," "most of the time," and "occasionally."

The survey conducted in Marawi and Cotabato found that a significant number of parents and caregivers marry off their daughters before the age of 18. In Marawi, 34% of respondents said that this happens always, most of the time, or sometimes, while in Cotabato, the figure was 43%. This was true regardless of gender, with both male and female respondents reporting similar rates of early marriage.

The study also found that majority of the faith leaders also thought that parents/caregivers married off their daughter before 18.

Table 18. Perceived prevalence of child marriage per respondent category, by study site, WVDF Child Marriage Survey 2023

Respondent category	Allowing to let their daughters get married before 18	Study Sites			
		Marawi (n=252)		Cotabato (n=257)	
		Female	Male	Female	Male
Community members	always	0.8%	0.8%	1.2%	0.8%
	most of the time	17.9%	19.8%	21.6%	22.0%
	sometimes	15.5%	12.3%	20.0%	20.0%
	never	9.5%	9.9%	15.2%	14.8%
	do not know	9.9%	10.7%	0.0%	0.0%
	does not want to answer	2.8%	2.8%	0.0%	0.4%
Faith leaders	always	0.4%	1.2%	0.4%	0.4%
	most of the time	8.3%	7.5%	9.6%	9.6%
	sometimes	9.1%	8.3%	7.6%	8.0%
	never	2.8%	4.4%	8.0%	7.6%
	do not know	3.6%	2.8%	0.0%	0.0%
	does not want to answer	1.2%	1.2%	0.0%	0.0%
Community members who let their daughters married before 18	always	0.0%	0.0%	0.8%	0.8%
	most of the time	6.7%	6.0%	3.6%	3.2%
	sometimes	9.1%	7.1%	7.6%	8.4%
	never	0.0%	2.0%	4.4%	4.0%
	do not know	1.2%	2.0%	0.0%	0.0%
	does not want to answer	1.2%	1.2%	0.0%	0.0%
TOTAL		100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

5.1.3.2. Age at first marriage

Table 19. Typical age at first marriage, per gender and study site, WVDF Child Marriage Survey 2023

Typical age at first marriage	Study Sites			
	Marawi (n=252)		Cotabato (n=257)	
	Female	Male	Female	Male
Below 18	48.4%	37.3%	58.0%	31.1%
18-19	19.4%	25.0%	14.8%	33.1%
20+	32.1%	37.7%	27.2%	35.8%
TOTAL	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

A notable proportion of respondents from both Marawi and Cotabato consistently reported that the average age of first marriage falls below 18. This concerning pattern is particularly pronounced among girls, with 48% of Marawi respondents and 58% of Cotabato respondents highlighting instances where female children are affected, surpassing the corresponding numbers for boys.

Table 20. Typical age at first marriage by respondent category, per gender and study site, WVDF Child Marriage Survey 2023

Respondent category	Typical age at first marriage	Study Sites			
		Marawi (n=252)		Cotabato (n=257)	
		Female	Male	Female	Male
Community members	below 18	25.0%	17.1%	32.3%	16.7%
	18-19	10.7%	15.5%	8.2%	17.1%
	20+	20.6%	23.8%	17.5%	24.1%
Faith leaders	below 18	12.7%	12.3%	16.7%	8.9%
	18-19	4.0%	5.2%	3.5%	9.7%
	20+	8.7%	7.9%	5.8%	7.4%
Community members who let their daughters married before 18	below 18	10.7%	7.9%	8.9%	5.4%
	18-19	4.8%	4.4%	3.1%	6.2%
	20+	2.8%	6.0%	3.9%	4.3%
TOTAL		100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

By disaggregating the typical age at first marriage based on respondent category, a consistent pattern emerged. It was evident from the reports of community members and faith leaders that a concerning trend exists within their communities, where a significant number of children, particularly girls, are being married before reaching the age of 18.

5.1.4. INJUNCTIVE SOCIAL NORMS AROUND CHILD MARRIAGE

5.1.4.1. Right of females to choose the age of marriage

Across all genders and geographical locations, an over-whelmingly large majority of respondents unequivocally agreed that women, regardless of their age, within their respective communities possess the fundamental right to autonomously determine the timing of their marriage.

Table 21. Right of females to choose the age of marriage, per gender and study site, WVDF Child Marriage Survey 2023

Right of female to choose the age of marriage		Study Sites			
		Marawi *(n=252)*		Cotabato *(n=257)*	
		Female	Male	Female	Male
Community members	Yes	93.7%	99.6%	95.3%	99.1%
	No	6.0%	0.4%	4.7%	0.9%
	Does not want to answer	0.4%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
TOTAL		100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

5.1.4.2. Right of females to choose their husband

Table 22. Right of female to choose their husband, per gender and study site, WVDF Child Marriage Survey 2023

Right of female to choose their husband		Study Sites			
		Marawi *(n=252)*		Cotabato *(n=257)*	
		Female	Male	Female	Male
Community members	Yes	93.3%	99.2%	96.9%	99.6%
	No	6.3%	0.8%	3.1%	0.4%
	Does not want to answer	0.4%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
TOTAL		100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Collectively, the respondents, irrespective of gender and geographic location, resoundingly agreed with the notion that women in their respective communities are entitled to exercise their agency in selecting their life partners and determining their marital destinies.

5.1.5. KNOWLEDGE OF NEGATIVE CONSEQUENCES OF CHILD MARRIAGE FROM THE PERSPECTIVE OF FAITH AND RELIGIOSITY

5.1.5.1. Mean scores for the knowledge of negative consequences of child marriage

Table 23. Mean scores[47] for the knowledge of negative consequences of child marriage, per levels of faith and religioisity, WVDF Child Marriage Survey 2023

Dimensions of faith and religiosity		Study Sites *(n=509)*	
		Marawi	Cotabato
Faith beliefs	No faith	2.0	-
	With faith	2.79	3.27
	With strong faith	3.31	3.55
Faith experience	No experience of faith	2.37	2.79
	Experience of faith	3.06	3.49
	Strong experience of faith	3.41	3.59
Private practice of religion	No private practice	-	-
	Engaged in private practice	3.01	3.79
	Engaged in strong private practice	3.30	3.52
Public practice of religion	No public practice	3.86	3.19
	Engaged in public practice	3.44	3.48
	Engaged in strong public practice	3.20	3.46
Intellectual interest in religion	No interest	2.41	-
	Interest	3.06	3.51
	Strong interest	3.50	3.57
Perception of societal religiosity	Non-religious	-	-
	Religious	3.10	3.47
	Highly religious	3.40	3.58

Through an extensive examination encompassing various aspects of faith and religiosity, it was found that respondents demonstrated a moderate level of knowledge about the negative consequences associated with child marriage. Notably, as respondents' religiosity levels increased—in relation to faith beliefs, faith experiences, private practice of religion (specifically in the context of Marawi), intellectual interest in religion, and perception of societal religiosity—there was a corresponding increase in their understanding of the

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[47] Mean scores range from 1-5. The corresponding categories are as follows: 1.0-2.0 indicates "No Knowledge", 2.1-3.9 indicates "With knowledge", while 4.0-5.0 indicates "With strong knowledge"

harmful effects of child marriage. This suggests that individuals who held stronger religious convictions, engaged in regular private religious practices, exhibited a deep intellectual curiosity about religion, or perceived higher religiosity within their society were more likely to possess an enhanced awareness of the negative ramifications of child marriage.

However, in Cotabato, an intriguing and opposite finding emerged. As religiosity levels intensified in relation to private practice and public practice of religion, there was a decrease in knowledge scores about the adverse consequences of child marriage. This implies that individuals who actively engaged in private religious practices in Cotabato or participated more frequently in public religious activities tended to have a relatively lower understanding of the detrimental effects of child marriage. This suggests that context and its social, cultural, and ethnic aspects matter.

Overall, this comprehensive analysis highlights the complex interplay between faith, religiosity, and knowledge regarding the negative consequences of child marriage. While certain dimensions of religiosity exhibited a positive correlation with knowledge, other facets demonstrated an inverse relationship. This helps shed light on the nuanced dynamics within different religious contexts.

5.1.5.2. Percentages of agreements with the statements around negative consequences of child marriage per study site

Based on the survey results, there is a notable level of awareness among respondents regarding the impact of early marriage, especially concerning the potential health repercussions for young girls. However, it is worth noting that some of the participants held the view that early marriage does not entail any detrimental consequences.

Table 24. Percentages of agreements with the statements around negative consequences of child marriage, per study sites, WVDF Child Marriage Survey 2023

Statements	Study Sites (n=509)	
	Marawi	Cotabato
1. A woman who has her first child before age 18 is likely to have difficulties giving birth.	61.5%	82.1%
2. A woman who has her first child before 18 is more likely than older women to have injuries and infections after birth.	52.4%	62.6%
3. A girl who is married before 18 is more likely to be beaten by her husband.	43.3%	47.5%
4. Children born to girls under 18 are more likely to be underweight and premature/born early.	54.0%	51.4%
5. Girls who marry before age 18 have children more quickly one after another.	66.3%	84.0%
6. A young married wife (under 18 years old) cannot make wise decisions about how to run the household.	40.9%	49.4%
7. Marriage soon after puberty does not have negative consequences for the girl.	43.3%	47.9%

5.1.6. FAITH NORMS AROUND CHILD MARRIAGE

5.1.6.1. Faith norms around child marriage

Table 25. Mean scores[48] for the faith norms, per gender and participant category, WVDF Child Marriage Survey 2023

Selected socio-demographic characteristics		Study Sites (n=509)	
		Marawi	Cotabato
Gender	Male	3.16	2.93
	Female	2.93	3.13
Participant category	Community members	2.97	3.07
	Faith leaders	3.08	2.93
	Community members who married their daughter before 18	3.00	3.10

On average, respondents across various study sites, regardless of gender and participant category, exhibited a positive attitude towards faith norms that discourage

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[48] Mean scores range from 1-5. The corresponding categories are as follows: 1.0-2.0 indicates "Supportive of child marriage", 2.1-3.9 indicates "Non-supportive of child marriage", while 4.0-5.0 indicates "Strongly non-supportive of child marriage"

child marriage. Male respondents from Marawi had higher scores in terms of non-supportive faith norms towards child marriage, compared to their counterparts in Cotabato. Conversely for female respondents, those from Cotabato had higher scores in non-supportive faith norms compared to their counterparts in Marawi. However, neither of these differences are statistically significant.

Furthermore, faith leaders in Marawi generally demonstrated higher scores with non-supportive faith norms towards child marriage, indicating a stronger stance against the practice. On the other hand, community members in Cotabato who had married off their daughters before the age of 18 exhibited the highest scores in non-supportive faith norms, surpassing other participant categories.

5.1.6.2. Percentages of agreements with the statements around faith norms that support child marriage per study site

Table 26. Percentages of agreement with the statements, per study sites, WVDF Child Marriage Survey 2023

Statements	Study Sites (n=509)	
	Marawi	Cotabato
1. My faith says that marriage/living with a partner martially (unofficial marriage) before age 18 is not allowed.	78.2%	88.3%
2. Girls in my faith community should only be married/living with a partner martially (unofficial marriage) as adults (over 18).	83.7%	60.3%
3. Those who want to end marriage/living with a partner martially (unofficial marriage) before age 18 are opposing our faith beliefs.	85.3%	61.9%
4. My faith says that the most important role for females is to become a wife and a mother.	8.3%	23.3%
5. God/Allah/Gods/Higher Power/Transcendent has created male superior over female.	4.4%	3.9%

The majority of respondents from both study sites expressed agreement with the statements concerning faith-driven norms surrounding child marriage in their respective communities. Notably, when examining the last two statements relating to gender roles within the community, an intriguing finding emerged. It appears that

there may have been significant disagreement regarding the perception of women's roles, particularly concerning traditional stereotypes that define their purpose solely as wives and mothers, and that portray them as inferior to males.

This observation raises interesting questions about the prevailing attitudes towards gender roles, and the potential influence of cultural and societal factors within both study sites. The contrasting viewpoints regarding women's roles indicate the existence of diverse perspectives and the need for further exploration to understand the underlying factors contributing to these differing beliefs.

5.1.6.3. Scores for the faith norms surrounding child marriage per levels of faith and religiosity

Table 27. Mean scores[49] for the faith norms surrounding child marriage, per levels of faith and religiosity, WVDF Child Marriage Survey 2023

Dimensions of faith and religiosity		Study Sites (n=509)	
		Marawi	Cotabato
Faith beliefs	No faith	1.00	-
	With faith	3.50	3.68
	With strong faith	4.79	4.59
Faith experience	No experience of faith	1.80	2.00
	Experience of faith	3.31	3.38
	Strong experience of faith	4.51	4.46
Private practice of religion	No private practice	-	-
	Engaged in private practice	3.20	3.37
	Engaged in strong private practice	4.85	4.78
Public practice of religion	No public practice	1.50	1.00
	Engaged in public practice	3.36	3.52
	Engaged in strong public practice	4.52	4.72
Intellectual interest in religion	No interest	1.78	-
	Interest	3.33	3.37
	Strong interest	4.57	4.49
Perception of societal religiosity	Non-religious	-	-
	Religious	3.68	3.65
	Highly religious	4.32	4.28

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[49] Mean scores range from 1-5. The corresponding categories are as follows: 1.0-2.0 indicates "Supportive of child marriage", 2.1-3.9 indicates "Non-supportive of child marriage", while 4.0-5.0 indicates "Strongly non-supportive of child marriage"

The data clearly indicates a positive correlation between levels of faith and religiosity, and the scores supporting measures against the practice of child marriage in both study sites. This finding challenges the conventional notion that faith-driven norms and beliefs promote child marriage and suggests a different perspective. Moreover, when analysed in isolation from other factors such as social and economic context, this relationship between faith and the opposition child marriage could be seen as a potential protective mechanism to the practice.

In recognising this unexpected association, it becomes crucial to delve deeper into the complex interplay between faith, social dynamics, and economic factors to gain a more comprehensive understanding. Exploring how faith can serve as a catalyst for positive change and act as a safeguard against harmful practices like child marriage can inform targeted interventions and policies.

5.1.7. FAITH VERSUS CULTURE: NORMS AROUND GENDER, FAMILY REPUTATION, SEXUALITY, REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH, PARENTING AND EDUCATION

5.1.7.1. Prevailing faith and social norms

Figure 6. Bar graph distribution of respondents who answered to the statement regarding "Whether they would marry their daughters off or let them live with a partner maritally (unofficial marriage) young to reduce family burden," per study site, WVDF Child Marriage Survey 2023
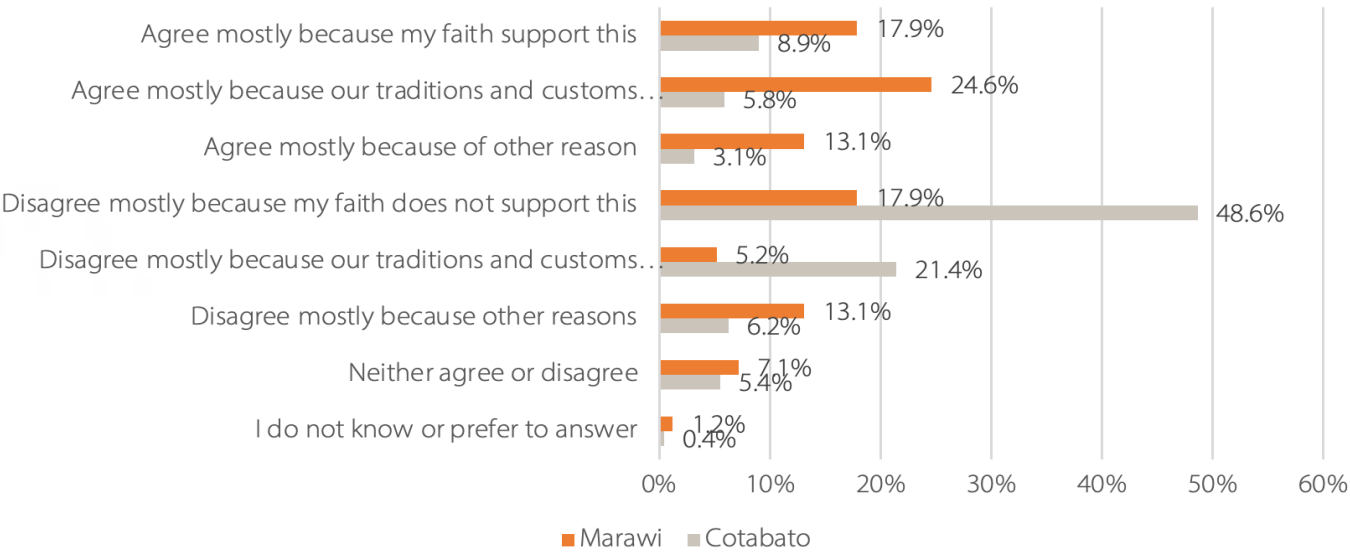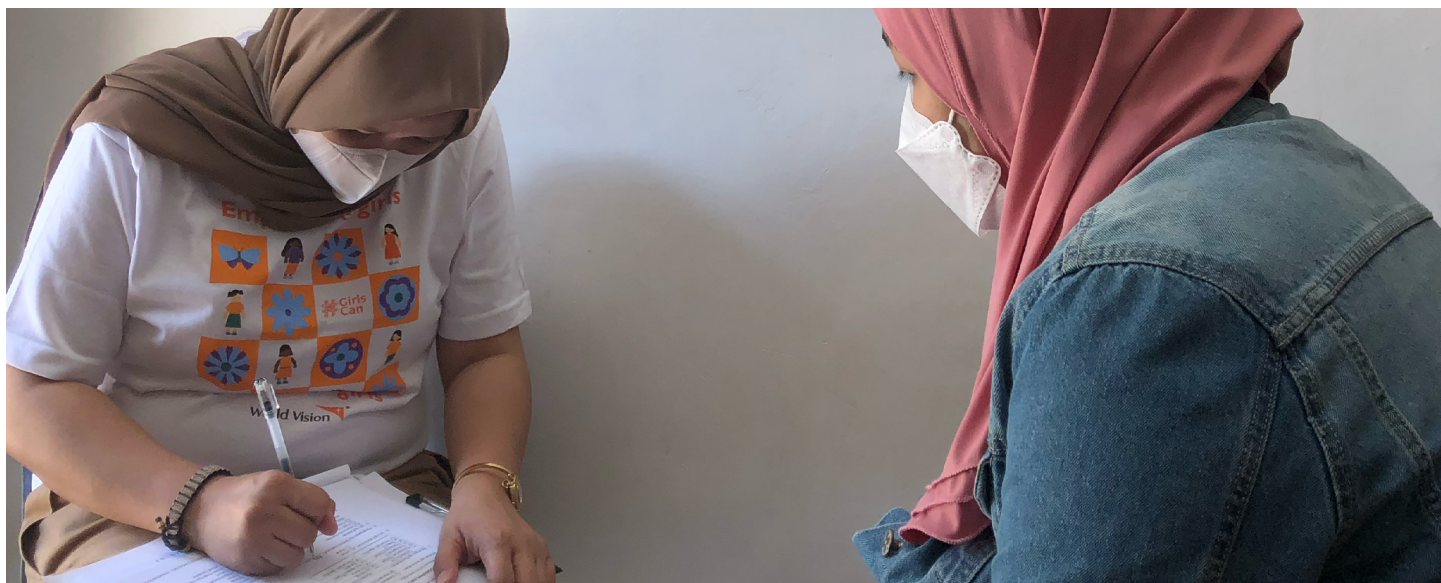
Figure 7. Bar graph distribution of respondents who answered to the statement regarding "Whether it is the duty of a parent to ensure that a daughter is married/living with a partner maritally (unofficial marriage) before the age of 18," per study site, WVDF Child Marriage Survey 2023

Agree mostly because my faith support this — Marawi 36.9%, Cotabato 10.1%
Agree mostly because our traditions and customs… — Marawi 11.9%, Cotabato 12.5%
Agree mostly because of other reason — Marawi 17.9%, Cotabato 4.7%
Disagree mostly because my faith does not support this — Marawi 8.7%, Cotabato 25.7%
Disagree mostly because our traditions and customs… — Marawi 6.3%, Cotabato 35.4%
Disagree mostly because other reasons — Marawi 7.0%, Cotabato 10.7%
Neither agree or disagree — Marawi 3.9%, Cotabato 6.7%
I do not know or prefer to answer — Marawi 0.8%, Cotabato 0.8%

■ Marawi ■ Cotabato

Figure 8. Bar graph distribution of respondents who answered to the statement regarding "Whether marrying a girl or letting a girl live with a partner martially (unofficial marriage) early protects her from sexual violence," per study site, WVDF Child Marriage Survey 2023

Agree mostly because my faith support this — Marawi 58.3%, Cotabato 39.7%
Agree mostly because our traditions and customs… — Marawi 15.5%, Cotabato 17.1%
Agree mostly because of other reason — Marawi 12.3%, Cotabato 7.8%
Disagree mostly because my faith does not support… — Marawi 2.0%, Cotabato 15.2%
Disagree mostly because our traditions and customs… — Marawi 4.0%, Cotabato 10.1%
Disagree mostly because other reasons — Marawi 4.0%, Cotabato 2.3%
Neither agree or disagree — Marawi 3.2%, Cotabato 6.6%
I do not know or prefer to answer — Marawi 0.8%, Cotabato 1.2%

■ Marawi ■ Cotabato

Figure 9. Bar graph distribution of respondents who answered to the statement regarding "Whether girls should get married/live with a partner martially (unofficial marriage) when they reach puberty/menstruation to protect their family's honour," per study site, WVDF Child Marriage Survey 2023
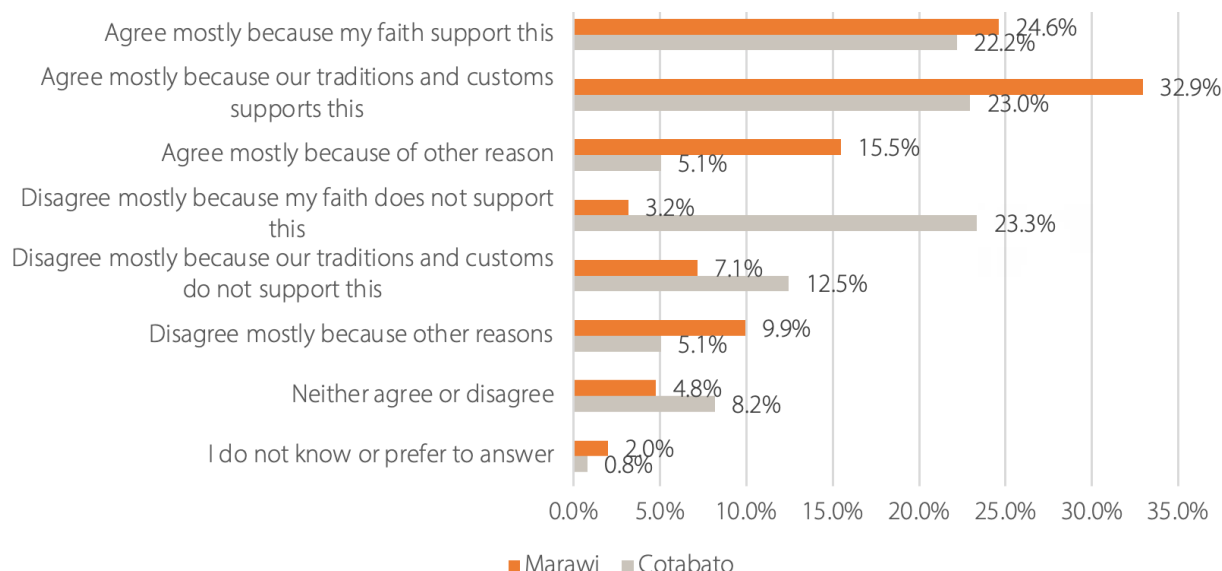
Figure 10. Bar graph distribution of respondents who answered to the statement regarding "Whether females should not be the head of family or head of any institution, organization and a country," per study site, WVDF Child Marriage Survey 2023
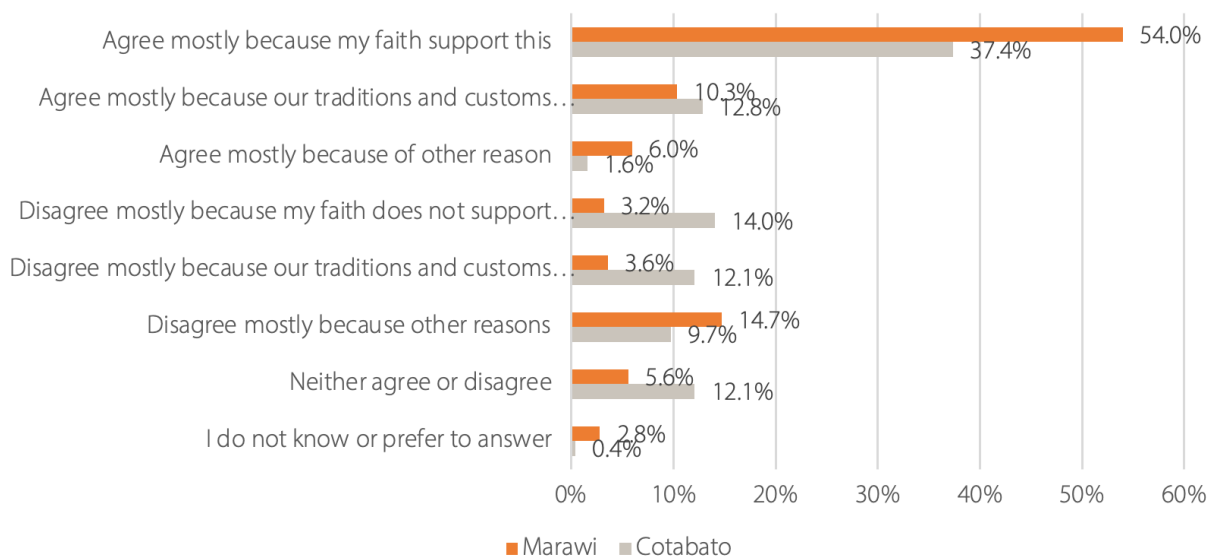
Based on the survey conducted, it was apparent that Marawi respondents held a stronger inclination towards supporting early marriage for their children, perceiving it as a way to alleviate the family burden and fulfil their parental duties. This viewpoint is deeply rooted in the faith, traditions, and customs within their community. In contrast, Cotabato respondents exhibited a distinct perspective, which is that they don't agree that early marriage is a way to alleviate family burden and fulfil parental duties, as these are not in any way supported by their faith, traditions and customs.

However, it is noteworthy that both Marawi and Cotabato respondents shared similar beliefs when it comes to the protective aspects of early marriage. They believe that marrying girls at a young age can safeguard them from sexual violence and uphold the honor of their families. These perspectives are strongly influenced by their respective faiths, traditions, and customs.

Furthermore, both groups expressed agreement on the notion that females should not assume leadership roles in institutions, organisations, or even at the national level. This

viewpoint is also rooted in their religious beliefs and was consistent across both Marawi and Cotabato respondents. In summary, the survey findings indicate that Marawi respondents demonstrated a greater inclination towards endorsing early marriage to address familial burdens and fulfil parental responsibilities, while Cotabato respondents held differing views on this topic as their faith, custom and tradition don't support such reasons to engage in early marriage. Nonetheless, both groups converged in their perspectives regarding the protective nature of early marriage and the traditional gender roles prescribed within their religious and cultural contexts.

5.1.8. REFERENCE GROUPS

5.1.8.1. Key and top influencer in the opinions of the respondents when deciding to marry off their daughters

Table 28. Key and top three (3) individuals who have great influence to the opinions of the respondents when deciding to marry off their daughters, per reference groups, WVDF Child Marriage Survey 2023

Reference Groups		Study Sites (n=509)	
		Marawi	**Cotabato**
Reference Group 1	Father	62.9%	45.4%
	Mother	15.7%	9.2%
	Relatives	10.7%	29.8%
Reference Group 2	Mother	32.3%	39.6%
	Relatives	30.7%	24.0%
	Father	18.0%	24.0%
Reference Group 3	Relatives	52.9%	41.7%
	Brother	11.2%	-
	Mother	7.6%	14.6%
		-	12.5%

The survey also sought to identify the primary reference groups individuals turned to when making the decision to marry off their daughters before the age of 18. The results revealed that respondents in both study sites predominantly considered fathers as the most influential figures. Mothers, while playing a significant role, were regarded as the secondary group in the preferred reference category. Surprisingly, relatives were ranked third in terms of preference. It is noteworthy that brothers held a prominent position within the top three reference individuals in Marawi, while faith leaders emerged as influential figures in Cotabato. These distinct groups are specific to each study site, indicating regional variations in decision-making processes.

5.1.8.2. Role of faith leaders and congregation members

Figure 11. The role of faith leaders and congregation members when it comes to decision-making of important matters to respondents, WVDF Child Marriage Survey 2023
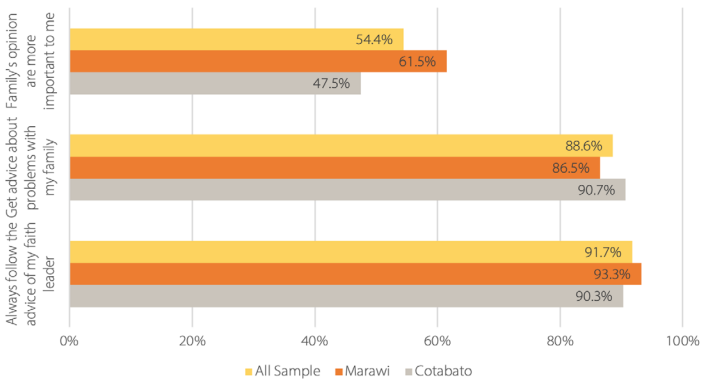
The survey data provides evidence of an overwhelming consensus that respondents placed immense value on the counsel and teachings offered by their faith leaders and the members of their religious community.

The data implies that a vast majority of respondents viewed the advice and guidance of faith leaders and congregation members as indispensable in navigating the complexities of life, which might include matters of marriage and family. It further suggests that these individuals may perceive their religious community as a trusted source of wisdom and moral guidance, and they were reported to rely heavily on the collective wisdom and shared experiences of their religious peers.

In summary, the data underscores the prevailing sentiment that seeking guidance from faith leaders and engaging with the religious community was of utmost importance to respondents. It highlights the significance of faith and community in shaping personal beliefs, values, and actions.

Figure 12. Reaction of people or congregation members when respondents don't follow their advice, WVDF Child Marriage Survey 2023
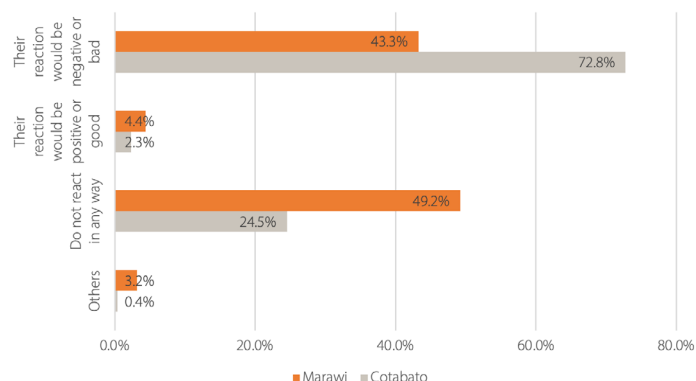
Figure 13. Reaction of faith leaders when respondents don't follow their advice, WVDF Child Marriage Survey 2023
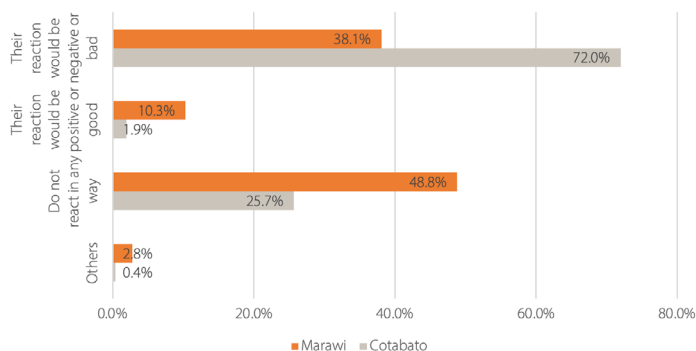
The role of faith leaders and congregation members held immense importance, as evidenced by the respondents' accounts indicating that a majority of them would face negative consequences if they chose to disregard their advice. This pattern was particularly pronounced among the respondents from Cotabato, surpassing those from Marawi. The reason for this might be explained by the fact the Cotabato City is the regional centre of BARMM, which hosts key Islamic institutions in the region, such as the Sultan Haji Hassanal Bolkiah Mosque, also known as the Grand Mosque of Cotabato, and the Regional Darul Ifta[50] which is a successful agency in leading moral governance consistent with the divine guidance and prophetic teachings for the inhabitants of the BARMM.

However, both study sites reported various negative reactions, including congregation members expressing displeasure (58.7% for Marawi, 51.3% for Cotabato), condemning them (78.9% for Marawi, 43.9% for Cotabato),

and excluding them from future activities (18.7% for Cotabato). Conversely, faith leaders demonstrated reactions, such as becoming upset (70.8% for Marawi, 55.1% for Cotabato), condemning them (66.7% for Marawi, 34.1% for Cotabato), excluding the respondents from future activities (10.4% for Marawi, 18.4% for Cotabato), and withdrawing support (13.5% for Marawi).

5.1.9. LINEAR REGRESSION ANALYSIS

In this study, separate linear regression analyses were employed using different subsets of the survey data to investigate the relationship between various factors and the Perception of Faith Norms surrounding child marriage. The aim was to gain deeper insights into the In this study, separate linear regression analyses were employed using different subsets of the survey data to investigate the relationship between various factors and the Perception of Faith Norms surrounding child marriage. The aim was to gain deeper insights into the factors that influence individuals' perceptions of faith norms regarding child marriage.

To capture the nuances of these perceptions, five distinct models were developed for analysis. Model 1 encompassed the entire sample, allowing for a comprehensive examination of the overall factors affecting the Perception of Faith Norms. Model 2 specifically focused on female respondents, enabling a gender-specific exploration of how different variables influence the Perception of Faith Norms surrounding child marriage. By isolating this subgroup, the study aimed to uncover any unique influences or discrepancies, when compared to male respondents.

Similarly, Model 3 concentrated on male respondents to understand their specific perspectives and identify potential gender-related variations in the Perception of Faith Norms associated with child marriage. By comparing the outcomes of Models 2 and 3, the study aimed to shed light on gender dynamics and disparities in these perceptions.

Models 4 and 5 delved into the data from two distinct regions: Marawi and Cotabato City. These region-specific models allowed for an analysis of localised factors that may shape the perception of faith norms related to child marriage. By comparing the results from these models with the previous ones, the study aimed to uncover any regional variations or unique influences on these perceptions.

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[50] Official Website of Bangsamoro Darul-Ifta BARMM. https://bdi.bangsamoro.gov.ph/

The dependent variable used in all models was the overall score calculated for the Perception of Faith Norms surrounding child marriage. This score provided a quantitative measure of individuals' perceptions around whether faith norms supported or opposed child marriage.

In addition to the dependent variable, a range of independent variables were considered to explore predictors of the perception that faith norms do not support child marriage. These independent variables encompassed socio-economic factors such as age, gender, education level, and marital status, as well as variables associated with direct social norms, knowledge of consequences, and dimensions of faith and religiosity. By incorporating these diverse independent variables, the study aimed to comprehensively examine the factors that contribute to individuals' Perceptions of Faith Norms related to child marriage.

Through separate linear regression analyses using different subsets of the survey data, the study sought to provide a nuanced understanding of the factors influencing the Perception of Faith Norms surrounding child marriage, and how they vary across different segments of the surveyed population.

The outcomes of the linear regressions are presented in the succeeding sections. Only the significant variables for each model were highlighted and discussed for a more direct and straightforward explanation.

Table 29. Linear regression output for Model 1 (All Sample) and Model 2 (Females Only), WVDF Child Marriage Survey 2023

Variables	Model 1 (All sample)				Model 2 (Females only)			
	Estimate	Std. Error	t value	Pr(> | t |)	Estimate	Std. Error	t value	Pr(> | t |)
INTERCEPT	3.723	0.582	6.397	0.000***	3.855	0.380	10.140	0.000***
Faith beliefs (ref= No faith)								
With faith	0.707	0.517	1.368	0.172				
With strong faith	0.669	0.503	1.329	0.185	0.011	0.138	0.077	0.938
Faith experience (ref=No faith exp)								
With faith exp	(0.386)	0.186	(2.072)	0.039*	(0.089)	0.210	(0.425)	0.671
With strong faith exp	(0.443)	0.189	(2.341)	0.020 *	(0.112)	0.210	(0.530)	0.596
Private practice of religion (ref=No priv prac)								
Engaged in priv prac	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Engaged in strong priv prac	(0.259)	0.096	(2.703)	0.007**	(0.389)	0.104	(3.732)	0.000***
Public practice of religion (ref=No pub prac)								
Engaged in public prac	(0.018)	0.189	(0.095)	0.924	(0.454)	0.262	(1.730)	0.085
Engaged in strong pub prac	(0.060)	0.191	(0.315)	0.753	(0.433)	0.265	(1.638)	0.103
Intellectual interest in rel (ref= No interest)								
Interest	0.154	0.191	0.802	0.423	-	-	-	-
Strong interest	0.109	0.203	0.537	0.591	(0.037)	0.053	(0.699)	0.485
Perception of soc rel (ref=Non-religious)								
Religious	-	-	-	-				
Highly religious	0.013	0.044	0.298	0.766	(0.026)	0.049	(0.531)	0.596
Faith leader's reaction (ref=Negative)								
Positive	(0.237)	0.121	(1.956)	0.051	(0.253)	0.113	(2.248)	0.026*
No reaction	(0.144)	0.096	(1.501)	0.134	(0.090)	0.085	(1.058)	0.291
Others	0.031	0.271	0.114	0.909	(0.796)	0.277	(2.872)	0.004**
Congregation member's reaction (ref=Negative)								
Positive	(0.082)	0.142	(0.577)	0.564	0.024	0.155	0.155	0.877
No reaction	0.128	0.094	1.366	0.173	0.118	0.081	1.463	0.145
Others	0.457	0.253	1.807	0.072	(0.038)	0.283	(0.134)	0.893

Knowledge on negative consequences (ref=No Knowledge)								
With knowledge	(0.426)	0.119	(3.595)	0.000***	(0.002)	0.130	(0.013)	0.990
With strong knowledge	(0.289)	0.126	(2.296)	0.022*	0.079	0.138	0.571	0.569
Study site (ref=Cotabato)								
Marawi	0.085	0.048	1.759	0.079	(0.034)	0.052	(0.654)	0.514
Gender (ref=Female)								
Male	0.006	0.052	0.105	0.916	-	-	-	-
Category respondent (ref=Community member)								
Faith leaders	0.008	0.061	0.134	0.894	(0.025)	0.081	(0.308)	0.758
Community members who married their daughters before 18	0.007	0.056	0.130	0.897	(0.041)	0.054	(0.760)	0.448
Civil status (ref=Married)								
Live with a partner								
Divorced	0.062	0.157	0.397	0.692	0.184	0.158	1.163	0.246
Separated	0.293	0.186	1.580	0.115	0.143	0.174	0.822	0.412
Widowed	-	-	-	-				
Single	(0.028)	0.294	(0.095)	0.924	(0.236)	0.355	(0.666)	0.506
Education (ref=Never attended)								
Some primary	(0.421)	0.207	(2.040)	0.042*	0.126	0.248	0.508	0.612
Completed primary	(0.805)	0.246	(3.268)	0.001**	0.180	0.305	0.590	0.556
Some elementary	(0.328)	0.185	(1.775)	0.077	0.206	0.211	0.977	0.330
Completed elementary	(0.334)	0.183	(1.825)	0.069	0.221	0.217	1.018	0.310
Some highschool	(0.314)	0.173	(1.813)	0.071	0.272	0.205	1.325	0.186
Completed highschool	(0.314)	0.172	(1.824)	0.069	0.219	0.203	1.076	0.283
Some college	(0.340)	0.177	(1.926)	0.055	0.290	0.210	1.378	0.169
Completed college	(0.386)	0.173	(2.226)	0.027 *	0.143	0.204	0.701	0.484
Some vocational	(0.416)	0.264	(1.577)	0.116	0.262	0.285	0.920	0.358
Completed vocational	(0.604)	0.247	(2.446)	0.015*	(0.122)	0.273	(0.449)	0.654
Some postgraduate	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Completed postgraduate	0.076	0.442	0.171	0.864	-	-	-	-
Job status (ref=Yes)								
No	(0.126)	0.044	(2.880)	0.004**	(0.164)	0.049	(3.362)	0.001***
Presence of child/ren in the household (ref=Yes)								
No	(0.019)	0.049	(0.382)	0.702	0.128	0.057	2.243	0.026*
Age at first marriage	0.000	0.000	0.043	0.966	(0.000)	0.000	(0.624)	0.533
No. of household members	(0.006)	0.006	(0.909)	0.364	(0.001)	0.007	(0.147)	0.883
Multiple R-squared	0.1861				0.3267			
Adjusted R-squared	0.1003				0.2188			
p-value	0.0001***				0.0000***			

In regression model 1 (all samples), a range of factors influenced the overall score of faith norms concerning child marriage. Notably, individuals with a moderate or strong faith experience exhibited a tendency towards lower scores, indicating a greater likelihood of having faith norms that support child marriage. Similarly, those actively engaged in a strong private practice of faith also demonstrated decreased scores in faith norms that discourage child marriage. Moreover, individuals who possessed a strong knowledge of the negative consequences associated with child marriage displayed lower overall scores, reflecting an inclination towards having faith norms that support child marriage. Education levels also played a significant role, as individuals with some primary education, completed primary or college-level education, or vocational training exhibited decreased scores in faith norms, favoring faith norms that support child marriage. Lastly, the absence of employment was correlated with increased overall scores for faith norms supporting child marriage.

In regression model 2 (females only), having a strong private practice of faith generally correlated with a decrease in the overall score of faith norms that do not support child marriage. Additionally, when individuals received a positive reaction from faith leaders by not following their advice, this tended to lead to a decrease in the overall score of faith norms not supporting child marriage. Among non-employed females, there appeared to be a correlation with lower scores, suggesting a disposition towards agreeing with faith norms that support child marriage. Conversely, female participants without children within their households tended to exhibit stronger faith-based norms that do not support child marriage.

Table 30. Linear regression output for Model 3 (Males Only) and Model 4 (Marawi Only), WVDF Child Marriage Survey 2023

Variables	Model 3 (Males only)				Model 4 (Marawi only)			
	Estimate	Std. Error	t value	Pr(> | t |)	Estimate	Std. Error	t value	Pr(> | t |)
INTERCEPT	5.190	0.804	6.461	0.000***	3.939	0.643	6.131	0.000***
Faith beliefs (ref= No faith)								
With faith	(0.049)	0.719	(0.068)	0.946	0.802	0.498	1.612	0.109
With strong faith	0.042	0.691	0.061	0.952	0.717	0.473	1.515	0.131
Faith experience (ref=No faith exp)								
With faith exp	(0.626)	0.337	(1.861)	0.065	(0.675)	0.247	(2.733)	0.007**
With strong faith exp	(0.734)	0.344	(2.136)	0.035*	(0.890)	0.255	(3.488)	0.001***
Private practice of religion (ref=No priv prac)								
Engaged in priv prac	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Engaged in strong priv prac	0.086	0.172	0.498	0.619	(0.035)	0.142	(0.247)	0.805
Public practice of religion (ref=No pub prac)								
Engaged in public prac	0.032	0.264	0.122	0.903	(0.010)	0.302	(0.033)	0.973
Engaged in strong pub prac	0.005	0.263	0.021	0.984	(0.018)	0.306	(0.059)	0.953
Intellectual interest in rel (ref= No interest)								
Interest	0.172	0.289	0.596	0.552	0.563	0.218	2.581	0.011*
Strong interest	0.222	0.304	0.730	0.467	0.574	0.237	2.419	0.017*
Perception of soc rel (ref=Non-religious)								
Religious								
Highly religious	0.006	0.076	0.082	0.935	0.035	0.067	0.522	0.602
Faith leader's reaction (ref=Negative)								
Positive	0.257	0.340	0.756	0.451	(0.390)	0.142	(2.739)	0.007***
No reaction	(0.672)	0.489	(1.374)	0.172	(0.171)	0.116	(1.473)	0.143
Others	0.661	0.689	0.959	0.340	0.087	0.260	0.334	0.739
Congregation member's reaction (ref=Negative)								
Positive	(0.449)	0.326	(1.378)	0.171	0.201	0.155	1.293	0.198
No reaction	0.640	0.488	1.310	0.192	0.285	0.109	2.608	0.010**
Others	0.413	0.634	0.651	0.516	0.315	0.247	1.274	0.204

Knowledge on negative consequences (ref=No Knowledge)								
With knowledge	(0.986)	0.209	(4.714)	0.000***	(0.540)	0.132	(4.098)	0.000***
With strong knowledge	(0.829)	0.221	(3.751)	0.000***	(0.481)	0.145	(3.322)	0.001***
Study site (ref=Cotabato)								
Marawi	0.191	0.091	2.107	0.037*	0.103	0.074	1.397	0.164
Gender (ref=Female)								
Male	-	-	-	-				
Category respondent (ref=Community member)								
Faith leaders	(0.011)	0.099	(0.107)	0.915	0.056	0.077	0.725	0.469
Community members who married their daughters before 18	0.165	0.123	1.341	0.182	(0.025)	0.071	(0.351)	0.726
Civil status (ref=Married)								
Live with a partner	-	-	-	-				
Divorced	(0.832)	0.318	(2.616)	0.010***				
Separated	0.250	0.423	0.591	0.555	0.163	0.161	1.010	0.314
Widowed	-	-	-	-				
Single	0.013	0.444	0.029	0.977	0.435	0.405	1.073	0.285
Education (ref=Never attended)								
Some primary	(0.917)	0.308	(2.975)	0.003**	(0.770)	0.280	(2.753)	0.007**
Completed primary	(1.800)	0.374	(4.817)	0.000***	(1.577)	0.319	(4.949)	0.000***
Some elementary	(1.001)	0.302	(3.310)	0.001**	(0.781)	0.252	(3.099)	0.002**
Completed elementary	(0.957)	0.289	(3.311)	0.001**	(0.646)	0.248	(2.605)	0.010**
Some highschool	(0.971)	0.274	(3.545)	0.001***	(0.681)	0.235	(2.905)	0.004**
Completed highschool	(0.812)	0.274	(2.968)	0.004**	(0.712)	0.239	(2.982)	0.003**
Some college	(0.926)	0.276	(3.352)	0.001**	(0.791)	0.240	(3.294)	0.001**
Completed college	(0.916)	0.278	(3.296)	0.001**	(0.714)	0.240	(2.967)	0.003**
Some vocational	(1.540)	0.535	(2.879)	0.005**	(0.660)	0.298	(2.213)	0.028**
Completed vocational	(0.968)	0.402	(2.406)	0.018*				
Some postgraduate								
Completed postgraduate					(0.320)	0.446	(0.718)	0.474
Job status (ref=Yes)								
No	0.001	0.075	0.019	0.985	(0.075)	0.061	(1.224)	0.222
Presence of child/ren in the household (ref=Yes)								
No	(0.084)	0.078	(1.087)	0.279	(0.047)	0.072	(0.647)	0.518
Age at first marriage	0.000	0.000	0.001	1.000	(0.000)	0.000	(0.532)	0.595
No. of household members	(0.003)	0.011	(0.269)	0.788	(0.009)	0.008	(1.233)	0.219
Multiple R-squared	0.4827				0.394			
Adjusted R-squared	0.3248				0.265			
p-value	0.0000009275***				0.000000264***			

In regression model 3 (males only), various factors significantly influenced faith norms pertaining to child marriage. A robust faith experience, on average, diminished the overall score of faith norms supporting child marriage, emphasising the importance of personal spiritual encounters. Additionally, possessing moderate or strong knowledge regarding the negative consequences of child marriage generally decreased the overall score of faith norms that endorse or tolerate such practices. Within the study site of Marawi, we observed an increased average overall score of faith norms opposing child marriage, indicating a positive shift in attitudes within this specific community. Conversely, being divorced tended to decrease the overall score of faith norms opposing child marriage, suggesting a potential link between marital status and support for child marriage. Furthermore, education tended to decrease overall scores of faith norms, thereby having faith norms that support child marriage.

In regression model 4 (Marawi only), in examining the factors influencing faith norms regarding child marriage,

several key aspects have been identified. Firstly, individuals who possessed a moderate or strong faith experience tended to have a decreased overall score of faith norms that do not support child marriage. Conversely, those with a robust intellectual interest in matters of faith tended to exhibit an increased overall score of faith norms that do not support or oppose child marriage. Furthermore, the reaction of faith leaders played a significant role, as individuals who received positive feedback for deviating from their advice tended to have a reduced overall score of faith norms that do not support child marriage. Similarly, when there is no reaction from congregation members for not following their advice, individuals tend to demonstrate an elevated overall score of faith norms that do not support. Moreover, individuals who possessed moderate to strong knowledge of the negative consequences of child marriage tended to exhibit a decreased overall score of faith norms that do not support child marriage. Lastly, being educated tended to decrease the overall score of faith norms that support child marriage.

Table 31. Linear regression output for Model 5 (Cotabato Only), WVDF Child Marriage Survey 2023

Variables	Model 5 (Cotabato only)			
	Estimate	Std. Error	t value	Pr(> | t |)
INTERCEPT	3.673	0.570	6.445	0.000***
Faith beliefs (ref= No faith)				
With faith				
With strong faith	0.054	0.174	0.312	0.756
Faith experience (ref=No faith exp)				
With faith exp	0.048	0.282	0.170	0.865
With strong faith exp	0.102	0.285	0.357	0.722
Private practice of religion (ref=No priv prac)				
Engaged in priv prac	-	-	-	-
Engaged in strong priv prac	(0.447)	0.128	(3.500)	0.001***
Public practice of religion (ref=No pub prac)				
Engaged in public prac	(0.093)	0.243	(0.384)	0.702
Engaged in strong pub prac	(0.135)	0.249	(0.542)	0.588
Intellectual interest in rel (ref= No interest)				
Interest				
Strong interest	0.038	0.071	0.528	0.598
Perception of soc rel (ref=Non-religious)				
Religious				
Highly religious	0.018	0.059	0.306	0.760
Faith leader's reaction (ref=Negative)				
Positive	(0.102)	0.475	(0.215)	0.830
No reaction	(0.054)	0.172	(0.317)	0.751
Others				

Congregation member's reaction (ref=Negative)				
Positive	(0.468)	0.436	(1.073)	0.285
No reaction	(0.156)	0.167	(0.933)	0.352
Others				
Knowledge on negative consequences (ref=No Knowledge)				
With knowledge	0.088	0.235	0.375	0.708
With strong knowledge	0.240	0.241	0.995	0.321
Study site (ref=Cotabato)				
Marawi				
Gender (ref=Female)				
Male	(0.082)	0.071	(1.149)	0.252
Category respondent (ref=Community member)				
Faith leaders	(0.124)	0.096	(1.303)	0.194
Community members who married their daughters before 18	0.035	0.081	0.433	0.666
Civil status (ref=Married)				
Live with a partner	-	-	-	-
Divorced	(0.543)	0.394	(1.378)	0.170
Separated	0.138	0.189	0.730	0.467
Widowed				
Single	0.197	0.405	0.486	0.627
Education (ref=Never attended)				
Some primary	(0.256)	0.286	(0.897)	0.371
Completed primary	(0.136)	0.364	(0.373)	0.709
Some elementary	0.021	0.260	0.079	0.937
Completed elementary	(0.131)	0.258	(0.509)	0.611
Some highschool	(0.054)	0.244	(0.223)	0.824
Completed highschool	(0.044)	0.241	(0.182)	0.856
Some college	0.015	0.249	0.060	0.952
Completed college	(0.123)	0.239	(0.515)	0.607
Some vocational				
Completed vocational	(0.234)	0.295	(0.794)	0.428
Some postgraduate				
Completed postgraduate				
Job status (ref=Yes)				
No	(0.098)	0.060	(1.634)	0.104
Presence of child/ren in the household (ref=Yes)				
No	0.012	0.063	0.198	0.843
Age at first marriage	(0.000)	0.000	(0.556)	0.579
No. of household members	(0.012)	0.010	(1.178)	0.240
Multiple R-squared	0.2946			
Adjusted R-squared	0.1635			
p-value	0.00034***			

In regression Model 5 (Cotabato City only), it had been observed that the only significant factor influencing faith norms regarding child marriage was the strength of private practice. On average, individuals with a strong private practice tended to exhibit lower overall scores for faith norms that do not support child marriage. in other words, their faith norms supported the practice of child marriage.

5.1.10. SUMMARY AND DISCUSSION OF LINEAR REGRESSION OUTPUT OF DIFFERENT MODELS

The study examined several regression models to understand the factors influencing faith norms related to child marriage. The models revealed that factors such as faith experience, private practice, knowledge of consequences, education, employment, and reactions from faith leaders all played a significant role in shaping respondents' perception of faith norms.

The summary findings for each significant factor are as follows:

1. *Faith experience*

   The influence of faith experience on faith norms regarding child marriage is evident. In models such as Model 1 (all samples) and Model 4 (Marawi only), individuals with a moderate or strong faith experience were more likely to agree with faith norms that support child marriage. This suggests that deeply rooted faith beliefs and practices may shape attitudes towards child marriage.

   On the other hand, in Model 3 (males only), a robust faith experience was also associated with increased support for faith norms that agrees with child marriage. This finding implies that personal spiritual encounters and a strong connection with faith may lead to a rejection of child marriage practices.

2. *Knowledge of negative consequences*

   The awareness and understanding of the negative consequences associated with child marriage play a crucial role in influencing faith norms. Interestingly,

models such as Model 1 (all samples), Model 3 (males only), and Model 4 (Marawi only) highlighted that individuals with a strong knowledge of the negative consequences tended to endorse child marriage more. This is contrary to other findings, which suggest that education and information about the harms of child marriage can influence attitudes and promote opposition to this practice.

3. *Education*

   Education levels appear to have straightforward effects on faith norms regarding child marriage. Model 1 (all samples) indicated that individuals with some primary education, completed primary or college-level education, or vocational training tended to be more supportive of child marriage. This is also true for Models 3 (males only) and 4 (Marawi only), where education was associated with increased support for child marriage. While these findings differed from those had have never undergone formal education, it's important to note that lack of education doesn't necessarily equate to non-support for child marriage within this context. It's plausible that regardless of educational attainment, overarching faith-based norms could still lean in favour of such practices.

   Nevertheless, there are also similar studies[51][52][53] indicating that the connection between marriage and education might not be as robust as initially thought. The explanation is partially attributed to poor school quality, which yields inadequate skills. As a result, girls and their parents begin to doubt the significance of girls' education. In other words, even when educational prospects exist, in environments where women struggle to transform education into sustainable prospects for the future, and/or where societal norms discourage women's workforce participation, the impact of educational opportunities in postponing marriage could be constrained.

4. *Reactions from faith leaders and congregation members*

   The reactions and feedback received from faith leaders and congregation members play a role in shaping faith

[51] Psaki SR, Chuang EK, Melnikas AJ, et al. (2019). Causal effects of education on sexual and reproductive health in low and middle-income countries: A systematic review and meta-analysis. SSM - Popul Health 2019;8:100386. DOI: https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jadohealth.2021.09.001

[52] Chakravarty D. Lack of economic opportunities and Persistence of child marriage in West Bengal. Indian J Gend Stud 2018;25:180e204. DOI: https://doi.org/10.1177/0971521518761430

[53] Heath R, Mushfiq Mobarak A. Manufacturing growth and the lives of Bangladeshi women. J Dev Econ 2015;115:1e15. DOI: https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jdeveco.2015.01.006

norms related to child marriage. In Model 2 (females only) and Model 4 (Marawi only), positive feedback from faith leaders for deviating from their advice decreased support for child marriage. Conversely, the absence of a reaction from congregation members increased support for child marriage in Model 4. These findings imply that social dynamics within faith communities can influence individuals' attitudes and behaviors towards child marriage.

Among all the models, the Model 3 focusing on males had the highest adjusted R-squared value of 0.3248, indicating it as the best model for explaining the variations in faith norms regarding child marriage.

5.2. Qualitative data

The data obtained from the focus group discussions (FGDs) and semi-structured interviews (SSIs) was analyzed based on three main themes and ten relevant sub-themes, in order to comprehensively assess, understand, and evaluate the relationship between faith and social behavior in the context of child marriage in the selected areas. The main themes and corresponding sub-themes utilized for analysis are outlined below:

- Trend of the practice of child marriage
  - Perceived extent of the practice of child marriage
  - Perceived reasons behind the persistence of the practice of child marriage
  - Perceived reasons behind the decrease of the practice of child marriage

- Faith/religion-based influences on the continuous/ending the child Marriage
  - Perceived importance of faith/religion to the continuation/ending of child marriage
  - Perceived faith-based reasons for the continuation of child marriage
  - Perceived faith/religion-based rewards/benefits/advantages of undertaking child marriage
  - Perceived faith/religion-based sanctions/disadvantages of not performing child marriage

- Faith-based activities to end the child marriage
  - Perceived source of information on child marriage
  - Perceived faith-based/religious interventions/campaigns to end child marriage
  - Perceived other interventions/activities

Complete summary for the main themes found for the focus group discussions (FGDs) can be found in Appendix 6 of this report.

5.2.1. FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSIONS

5.2.1.1. Trend of the practice of child marriage

5.2.1.1.1. Perceived extent of the practice of child marriage

The group unanimously agreed that child marriage is prevalent in Marawi and Cotabato City, involving family members, peers, and community members between the ages of 10 and 18. This practice is observed within the local communities, where young individuals are compelled to enter into marriages at an early age due to complex factors, ranging from socio-economic, political, cultural, and other contextual factors. The extent of child marriage in these regions reflects a concerning trend, highlighting the need for interventions and support to address this issue, and to protect the rights and well-being of children.

5.2.1.1.2. Perceived reasons behind the persistence of the practice of child marriage

In Marawi, the practice of child marriage is influenced by political dynamics. The region's unique political environment, with its history of conflicts and power s truggles, contributes to the persistence of child marriage. Political instability can create an atmosphere where traditional norms and practices, including child marriage, are perpetuated as a means of preserving cultural identity or gaining social status.

Furthermore, the external environment plays a significant role in Marawi. Socioeconomic factors such as poverty and limited access to education and healthcare can increase the likelihood of child marriages. Economic challenges can compel families to consider early marriage as a pragmatic response to financial constraints. This arises from the scarcity of resources to adequately support all family members or as a strategy to safeguard their daughters from potential societal vulnerabilities.

This aspect was underscored by a participant in the Marawi FGD—an interviewee, a 58-year-old grandmother who herself was married at a young age. She shed light on the situation, explaining:

"Sometimes [child marriage occurs] for debt to be paid. Because when the parents have debt, they just marry their child to the debtor to pay it off. These are for large debts that they cannot pay, for example around Php 200,000 (USD 4,000). The parents make an agreement then."

UMG 1

*kadalasan desisyon ng magulang minsan naman dahil sa kakulangan ng gastusin kaya ipinapakasal nalang nila ng (mga) maagayung mga anak nila

In Cotabato, the influencing factors behind child marriage tend to rely more on personal choices. Young individuals may choose to get married at an early age due to factors such as love or infatuation, peer pressure, or a desire for independence. In some cases, young couples may decide to elope with their partners, bypassing traditional norms and parental consent.

One respondent, a young adult woman of 26 years old, expressed: *"Because of lack of love and attention, my sister thought we didn't love her, so maybe that's where she found the love she was looking for, in her husband now."*

Common underlying reasons for child marriage in both Marawi and Cotabato include teenage pregnancy, where early marriage is seen as a way to legitimize the union and avoid social stigma. Engaging in premarital sex also contributes to child marriages, as cultural or religious beliefs may consider premarital sex as dishonorable or sinful, leading families to rush their children into marriage to protect their honor.

Parental pressure is another significant factor. Families may exert pressure on their children to get married early for various reasons, including preserving family honor, maintaining social status, fulfilling cultural expectations, or occasionally due to financial constraints within the household that can be resolved through dowry. In some instances, it's perceived that solely through such unions can the family improve their financial situation. Additionally, some young individuals may make their own choices to marry early, influenced by factors like romantic relationships, personal desires, or the belief that marriage provides security or stability.

5.2.1.1.3. Perceived reasons behind the decrease of the practice of child marriage

In Marawi, one key factor that may curb the practice of child marriage is the influence that relatives and community members may have on the decision of the parents or children. When people within the community express their disapproval and actively discourage child marriage, it creates a social environment that discourages the practice. As mentioned by one of the participants, a 16-year-old boy navigating early marriage, *"Those who have experienced early marriage tell us not to get married because it is really difficult."* Elaborating on this sentiment, the respondent expounded that the early union poses formidable hardships and burdens due to the inherent responsibilities and challenges it entails.

In Cotabato, the focus on women's welfare is crucial. This signifies the recognition of women's rights and well-being when making such decisions to marry early or not. This is further highlighted by the account given by one of the respondents, a 16-year-old unmarried boy without children, who emphasized that, *"[Child marriage] affects a woman's health when she gets pregnant early. It also adds to the poverty because of the current crisis [related to the escalating expenses associated with inflation and the cost of living.]*

Both regions also share common conditions that may further prevent the practice of child marriage, particularly the emphasis on education. Ensuring access to education is a powerful tool in empowering young individuals. Education equips them with knowledge, skills, and aspirations for a brighter future. When children have educational opportunities, they are more likely to delay

marriage and pursue their personal goals.[54]

Another factor that may contribute to the decline of child marriage is to minimise the influence of traditional norms and customs. As societal attitudes shift, there is a growing recognition that child marriage is not in the best interest of young girls and boys. By challenging and questioning these traditional practices, communities can adopt more progressive and inclusive values.

Additionally, the presence of financial stability acts as a deterrent to child marriage. When families have stable economic conditions, they are less likely to resort to child marriage as a coping mechanism or a means to alleviate poverty through the substantial money or financial assets given by the groom (or dowry). Financial stability provides families with more options and resources, reducing the perceived need for early marriages.

5.2.1.2. Faith/religion-based influences on continuous/ending child marriage

5.2.1.2.1. Perceived importance of faith/religion on the continuation/ending of child marriage

The perceived importance of faith and religion in relation to child marriage is particularly prominent within the context of Islam, which is the main religion of the respondents. According to the group, Islamic teachings often emphasize the roles and responsibilities of individuals within the family unit, with men traditionally regarded as the providers and protectors. This aspect of Islamic law can contribute to the continuation of child marriage, as marrying girls off at a young age is seen as a way to fulfill their financial needs and ensure their overall well-being. By entering into early marriages, it is believed that girls will be taken care of by their husbands, thereby easing the burden on their families and preserving their social status. This is highlighted by one of the interviewees in Marawi, an 18-year-old young unmarried boy without children, who said that, *"It is sunnah (or blessing) to have one's own family and for a woman to offer herself to a man."*

Moreover, Islam prohibits premarital sexual relationships, deeming them as *haram*, or forbidden. In this context, child marriage can be viewed as a mechanism to prevent the occurrence of illicit sexual behavior, *fitnah* (temptation), or *zinah* (adultery). It is believed that marrying girls at a young age safeguards their chastity and protects them from engaging in immoral acts. By ensuring early marriages, families seek to uphold religious values and preserve the moral purity of their daughters, safeguarding their reputations within the community.

An 18-year-old unmarried girl without children, an active participant in the Marawi FGD, articulated, *"When they notice that their children are in relationships, they just marry them to avoid two of the bad things that can happen to them."* This signifies that child marriage can be used to shield them from the prospect of engaging in behaviors contrary to Islamic teachings, encompassing acts like premarital inter-course, not to mention getting involved in relationships prior to marriage.

These religious beliefs and cultural practices, deeply rooted in faith, influence the continuation and perpetuation of child marriage in certain communities. The significance attributed to male roles as providers, coupled with the emphasis on maintaining sexual purity and avoiding *fitnah*, contribute to the social acceptance and normalization of child marriage.

5.2.1.2.2. Perceived faith-based reasons for the continuation of child marriage

The group emphasized that in Islamic societies, running away and eloping is considered dishonorable to the family. Instead, early marriage is viewed as a way of following the example set by the Prophet Muhammad, known as *Sunnah*. Moreover, there is disapproval for a pregnant woman to enter into marriage, as it may be seen as a breach of Islamic customs. This is further supported by one of the grand-mothers who shared that: *"We have a case where the girls are having a hard time because they were forced to get married. They said they might end up like their sister who only eloped, so they got married early to avoid embarrassment to their family."*

The Quran, as highlighted by the respondents, also suggests that a good woman should be paired with a good man, emphasizing the significance of finding a suitable partner in accordance with Islamic teachings. As expressed by one 17-year old unmarried girl without children during the FGD in Cotabato, *"Faith becomes complete in marriage because according to Islam, if you don't have a husband or a wife, your faith is incomplete no matter how religious you are."*

As mentioned in earlier discussions, the Code of Muslim Personal Laws in the Philippines stipulates a minimum

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[54] Wodon,Q. T.; Male, C.; Nayihouba, K.A; Onagoruwa, A.O.; Savadogo, A.; Yedan, A.; Edmeades, J.; Kes, A.; John, N.; Murithi, L.; Steinhaus, M.; Petroni, S.(2017) Economic impacts of child marriage : global synthesis report (English). Economic Impacts of Child Marriage Washington, D.C.: World Bank Group. http://documents.worldbank.org/curated/en/530891498511398503/Economic-impacts-of-child-marriage-global-synthesis-report. (Accessed: 22 August 2023)

marriage age of 15 for both genders within the Muslim community. However, for females who have reached puberty, marriage is permissible at the age of 12 with guardian consent. Furthermore, Islamic beliefs stress the importance of marrying at a young age while the body is still in its prime. This notion is influenced by the understanding that youth brings physical vigor and fertility, enabling couples to fulfil their marital duties and procreate.

In both communities, many parents especially in Marawi perceive their children, particularly daughters, as valuable assets and may consider them "sellable" due to the prevailing practice of dowry. Dowry is a cultural tradition and is supported by the Quran, where the groom's family provides gifts or financial resources to the bride's family as part of the marriage arrangement. This is also particularly true even in marriages happening within relatives. As shared by a respondent during the FGD, 18-year old single young woman, *"Others marry off their children even to rich relatives. It helps them get out of poverty because it makes their lives easier. Apparently, the rich relatives help pull up the family of their daughter-in-law".*

5.2.1.2.3. Perceived faith/religion-based rewards/ benefits/advantages of undertaking child marriage

As highlighted in the focus group discussion, child marriage is perceived by some to offer a range of faith/religion-based rewards and advantages. Firstly, it is seen as a means to avoid potential issues with relatives. By marrying their children at a young age, families can mitigate the risks of conflicts or disagreements that may arise in the future regarding suitable partners or potential cultural clashes. This is clearly expressed by one of the grandmothers in Cotabato who shared that, *"[Child marriage helped] the parents have peace of mind because someone is taking care of their child. Because sometimes, situations arise where their unmarried children return home late at night. So, when their children are already married, their children would know their responsibility as a husband or wife, that the family should come first before wandering around."*

Another benefit emphasized is the avoidance of *zina* or *fitnah*, referring to illicit relationships or moral corruption. Early marriage is seen as a way to ensure that young individuals are shielded from such temptations, as they are provided with a legal and sanctioned outlet for their sexual desires within the confines of a marital relationship. This theme consistently emerges in the qualitative data, applying to both genders, as evident from the collected insights.

Child marriage is also perceived as a means to expand the family lineage. By marrying children early, families can secure future generations and ensure the continuity of their lineage. This aspect holds significant cultural and religious importance, as it is believed to preserve traditions and family heritage.

The issue of poverty alleviation is another factor mentioned in the discussion. It is argued that by marrying off their children at an early age, families can potentially gain economic advantages. This may include reducing the financial burden on the family, as the responsibility for the child's well-being shifts to the spouse's family. Additionally, it is believed that early marriage can provide access to economic resources and support, potentially improving the overall financial stability of the family. The viewpoints of the majority of respondents, both in quantitative and qualitative aspects, converge on the notion that early marriage nurtures greater maturity and self-reliance in individuals, particularly children. This, in turn, serves as a motivating factor and propels them to prioritize job-seeking endeavors or alternative income streams. The outcome is twofold: personal family support and, at times, extended assistance to the larger family network.

Child marriage is also associated with a sense of independence. By marrying young, individuals can escape parental authority and gain autonomy over their own lives. This is particularly relevant in cultures where familial control and societal expectations limit personal freedoms. Early marriage is perceived as an opportunity for young people to establish their own households and make independent decisions regarding their lives. Many of the married boys and girls who participated in the discussion supported this by sharing their personal experiences that marrying early helps one *"learn to stand on your own two feet and earn money by working"* and *"have more time to take care of yourself."*

Lastly, the expansion of political power is considered a potential benefit of child marriage. By forming alliances through early marriages, families can strengthen their social and political networks, potentially gaining influence and power within their communities. This can lead to increased opportunities for social mobility and enhance the family's standing in society. As shared by a 58-year old grandmother in one of the FGDs conducted in Marawi, "When they get married because of politics, it helps to increase their number of votes." In the context of Marawi, this would usually mean that individuals or families might arrange marriages strategically to forge alliances, gain favour, or enhance their political standing. A recent marriage that

happened between two (2) powerful political families in the province of Lanao del Sur may provide strong evidence for this.

5.2.1.2.4. Perceived faith/religion-based sanctions/ disadvantages of undertaking child marriage

Participants expressed concerns about potential negative consequences of not undertaking child marriage, including an increase in suicidal tendencies, disturbances within the community, and the potential backlash from community members.

Firstly, the participants discussed the link between not performing child marriage and an increased risk of suicidal tendencies. They believed that not conducting early marriages for children, particularly for those who are already in relationship, could lead individuals to feel heartbroken and frustrated with not being with his other considered soulmate. In other words, for certain youths who find themselves deeply enamoured with their partners in premarital relationships, pursuing early marriage becomes a means to fully express and legitimise their affection for one another. Failing this option, a prevailing sense of despondency and remorse may contribute to feelings of despair, potentially escalating the susceptibility to harbouring thoughts of self-harm or even engaging in such actions.

This conversation took place within the context of an FGD conducted in Marawi. While only a minority of respondents touched upon this theme, it garnered reinforcement from other participants who verified that such occurrences do transpire, albeit rarely.

The focus group also emphasized the potential disturbance caused within the community when individuals do not perform child marriage as expected. Participants felt that not adhering to religious practices or rituals could disrupt the social fabric of the community, causing tension, mistrust, and division among its members. This is particularly true for the parents of those children who are seen to have committed forbidden and illegal relationships, both with the opposite and same sex. Thus, non-compliance is seen as a breach of community norms and values, which could result in strained relationships and conflicts.

Furthermore, participants expressed concerns about the introduction of a third party into relationships when individuals fail to perform early marriage. Specifically, the possibility of engaging in extramarital affairs was raised. The group acknowledged that when religious expectations are not met, individuals may seek fulfilment outside of their committed relationships, potentially leading to infidelity. A handful of occurrences were highlighted by the participants, wherein couples who initially intended to pursue early marriage were compelled to abandon their plans due to familial dissent. In such cases, it was observed that the young man would often seek out another compatible partner with whom he could enter into a marital union.

This perceived threat to the sanctity of marriage was considered a significant faith-based sanction or disadvantage of not performing child marriage.

Finally, the focus group highlighted the impact of community opinions and judgments on those who do not fulfil religious obligations. Participants believed that individuals who deviate from expected religious practices might face criticism, condemnation, or ostracism from community members. The fear of being stigmatised and judged by others can create immense pressure to conform, even if it contradicts personal beliefs or values.
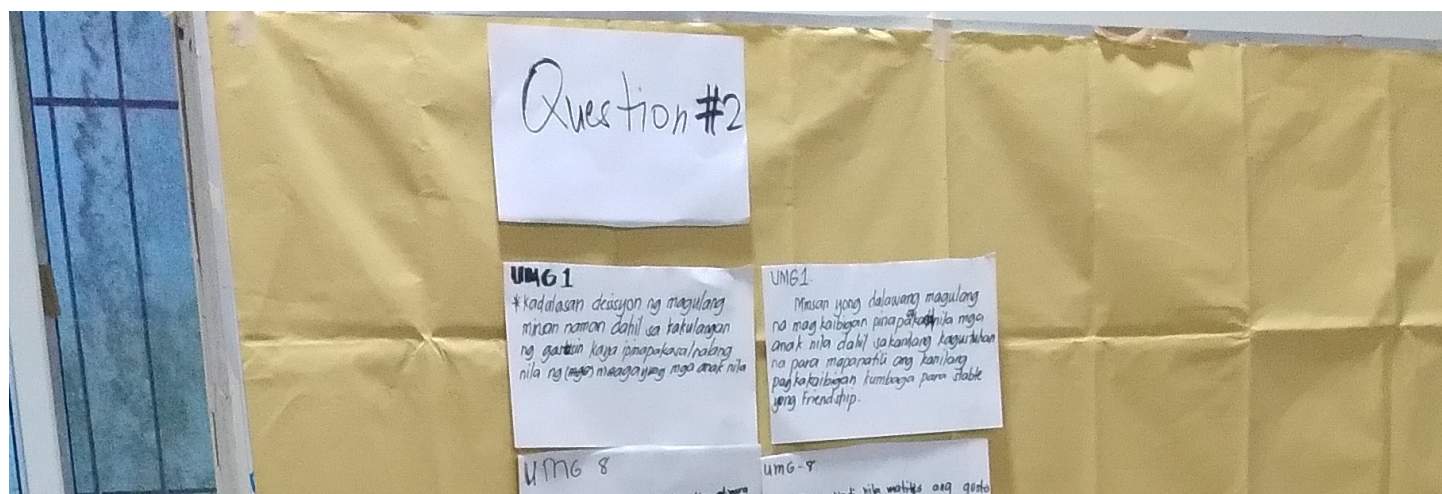
5.2.1.3. Faith-based activities to end child marriage

5.2.1.3.1. Perceived sources of information on child marriage

Participants expressed deep concern over the perceived sources of information regarding this issue within their community. One prominent observation was the lack of proactive efforts to prevent child marriages. This absence of initiatives and programs left participants feeling disheartened and frustrated.

They also noted that the influence of religious and cultural leaders played a significant role in shaping the community's perception of child marriage. These leaders, who held positions of authority and respect, often influenced the mindset of community members and contributed to the normalization of child marriage through their teachings and endorsements. As mentioned by one of the youth respondents, "They do not prohibit [child marriage] because they know the sunnah of Islam. No one says early marriage is forbidden."

As mentioned in earlier sections of the report, the newly passed Anti-Child Marriage Law (RA 11596) in the country repeals or modifies decrees and other measures inconsistent with the new law, including the Presidential Decree No. 1083, also known as the Code of Muslim Personal Laws, Filipino Muslims which allowed child marriage for members of that faith, and the Indigenous Peoples Rights Act of 1997 or RA 8371 that issues Certificates of Tribal Marriages that sometimes involve minors and children. Majority of the Muslim residents and communities in the region still have limited awareness on the details of such law.

Thus, the National Commission on Muslim Filipinos was assigned to execute and raise awareness about RA 11596 in the region. This effort requires the involvement and collaboration of government bodies, NGOs, indigenous and Muslim representatives, and women and children.

Additionally, the discussions shed light on the interventions made by parents, which served as another source of information on child marriage. While some parents actively opposed the practice and sought to protect their children from it, others succumbed to societal pressures or adhered to deeply rooted cultural traditions. The varying responses from parents highlight the complexity of the issue and how different factors, such as societal expectations and cultural norms, influence parental decisions. These findings align with the fundamental principles outlined in the study framework, emphasizing that these decisions are influenced by significant norms (e.g., descriptive, injunctive, and societal meta norms) that directly and indirectly shape their perspectives on and acceptance of early marriage practices.

5.2.1.3.2. Perceived faith-based/religious interventions and campaigns to end child marriage

Participants cited the lack of available materials and resources to support their efforts in preventing child marriage within their respective communities. Thus, it is evident that faith leaders and religious organisations held significant influence over community values and norms, presenting a unique opportunity to spearhead initiatives to end child marriage. However, without the necessary tools and resources, their potential impact remains constrained.[55]

This realisation fostered a shared determination among the participants to mobilise and advocate for greater support from religious institutions and leaders. They understood the urgent need to develop comprehensive faith-based campaigns that would raise awareness, promote education, and challenge societal attitudes towards child marriage.

5.2.1.3.3. Other perceived interventions and activities

Various perceived interventions and activities have been identified by the group to prevent child marriage in the community. They suggested advocacy awareness campaigns and capacity building programs, specifically focused on educating the community about the laws against child marriage. Through these initiatives, community members will gain a deeper understanding of the legal consequences and social implications associated with child marriage.

Another crucial intervention suggested was to ensure access to education, particularly through the provision of scholarships. By offering educational opportunities to girls at risk of child marriage, the community aims to empower them with knowledge and skills, enabling them to pursue their dreams and aspirations. Scholarships will serve as a powerful tool to break the cycle of poverty and empower girls to make informed decisions about their futures.

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[55] Le Roux, E., and Palm, S. 2018. What lies beneath? Tackling the roots of religious resistance to ending child marriage. Research Report. Girls Not Brides. https://www.girlsnotbrides.org/documents/889/W11839-SU-Theology-Report.pdf. (Accessed: 17 May 2023)

Recognising the significance of community involvement, there were suggestions to strengthen the efforts to actively engage religious and cultural leaders. This entails raising their awareness about the potential repercussions of early marriage through workshops and dialogues. Rather than debating the religious leaders' positions on child marriage, the emphasis should be on recognising their informed and considerate approach to addressing this issue.

By leveraging their influence, these leaders can play a pivotal role in challenging traditional norms and advocating for the rights of girls. Their support will help foster a positive shift in attitudes against child marriage and promote alternative paths for girls' development.

Furthermore, possible interventions from both the public (i.e. national and local government units) and private sectors (i.e. private corporations, non-government organisations, and other civil society groups) is also be instrumental in addressing the issue. The public sector will contribute by enacting and enforcing legislation that protects girls from child marriage. This will involve collaboration between government agencies, law enforcement, and judicial systems to ensure the effective implementation of existing laws.

The private sector will also play a vital role by supporting initiatives that directly address the root causes of child marriage. Through corporate social responsibility programs, private companies can invest in projects that enhance educational opportunities, economic empowerment, and community development. By channeling resources and expertise towards these endeavors, the private sector can contribute to the sustainable prevention of child marriage.

5.2.1.3.4. Recommendations

	Marawi City			Cotabato City		
Rank	Number of FGD respondents making the recommendation	Recommendation	Suggested role/ responsibility of faith/religion	Rank	Number of FGD respondents making the recommendation	Recommendation	Suggested role/ responsibility of faith/religion
1	15	Offer seminars/ workshops on effective parenting, underlining the Islamic duty of parents to nurture their children properly	Ministry of Basic Higher and Technical Education (MBHTE), Department of Social Welfare and Development, Non-government organisations	1	35	Launching an advocacy campaign to raise awareness about the drawbacks of early marriage and educating people about the Islamic qualifications for marriage	BARMM government, local government units (including the barangay) and non-government organization (NGOs)
2	10	Organize seminars to educate about child marriage drawbacks, using the Islamic principle of sharing relevant information	Islamic scholars, Government, Non-government organisations	2	20	Provide educational scholarships to youth and at-risk population	BARMM government, local government units, and the Department of Education
3	5	Government should create job opportunities and specialised programs for out-of-school youth	BARMM government, local government units (including barangays)	3	10	Create an Islamic program with symposiums and sports to engage and redirect youth towards positive activities	BARMM government and faith or religious leaders
	5	Enable parents to secure their families' economic well-being by providing livelihood opportunities	BARMM government, local government units (including barangays)	4	10	Implement training sessions and seminars to educate parents about proper child upbringing, drawing from Islamic teachings as an example	Local government units (including barangay)
	5	Engage in open dialogues with religious and community leaders	Religious or faith leaders and community leaders such as Sultans and Datus				

5.2.1.4. Influential people mapping

This exercise aimed to identify the reference groups among community members who participated in the focus group discussions, and shed light on the influential individuals or organisations that influence their decision-making process regarding child marriage. Each focus group was specifically asked to explore where their community obtains information and advice concerning child marriage, and to determine the most significant organisations or individuals involved. Special attention was given to examining the role of faith-based organisations and faith leaders in this context. By collectively identifying and ranking the top five influential people or organisations, the exercise enabled the mapping of the most influential entities within the community across different focus groups. Furthermore, it sought to uncover whether various demographic groups relied on different influencers in matters concerning child marriage within their communities.

Most importantly, those identified in the Influential People Mapping were further subjected to the semi-structured interviews (SSIs), which aimed to explore the attitudes and practices supported by influential figures in respect to child marriage. It also allowed influential people to describe any activities or interventions they had been involved in with respect to preventing child marriage, and to assess their success.

5.2.2. SEMI-STRUCTURED INTERVIEWS OF KEY INFLUENTIAL PEOPLE

5.2.2.1. Trend of the practice of child marriage

5.2.1.1.1. Perceived extent of the practice of child marriage

Based on the interviews, child marriage is prevalent in certain communities, primarily affecting young individuals between the ages of 10 and 17. The practice is influenced by various factors, such as economic hardships, cultural traditions, weak enforcement of laws, and gender inequality. Child marriage restricts access to education, perpetuates poverty, and has negative consequences for both individuals and societies. To address this issue, comprehensive strategies need to emphasize (as the frame-work of the study suggests) that engaging in the practice of child and early marriages are shaped by significant norms (e.g., descriptive, injunctive, and societal meta norms) that directly and indirectly influence its acceptance.

5.2.2.1.2. Perceived reasons behind the persistence of the practice of child marriage

As revealed in the semi-structured interviews conducted, in the case of Marawi (a city plagued by political unrest), cultural norms and traditions play a significant role. Parents in Marawi, influenced by long-standing customs, often view child marriage as a way to preserve their cultural identity and maintain family honour. Additionally, the political factors that plague the region create an atmosphere of uncertainty, prompting families to arrange early marriages as a means of securing their daughters' futures. A 41-year-old mother provided a poignant insight shared during an SSI interview:

"There are many reasons. The first is the desire of the woman or man because, sometimes, they get married or get pregnant, so they get married early. While others are because of politics— they are in conflict with others. The third part is culture. We can't avoid it because we are used to arranged marriages. Until now,

there are still many who follow it."

Conversely, in Cotabato, different factors contribute to the persistence of child marriage. A weak understanding or lack of knowledge about Islam's teachings is prevalent, allowing misconceptions and misinterpretations to prevail. Parental neglect and discipline issues further exacerbate the situation, as some parents fail to provide adequate guidance to their children regarding the negative consequences of early marriage. Moreover, an essential insight highlighted in the SSI (but is conspicuously absent from the FGD sessions) pertains to the role of technology and social media. This factor has introduced novel challenges by presenting idealised depictions of early marriages.

Consequently, young individuals are increasingly susceptible to perceiving such unions as alluring and desirable, which shapes their beliefs and attitudes about this path. Peer influence and pressure within communities also contribute significantly, with young people feeling compelled to conform to societal expectations. One respondent, aged 48 and who held the role of barangay chairman within a study site, eloquently captured this sentiment: *"[It is because] of curiosity in social media, and sometimes due to parental neglect and lack of money. There are [also] cases where parents who are sensitive would hastily marry off their children when they see them with a boy, even if they are not doing anything wrong. Sometimes, they are t empted and fall into temptation."*

Both regions share certain common factors that contribute to the persistence of child marriage. Limited l ivelihood opportunities and financial constraints make child marriage appear as a viable option for families struggling to secure their economic stability. The perceived benefits of early marriage, such as accessing dowry or financial support from the groom's family, often overshadow the long-term negative effects on girls' education, health, and overall well-being. Additionally, elopement and early pregnancy frequently occur, leading families to hastily arrange marriages to avoid social stigma.

5.2.2.2. Faith/religion-based influences on the continuation/ending child marriage

5.2.2.2.1. Main benefits/rewards/advantages of practicing child marriage

In Marawi, cultural and religious justifications form the cornerstone of this tradition. Families believe that marrying off their children at a young age brings spiritual and life

blessings, according to their religious beliefs.

As expressed by one of the respondents, a 30-year old mother, *"In my opinion, the advantage of child marriage is that when your child, whether a girl or boy, falls in love, it makes them want to get married. In Islam, you are required to approve the marriage because it is the wajib (religious duty) of the parents, as long as they didn't force it. Because in Islam, when someone wants to get married, they need to be helped to get married."*

Furthermore, this practice is believed to ensure the preservation of cultural heritage and traditions, fostering a sense of unity and identity within the community. As shared by one of the respondents, a 41-year old mother, in one of the SSI sessions, *"The benefits of this is that the 'race' of a family increases. It is part of our tradition as a Meranaw that when you have many families, you are more respected and feared. Second, in politics, your votes increase."*

Meanwhile, in Cotabato, financial support and assistance for parents stand as key advantages. Parents view child marriage as a means to alleviate financial burdens, as the union provides economic stability through the support of the partner's family. Additionally, child marriage allows both partners to grow together, enabling them to keep pace with each other's personal development. Moreover, this practice is perceived as a preventive measure against adultery, fornication, and the resulting shame, as it establishes a committed and socially sanctioned relationship. This is further supported by a statement from one of the respondents: *"Getting married at an early age can prevent zinah (adultery and fornication) and also prevent shame, especially for parents. You can also watch and closely monitor the growth of your children because you are still young and strong. It can also unite two people who love each other."*

Regardless of the region, child marriage is believed to facilitate early maturity and skill development in the young brides and grooms. The responsibilities and challenges they encounter as married couples are believed to encourage personal growth, and foster

resilience and independence. Additionally, child marriage strengthens social connections and support networks, as families come together to celebrate the union and offer guidance to the newlyweds.

5.2.2.2.2. Main sanctions/disadvantages of not performing child marriage

In the context of child marriage, several SSIs shed light on the main sanctions and disadvantages associated with not performing such a practice. Respondents from the city of Marawi revealed that one prominent factor is the intense social and community pressure put on families to engage in child marriages. Failure to comply with these expectations can result in ostracization, strained relationships, and even the deterioration of community support networks.

Moreover, the interviews highlighted the consequential moral decay and social issues stemming from child marriage. By not participating in this practice, according to the SSI collected data, Marawi residents believe they can mitigate the negative consequences associated with early unions, such as increased rates of domestic violence[56] (a study supported this report, where forced marriages are also a response to settle cases of gender-based violence, such as marrying the girl to the perpetrator in some instances), restricted access to education and employment opportunities, and limited personal growth and development.

This finding is corroborated by personal experiences shared by one of the respondents: *"In our community, especially now, if you don't allow your daughter or son who wants to get married, it can cause a big problem because they can elope. Second, our children may rebel more. In Islam, the ancient people like our prophets. Their practices are followed by the majority, which includes early marriage."*

On the other hand, in Cotabato, the absence of self-sufficiency emerges as a significant sanction from refraining from child marriage. The interviews underscored how young individuals who do not partake in early unions often remain dependent on their parents for financial and emotional support. This is believed to hinder their ability to achieve autonomy and self-reliance. Furthermore, missed destiny or marital opportunities are perceived as disadvantages in Cotabato. According to the interviews conducted with the identified influential people, not

[56] Joint Regional Child Protection, and Gender-Based Violence Working Group. 2017. Child Protection Rapid Assessment Report: Marawi Displacement. https://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/CPRA%20Marawi%20Displacement.pdf (Accessed: 23 August 2023)

adhering to child marriage may result in the loss of potential suitors and marital prospects, potentially leading to feelings of social exclusion and unfulfilled desires for companionship.

The interviews also uncovered an interesting and similar perspective in Marawi, where some interviewees expressed a lack of negative consequences and even perceived child marriage as potentially helpful. They believe that early unions can provide financial stability, security, and cultural preservation within their community. However, it is important to note that these viewpoints do not negate the identified drawbacks and are reflective of certain individuals' perspectives, rather than a comprehensive societal stance.

Overall, the SSIs conducted in Marawi and Cotabato unveiled distinct sanctions and disadvantages associated with not performing child marriage. While Marawi respondents experience social and community pressure, moral decay, and social issues, Cotabato respondents face a lack of self-sufficiency and missed destiny or marital opportunities. These insights provide a deeper understanding of the complexities surrounding child marriage and the potential repercussions of not adhering to this practice in each region. While it is important to note the limitations in terms of representative diversity among influential figures in the study (spanning age, gender, roles, and occupations), it remains unjustified to extrapolate further disaggregation. Nonetheless, disparities are under-pinned by thematic elements identified within each geographical area.

5.2.2.2.3. Role of faith and/or religion for continuation of child marriage

The role of faith and religion plays a multifaceted part in the continuation of child marriage, as highlighted in the SSIs conducted. From an Islamic perspective, there are varying interpretations of religious texts, which some individuals use to justify child marriages. These interpretations often rely on cultural norms and traditions, where child marriage is considered acceptable or even necessary.

On the other hand, religious and cultural differences across Muslim tribes and communities (i.e. Maranaw of Marawi vs. Maguindanaons of Cotabato) contribute to the complexities surrounding child marriage. These differences shape the attitudes, beliefs, and practices regarding marriage, influencing the prevalence and acceptance of child marriages in their communities.

In some instances, faith acts as a mediator and decision-maker when it comes to child marriage. Families and community members may firmly believe that faith should guide their actions, leading them to rely on religious teachings as a basis for their decision to arrange child marriages. As one of the faith leaders expressed, *"We have our own law in Islam. In Islam, there is a process for marriage. In the instance that the woman/man is not of the right age, they cannot be married. But if they show their own desire to marry, in Islam, it should be given to them."*

It's worth emphasizing that at the time of the interview, a significant portion of the Muslim populace and communities within the study sites possessed only a limited grasp of the specifics surrounding the recently enacted Anti-Child Marriage law. This legislation holds precedence even over the Code of Muslim Laws applicable to Filipino Muslims.

This emphasis on faith can make it challenging to address the issue solely through secular approaches. However, in Marawi, neutrality and an emphasis on individual choice are also highlighted. The community recognizes the importance of personal agency in decision-making, advocating for the rights of children to choose their own life paths, including marriage. As simply expressed by another respondent, *"Our religion does not say anything about avoiding it. It only says that no matter what age, one can get married if he or she has the means to marry or to support his or her future family."*

In Cotabato, a different perspective emerges, where parental responsibility and teaching are emphasized. The belief is that parents hold the duty to guide their children and make decisions in their best interests. As shared by one of the parents interviewed, *"Even if the President himself disciplines the child, if the child doesn't believe it, it won't work. In Islam, it can be easy or hard. It can be easy if you follow Islam, but it can be hard if you do what is not right."*

In this context, child marriage may be seen as a parental decision made for reasons such as economic stability or cultural preservation. Religious teachings may be invoked to support the notion that parents have the wisdom and authority to determine what is best for their children. While the constraints related to the diversity of influential individuals interviewed in the research are recognized, including factors like age, gender, roles, and occupations, it is not reasonable to extend the analysis into more detailed breakdowns. Nevertheless, the differences are rooted in broader themes that have been identified within each specific geographical region or study sites (i.e. Marawi and Cotabato).

5.2.2.2.4. Faith-based or religious sanctions/ disadvantages of not performing child marriage in the community

In the community of Marawi, faith-based or religious sanctions discourage the non-performance of child marriage, imposing significant disadvantages for those who choose to defy this practice. Through semi-structured interviews, it became evident that individuals often experienced intense guilt or feared negative consequences within a religious context for not adhering to child marriage norms. This guilt stems from the belief that marrying off their children, particularly daughters, at a young age is their parental responsibility as prescribed by religious teachings. Deviating from this responsibility creates conflict within families and challenges the authority of religious leaders.

Furthermore, the reluctance to oppose child marriage is fueled by the lack of livelihood or financial support available to families. In Marawi, where economic opportunities may be limited, parents perceive child marriage as a means to secure their daughters' futures and financial stability for their families. Rejection of this practice risks exacerbating their already precarious financial situation, leading to a sense of helplessness and reliance on the established cultural norms.

Compounding these challenges is the perception that child marriage holds significant cultural importance and aligns with existing practices in the community. Marawi's cultural heritage places emphasis on traditions and customs, and child marriage is seen as a reflection of this heritage. As shared by one of the respondents, a 46-year old male faith leader, *"For us as a Meranaw, the negative side of this is that you may have a problem or conflict with your family if you do not support your child and spouse, even if they are not of the right age."*

By refusing to engage in child marriage, individuals may face conflict within their communities, as their actions may be perceived as a rejection of cultural identity. This clash between personal beliefs and cultural expectations adds further complexity to the decision-making process, leaving individuals torn between their faith, their values, and the expectations placed upon them.

Respondents in Cotabato, on the other hand, underscore the significance of upholding chastity in line with Islamic values. This encompasses major life decisions, such as marriage. They stress the need to avoid conflicts within marriages, expressing concerns that marrying young without emotional maturity or financial stability could lead to disputes. This highlights the understanding that early

marriage, under certain circumstances, may heighten the potential for relationship strains.

Insufficient understanding of Islamic teachings is perceived to impact various aspects of life, including marriage decisions. Respondents stress the importance of a solid grasp of Islam to make well-informed choices, particularly regarding significant life events like marriage. Marrying without a proper understanding of Islamic values is noted as a potential source of misinterpretation.

Additionally, respondents acknowledge the financial aspect of marital practicalities. Worries over financial instability accompanying early marriage point to the potential for increased stress and conflicts. A secure financial foundation is deemed pivotal for a strong start to marriage.

Overall, these perspectives underscore that the success of early marriage rests on multifaceted considerations. Deviating from these factors could heighten the likelihood of challenges. This collective insight provides a deeper understanding of the complexities of early marriage within Islamic principles, emphasizing the importance of holistic adherence to gain favorable outcomes.

In Cotabato, respondents highlighted the importance of maintaining chastity according to Islamic values, which extends to marriage decisions. Conflict avoidance within marriages is also emphasized, as marrying young without emotional maturity or financial stability could lead to disputes. Understanding Islam is considered essential, as a lack of knowledge can affect life decisions, including marriage. Respondents also stressed the role of finances in marital stability. Overall, these insights underscore the multifaceted considerations deemed crucial for successful early marriages within Islamic principles.

5.2.2.2.5. View of faith-based or religious rewards/ sanctions concerning child marriage

In the SSIs conducted on the topic of faith-based or religious rewards/sanctions concerning child marriage, a diverse range of perspectives emerged. One respondent, a 30-year old female faith leader, expressed this conflicting view on child marriage: "For me, it is based on the Quran if someone gets married but has not reached the right age. Then, we cannot say it is forbidden or haram (forbidden) because it is sunnah (way of life). There is no violation as long as your child is not forced. But if you forced it, it is a violation and it is haram. Because marriage is like a fruit on a tree, it is better if you pick it at the right time. It is better

if it is at the right age." When asked about reconciling this interpretation with the national Anti-Child Marriage Law that prohibits marrying those below 18, she replied, "The choice is still up to the parents if they follow the traditional culture, because in Islam, it allows the law of culture as long as it does not violate human rights."

In the context of Marawi, individual perspectives and situational considerations play a significant role in shaping views on the permissibility and benefits of child marriage. While some individuals expressed mixed views, acknowledging potential benefits such as economic security and cultural preservation, they also voiced concerns about negative consequences. Participants highlighted the adverse effects on the physical and psychological well-being of children, particularly young girls forced into early marriages, emphasising the importance of protecting their rights and providing them with opportunities for education and personal development.

On the other hand, in Cotabato, the discussions revolved around morality and the prevention of vice, with faith being seen as a means of discipline. This statement is further supported by one of the interviews, which stated that "If people [only strictly] followed the laws of Islam, perhaps they wouldn't experience extreme poverty because they wouldn't engage in early marriage, unless they fulfil the necessary qualifications."

The participants emphasised the role of religious teachings in guiding individuals towards virtuous behaviour and upholding moral standards. In this context, child marriage is viewed as a deviation from prescribed religious norms and principles, with strong emphasis placed on the importance of preventing such practices and ensuring the well-being of children.

Overall, the interviews shed light on the complex dynamics surrounding faith-based or religious rewards/ sanctions concerning child marriage. While perspectives varied, the concerns about negative consequences and the need to protect the rights of children were recurrent themes across the discussions. These insights highlight the significance of addressing child marriage from both a cultural and religious standpoint, and emphasise the importance of promoting education, gender equality, and the well-being of young girls within faith-based communities.

5.2.2.3. Faith-based activities to prevent child marriage

5.2.2.3.1. Sources of information and advice concerning child marriage

In Marawi and Cotabato, communities are deeply rooted in their traditions and close-knit social circles. The primary

source of information and advice concerning child marriage is often derived from respected community leaders, elders, and the collective wisdom of these social networks. Additionally, Islamic teachings play a significant role in shaping attitudes towards child marriage, as religious leaders offer guidance and interpretations of religious texts. As one of the respondents shared, *"The* Ustadhs *do not directly say to avoid child marriage, but there are sermons about it, although not directly. The Ustadhs explain what the sanctions of pre-marital sex are in Islam. When it comes to early marriage, it is not talked about as much, but they discuss the possible consequences of getting married at a young age."*

In the digital age, online platforms and media sources have also become influential in shaping perceptions and disseminating information about child marriage, reaching a wider audience and providing alternative perspectives. A respected 57-year-old grandfather among the influential voices remarked, *"Often, we come across discussions on the potential outcomes and repercussions of Child Marriage through platforms like social media and YouTube,"* a well-known online video-sharing platform.

Furthermore, personal experiences of individuals in Marawi contribute to the understanding of the consequences and realities of child marriage, which helps raise awareness among community members.

Educational institutions in both Marawi and Cotabato offer a platform for students to learn about the risks associated with early marriage and empower them with knowledge to make informed choices. Moreover, parents, family members, health centers, and Barangay Local Government Units (BLGU) in Cotabato actively participate in providing guidance and support to discourage child marriage. They recognize the importance of safeguarding the well-being of young individuals, through activities like seminars and workshops on child protection issues.

5.2.2.3.2. Availability of faith-based or religious campaigns and/or community efforts to prevent child marriage in the community

In the communities, there is a notable lack of awareness regarding the issue of child marriage, as revealed through semi-structured interviews. The interviews shed light on the limited availability of faith-based or religious campaigns and community efforts aimed at combating this practice. It appears that the gravity of the issue has not yet permeated the collective consciousness of the community, which leaves it susceptible to perpetuating child marriages. In other words, the social norm is still very strong. There is a

pressing need for more comprehensive educational programs and awareness campaigns that leverage the influence of faith-based and religious institutions. Majority of the influential people interviewed expressed that the absence of such initiatives underscores the urgency to mobilize resources, and engage religious leaders and community members to protect vulnerable children from the harmful consequences of early marriages.

5.2.2.3.3. Knowledge of the community concerning faith-based and religious interventions that prevent child marriage in the community

The knowledge within the community regarding faith-based and religious interventions that prevent child marriage appears to be characterised by limited awareness, limited interventions, lack of interest or participation, and a noticeable absence of opposition. The semi-structured interviews shed light on these aspects. It became evident that a significant portion of the community seemed uninformed about the potential role of faith-based and religious practices in combating child marriage.

Many individuals expressed a lack of awareness regarding the existence of such interventions, like awareness campaigns and information seminars on the possible consequences of child or early marriage. This limited knowledge seems to have contributed to the lack of active initiatives aimed at preventing child marriage within the community. Moreover, there appeared to be a prevailing sense of disinterest and minimal engagement from community members in participating in faith-based or religious activities centred around preventing this harmful practice.

The lack of enthusiasm could be attributed to a combination of cultural norms, prevailing societal attitudes, and a general disregard for the significance of the issue. Surprisingly, during the interviews, it became evident that there was no opposition to faith-based and religious interventions aimed at tackling child marriage within the community. This absence of opposition could be indicative of the need for increased awareness and understanding of the potential benefits that these interventions can bring in eradicating child marriage from the community.

5.2.2.3.4. Accessibility to resources on these faith-based religious interventions to prevent child marriage in the community

Semi-structured interviews conducted within the community shed light on several factors that contribute to this issue. First and foremost, there is a limited awareness of available resources. Many community members remain uninformed about the various interventions, such as awareness campaigns and information seminars on the possible consequences of child or early marriage, that could help prevent this practice rooted in religious teachings. This lack of awareness further hampers their ability to access and utilize these resources effectively. Moreover, personal experiences and verbal discussions play a pivotal role in disseminating information within the community. Yet, there's potential to amplify these interactions and extend their influence to a broader audience.

As a consequence, the impact of faith-based religious interventions is diminished, and the fight against child marriage remains an uphill battle in the community. Majority of the influential people interviewed, particularly parents, have mentioned that efforts must be directed towards raising awareness, promoting dialogue, and ensuring the complete and effective implementation of these vital resources that combat this harmful practice.

5.2.2.3.5. Differences in values and norms regarding child marriage in their culture that differ from those in their faith/religion

With child marriage, the tensions between culture and religion come to light as contrasting values and norms emerge from the diverse communities. Through semi-structured interviews, it became evident that in Marawi, a culturally rich city, cultural practices override the influence of religious beliefs. Here, the notion of parental authority looms large, with forced marriages being seen as a distressing reality. In Marawi, age limits set by religion take a backseat, as cultural traditions dictate the course of action.

This is further supported by the majority of the influential people interviewed, with statements like: *"If this is what we are going to discuss, there will be more differences because what we always follow is the culture that we have. We are too proud of our Meranaw status. Even though we have been trampled on, we still prefer our choice as a Meranaw,"* and, *"As a father, I am determined that I follow our culture better and sometimes it prevails more than my belief in our religion."* Another respondent also expressed that, *"It is the culture that destroys our religion because there are practices in our culture*

that are against our religion." In this context, culture could be interpreted by the respondent as a way of life for Meranaw. Child or early marriage cannot be separated from the life-style and pursuits practiced in these communities.

On the other hand, in Cotabato, a different dynamic unfolds, where religious guidance assumes paramount significance. Within this community, adherence to religious principles shapes the perception of child marriage. The legal age requirements as stated in the Code of Muslim Personal Laws hold sway, establishing a clear distinction between culture and faith. As summarized by one of the respondents, *"There is a big difference. In the Islamic way, early marriage is good if it is done properly. In cultural practices, early marriage happens because something unpleasant happened."* Another respondent further added that, *"In Islam, if you get married in a halal way, it will have a good result. If it is a cultural practice, there is a possibility that the lives of the children can become miserable."*

In Cotabato, the emphasis on parental guidance helps navigate the delicate balance between cultural heritage and religious values, ensuring the protection of children's rights. As these narratives illustrate, the clash between culture and religion leads to varying perspectives, with Marawi emphasizing cultural practices while Cotabato prioritizes faith as guidance.

5.2.2.3.6. Perceived role as influential people in the community preventing child marriage in the community

In the community of Marawi, where the persistence of child marriage prevails due to cultural factors, influential individuals have taken up the responsibility of preventing this harmful practice. Through semi-structured interviews, it became evident that parental influence and responsibility played a significant role in shaping the trajectory to child marriage. One respondent corroborated this by stating that, *"Islam has no control. Sometimes, when the culture of the people dominates, especially when the family's pride is discussed, no matter who the leader is, it will still not be listened to."*

Influential figures, such as parents, community leaders, and elders have recognized the detrimental consequences of child marriage and made it their mission to address this issue. However, a crucial challenge lies in the differing perspectives when interpreting religious teachings. While some perceive child marriage as permissible, others emphasize the importance of protecting children's rights and well-being. As expressed by one of the respondents,

"Avoiding child marriage is more difficult to advocate, especially for us Muslims and our culture. But as an influential person in our area, what I can Ido is give advice that child marriage is not good. I am doing it, but if all the leaders in Marawi stop or give advice to ban child marriage, it will be difficult because it will be a big process."

In the neighboring community of Cotabato, influential individuals have embraced education and awareness as vital tools in combating child marriage. They understand that by providing children access to education, they can empower them to make informed choices and break free from the cycle of early marriages. Faith and religion serve as guiding principles in this community, reinforcing the belief that child marriage goes against the core values of compassion and respect for human dignity. One of the teachers interviewed expressed that, *"I advise the children and pupils to finish their studies first, so they will have something to hold onto in the future. Seeking knowledge is powerful. As a teacher, I emphasize the value of education. I encourage the youth to study well. Religion plays a very important role in avoiding premarital sex. The Rule of Islam is there to guide us, as Islam does not allow couples to engage in premarital sex. All of our actions are based on Islam, and this is what is referred to as Qutbakkul Nikkah. Islam teaches us that seeking knowledge is a lifelong process, from cradle to grave. Religion is the basis for making moral decisions in life."*

Additionally, the role of government and NGOs cannot be underestimated in this fight against child marriage. Collaboratively, these influential figures and organizations work to implement policies, raise awareness, and provide

support systems for the affected individuals. By joining forces, these influential people are reshaping the narrative surrounding child marriage, advocating for change, and striving to create a brighter future for their community.

5.2.2.4. Community readiness to prevent early marriage

The final activity of the focus group discussions (FGDs) involved the assessment of the community readiness to prevent child marriage. This was done by evaluating the role of faith and community dynamics in the willingness to change social norms. This assessment employs the six Dimensions of Change to gauge the community's stage of readiness for behavior change. The community's readiness is categorized using a traffic light system: red for resistance to change, amber for challenging the status quo, and green for supporting behavior change (see Table 3).

During this activity, participants assessed the relevance of six statements, each corresponding to one Dimension of Change, within their community context. Participants contemplated the applicability of each statement and expressed their assessment using face cards: smiley face (agree), neutral face (somewhat agree), and sad face

(disagree). These votes are recorded, and scores are assigned based on participants' choices. Scores for each statement for each dimension. To calculate comprehensive readiness to change, the scores from all dimensions are totaled, then divided by 6, generating a final community readiness score within the 1-9 range (see Table 4).

Table 32. Summary scores of community readiness to change behaviour in child marriage, WVDF Child Marriage Survey 2023

Community Readiness to Change Behaviour in Child Marriage								
Marawi	**Dimension**						**Average score**	**Stage**
	A	**B**	**C**	**D**	**E**	**F**		
Grandfathers	3	6	9	9	9	6	7	8
Grandmothers	3	3	9	6	3	7.8	5.3	6
Married boys	3	6	6	9	5.4	3	5.4	6
Married girls	4	9	6	9	4	7	6.5	7
Unmarried boys	3	6	4	6	5	6	5	6
Unmarried girls	3	6	3	9	6	9	6	7
Young adult men	3	3	3.6	6	6	6	4.6	5
Young adult women	3	4.5	3	6	6	9	5.25	6
Average	3.1	5.4	5.5	7.5	5.6	6.7	**5.6**	**6**
Cotabato								
Grandfathers	6	3	3	9	9	3	5.5	6
Grandmothers	6	4	5	4	8	3	5	6
Married boys	6	4.5	7	6	3	3	4.9	5
Married girls	4.8	7.8	3	6.6	3	3	4.7	5
Unmarried boys	3	7.8	3	6	3	3	4.3	5
Unmarried girls	3	3	4.8	6	3.6	6	4.4	5
Young adult men	6	5.4	6	6	3	3	4.9	5
Young adult women	4.5	6.75	6	6	6	3	5.4	6
Average	4.9	5.3	4.7	6.2	4.8	3.4	**4.9**	**5**

By sub-groups (MARAWI). The findings from the study conducted in Marawi revealed interesting insights about different groups within the community and their attitudes towards child marriage. Among these groups, the grandfathers stood out with an average score of 7, indicating that they had already reached stage 8, known as the expansion phase. During this phase, community members, leaders, and influential individuals come together to address the issue of child marriage by decoupling religious beliefs from the practice and actively working towards its prevention. It is encouraging to see that the grandfathers, as respected figures within the community, are leading the way in this positive change.

On the other hand, both married and unmarried girls scored an average ranging from 6 to 6.5, placing them at stage 7, which is referred to as the stabilization stage. This stage signifies that community leaders and influential people are openly acknowledging and rejecting the connection between child marriage and religious beliefs. They are

actively supporting efforts to prevent child marriage and are working towards creating a safer environment for young girls. It is promising to see that these girls, despite being directly affected by child marriage, are contributing to the positive shift in attitudes within their communities.

However, it is important to note that the remaining groups scored lower, ranging from 4.6 to 5.4, indicating that they are in earlier stages of progress. These stages include stage 5, the preparation stage, and stage 6, the initiation of inter-ventions/activities. While these groups have started taking steps towards addressing child marriage, there is still progress to be made. Continuous support and sustained efforts are required to ensure that positive changes take root and spread throughout the community.

Overall, the findings suggest that change is indeed happening among the groups in Marawi regarding the potential links between faith norms and child marriage. Attitudes are starting to shift positively, indicating a growing understanding of the need to prevent child marriage and protect the rights of young girls. However, it is crucial to recognize that further work is still needed to consolidate these changes and ensure that they become ingrained in local culture and practices. One way of addressing this is to determine which among the dimensions of change, in the context of practice of child marriage, can be improved and need further guidance.

The study also examined different dimensions of community knowledge regarding child marriage. The lowest average score was 3.1 for Dimension A, which focuses on community knowledge concerning the links between faith/religion and child marriage. This suggests that there is room for improvement in terms of educating the community about the complex factors contributing to child marriage. On the other hand, Dimension D, which assesses community knowledge of faith/religious efforts to end child marriage, obtained the highest score at 7.5. This highlights the positive impact of ongoing efforts that raise awareness and engage religious leaders in combating child marriage.

By sub-groups (COTABATO). In the Cotabato study site, all of the groups assessed received average scores ranging from 4.3 to 5.5, placing them within stages 5 and 6, respectively, of the intervention process. Specifically, grandfathers, grandmothers, and young adult women were classified as being in stage 6, which is the initiation of interventions or activities aimed at breaking the connection between faith/religion and child marriage. On the other hand, the remaining groups were categorized as being in

stage 5, denoting the preparation phase, where community leaders or influential individuals begin to challenge the links between faith/religion and child marriage.

Overall, the groups in Cotabato acknowledged that some changes have started to occur, but it is essential for local efforts to be consistently sustained and supported. Among the subgroups, the dimension with the lowest average score across all aspects is a 3 for Dimension F, which pertains to the availability of faith-based/religious resources to support community endeavors in ending child marriage. Conversely, Dimension B, which focuses on community faith-based/religious belief systems and attitudes towards child marriage, attained the highest average score at 6.75. This aspect might be an accessible opportunity for targeted interventions.

In summary, the study reveals that the groups in Cotabato are in stages 5 and 6 of the intervention processes, with some individuals already initiating interventions to break the link between faith/religion and child marriage. However, sustained local efforts are necessary and there is room for improvement, particularly in terms of accessing faith-based/religious resources, and shifting community belief systems and attitudes against child marriage.

By study site. In comparing Marawi and Cotabato, it becomes evident that Marawi has a higher average score, indicating they are in a more advanced stage of addressing the issue of child marriage. Marawi is currently classified at stage 6, which signifies the initiation of interventions/activities. At this stage, it is assumed that community leaders and influential individuals are already doing or initiating interventions or activities that break the link between faith/religion and child marriage. However, it must also be taken into consideration that the factors that lead to this score (or this stage) vary, and perhaps indicate where and what interventions need to be devised and implemented.

In Marawi, there is a growing recognition of the detrimental effects of child marriage, and an acknowledgment that these harmful practices are influenced by cultural and religious beliefs. Stakeholders, such as few civil society groups and community-based organizations such as the Magungaya Mindanao, Incorporated and Al Mujadilah Development Foundation, in Marawi have taken significant steps to address this issue by initiating comprehensive discussions and formulating concrete plans to dismantle the connection between faith/religion and child marriage. They are actively engaging with religious leaders, community members, and other key

stakeholders to promote awareness, educate the public, and develop interventions that discourage it.

On the other hand, Cotabato is currently positioned at stage 5, the preparation stage. In this stage, community leaders and influential individuals are actively involved in planning strategies and interventions that challenge the links between faith/religion and child marriage. While this might hold true, concrete strategies or plans to effectively address the issue are yet to be developed.

To summarize, Marawi demonstrates a more advanced stage of community readiness, characterized by active planning and engagement with stakeholders to challenge the connections between faith/religion and child marriage. Meanwhile, Cotabato remains at an earlier stage, with a recognition of the issue but a need for more focused efforts to prevent and eradicate child marriage in the context of faith and religion.

More importantly, the results indicate that the communities in the study exhibit significant diversity. This diversity likely accounts for variations in readiness across different age groups, genders, marital statuses, localities, degrees of religiosity, and the impact of influential figures.

From the broader perspective, this tool—which encompasses both quantitative and qualitative methodologies, and is tailored to capture faith norms related to child marriage—applies across diverse sectors and program domains. However, its effectiveness requires adjustments that cater to specific contexts. The utility of this tool is its capacity to delve into the intricate layers of 'faith' and examine the influence of various dimensions on child marriage. Nevertheless, the principal research findings underscore that faith norms, though significant, do not work in isolation; they intersect with other socio-economic and political factors in shaping child marriage practices. Moreover, concentrating solely on 'faith norms' may fall short in encapsulating the entirety of cultural and traditional beliefs.

Inclusive application of the tool requires the consideration of varying contexts. It's essential to guidance in adapting it to different religious, social, and cultural paradigms. Special emphasis should be directed toward applying faith norms within conflict and fragile settings, where underlying causes are accentuated.

Despite the complexity inherent in dissecting the layers of 'faith,' this exploration remains imperative. World Vision's distinctive contribution lies in its innovative approach to

Social and Behavior Change (SBC) theories. This contribution advocates for the incorporation of the Divine within the discourse, departing from the conventional empirical understanding of human behavior. It embraces a broader perspective that acknowledges and incorporates 'intangible' elements, recognizing their significance in shaping behaviors and attitudes. This pioneering stance illustrates World Vision's dedication to comprehensively grasping the interplay between faith norms and child marriage, thereby enhancing the efficacy of interventions in this critical domain.

6.1. Contrasting realities and perceived autonomy in these communities

In these communities, children regardless of their gender face the alarming risk of early marriage. However, it is disheartening to note that girls, in particular, are disproportionately affected and tend to experience marriage at an even younger age compared to boys. This gender disparity highlights an urgent concern that needs to be addressed, as confirmed by both the quantitative and qualitative data.

Interestingly, when examining the perceptions of the community members, it becomes apparent that there exists a prevailing belief in the freedom of choice regarding marriage among the respondents. They maintain that children within their communities possess the agency to decide both the timing and the partner of their unions. This perception of autonomy suggests an intriguing contradiction between the observed reality of early marriages and the perceived notion of freedom.

It is essential to delve deeper into this complex situation, considering the societal, cultural, and economic factors that contribute to early marriages. By understanding the underlying reasons behind this phenomenon, it becomes possible to develop targeted interventions and strategies that promote gender equality, protect children's rights, and empower young individuals to make informed choices about their own lives.

6.2. Unveiling the drivers of child marriage: Perspectives from Marawi and Cotabato

In Marawi, the community tends to hold the belief that early marriage alleviates the burden on families and is viewed as a fundamental responsibility of parents. These perspectives are deeply entrenched in the religious, social, and cultural norms prevalent within the community. Marawi respondents often perceived child marriage as a means to mitigate financial strains and reduce demands on limited resources. Additionally, there is a prevailing belief that early marriage safeguards the honor and reputation of the family. On one hand, the Community Readiness to Prevent Child Marriage tool also showed that Marawi is at stage 6, or initiation stage, where community leaders and influential individuals are already doing or initiating interventions or activities that break the link between faith/religion and child marriage.

The persistence of child marriage in Marawi is primarily driven by external factors. These may include societal pressures, traditional practices, and community expectations. Cultural and religious norms heavily influence the acceptance and perpetuation of child marriage in this context. Marawi's social fabric, with its emphasis on close-knit relationships and collective decision-making, contributes to the adherence of this practice

In contrast, the dynamics surrounding child marriage in Cotabato lean more towards personal choices. Individuals in Cotabato are more likely to exercise agency and make

independent decisions regarding marriage. Factors such as personal aspirations, educational opportunities, and economic circumstances play a significant role in shaping the prevalence of child marriage in this region. The survey findings, as well as insights from focus group discussions (including semi-structured interviews), uncover such contrasts.

In contrast to Marawi, where external influences hold greater sway, Cotabato residents prioritize individual autonomy and personal preferences when it comes to the practice of early marriage. Overall, the initial insights gleaned from the data say that, while Marawi communities adhere to child marriage due to religious, social, and cultural expectations, Cotabato residents tend to base their decisions on personal considerations and circumstances. However, as later revealed by the qualitative data, this might be an oversimplified view. Nonetheless, understanding these contrasting dynamics is crucial for developing targeted interventions and initiatives aimed at addressing child marriage in both regions.

6.3. Understanding the multifaceted nature of child marriage beyond faith norms

The study findings reveal that, despite a high level of religiosity and expression of faith, faith norms alone do not endorse or support the practice of child marriage. This implies that while faith norms have an influential role in mediating child marriage, they are not the sole decision-makers or main drivers behind this harmful practice. Child marriage is a multifaceted issue influenced by a wide array of factors and requires comprehensive understanding.

Beyond faith norms, several other factors contribute to the prevalence of child marriage. In the regression model analysis performed, some key factors—such as knowledge of the negative consequences of child marriage, employment status, and reaction and opinions of their community, particularly fellow congregation members and faith leade—greatly influence perceptions of the practice of child marriage.

In other words, social, economic, and political factors play significant roles in perpetuating child marriage. Poverty, for instance, is a critical factor that increases the vulnerability of families and communities to this practice. The lack of economic resources and opportunities often leads

families to view child marriage as a means to alleviate financial burdens or to secure a better future for their children, such as through dowry.

Gender inequality is another influential factor in child marriage. Societies that perpetuate unequal power dynamics between men and women are more prone to child marriage practices. Traditional customs and societal expectations often reinforce these gender inequalities, making it challenging to address child marriage solely through faith norms. Furthermore, existing legal frameworks can either serve as protective measures or perpetuate child marriage, depending on their enforcement and effectiveness. It is necessary to critically assess and reform legal systems to ensure that they provide adequate protection for children, and effectively address child marriage. As discussed in earlier sections, there is a major contradiction between the recently passed Anti-Child Marriage Law and the existing Muslim Code of Personal Laws in the country.

In conclusion, while faith norms contribute to the mediation of child marriage, they should not be viewed in isolation. To effectively combat this issue, it is essential to consider the interplay of various factors, such as poverty, limited access to education, gender inequality, traditional customs, and legal frameworks. Only by addressing the complex web of factors can we work towards eradicating child marriage and ensure the well-being and rights of children are upheld.

6.4. Empowering faith and religious leaders to address early marriage

Research demonstrates the profound influence held by faith and religious leaders, whose guidance and teachings play a pivotal role in shaping the values, beliefs, and practices of community members, particularly in matters as significant as marriage. These esteemed leaders are widely respected for their spiritual knowledge and are often regarded as authoritative figures.

Due to the immense impact of these leaders, it is crucial to ensure they possess a comprehensive understanding of the potential consequences and challenges of early marriage. Equipping faith and religious leaders with this knowledge empowers them to effectively share it with their constituents or followers. With this understanding, they can initiate open and honest conversations about the

advantages and disadvantages of early marriage, encourage critical thinking and informed decision-making among community members, and dispel religious myths concerning child marriage.

Through their teachings and discussions, these leaders can help individuals recognize the importance of considering various factors, such as personal readiness, emotional maturity, financial stability, and educational attainment, before entering into marriage. They can emphasize the significance of education, career development, and personal growth before committing to life-altering decisions.

It is essential, however, to focus not on debating the stance of faith or religious leaders regarding child marriage, but rather on acknowledging their informed and thoughtful approach in addressing it. By disseminating knowledge and facilitating discussions, these leaders can contribute to creating an environment where individuals are empowered to make decisions that prioritise their well-being and aspirations. Consequently, this fosters healthier relationships, stronger families, and overall societal prosperity.

6.5. Limited resources and support for prevention efforts of child marriage

The community assessments, done through focus group discussions and interviews, shed light on the prevailing situation regarding the prevention of child marriage in Marawi and Cotabato. The analysis of community readiness levels highlights notable differences between the two regions.

As previously mentioned, Marawi emerged as a community with a higher average score at stage 6, the initiation stage. They may have already initiated discussions, formed partnerships, and developed strategies to combat early marriage. They displayed a greater level of awareness and readiness to tackle child marriage

On the other hand, Cotabato was positioned at stage 5, the preparation stage. They may still be in the early stages of formulating concrete strategies, and establishing partnerships or collaborations to combat this practice. While they have shown progress, there is still room for further development before entering the implementation stage.

Interestingly, both communities have begun to acknowledge the potential influence of faith or religion on the prevalence of early marriage. This recognition implies an emerging understanding that cultural and religious factors play a role in shaping attitudes and practices surrounding child marriage. However, despite this awareness, both Marawi and Cotabato face challenges in implementing preventive initiatives due to limited resources and insufficient support.

One significant challenge is the scarcity or absence of materials and resources specifically designed to support efforts that prevent child marriage. The lack of such resources can hinder community members, stakeholders, and organizations from effectively addressing this issue. Without adequate materials, information, and tools, it becomes difficult to raise awareness, provide education, and mobilize support for preventing early marriage, as demonstrated by the analysis of the COM-B assessment tool. It states that there is a transition from capability to motivation to opportunity among these dimensions of change.

To enhance the prevention efforts in both Marawi and Cotabato, it is crucial to fill the resource gap by providing accessible culture- and faith-sensitive materials and resources. This may include educational materials, awareness campaigns, training programs, and support networks that cater to the unique needs and concerns of these communities. Additionally, facilitating partnerships and collaborations among community organizations, local authorities, and religious leaders can help bolster prevention efforts and generate collective support for eradicating child marriage.

The following recommendations are proposed to enhance the relevance and applicability of the research in programming interventions aimed at addressing child marriage in the country, specifically within the context of the World Vision Development Foundation (WVDF) and its local stakeholders and partners. To apply the value of this research, WVDF can enhance its programming interventions by incorporating the following key activities:

7.1. Advocacy and awareness

The inclusion of an advocacy awareness campaign on the potential consequences of child marriage in programming interventions holds significant value. By integrating this campaign, the initiative aims to raise community awareness and understanding regarding the adverse effects and risks associated with child marriage, and now with the legal consequences engaging to such practice. Equally crucial is the capacity building of local structures, including local government units like barangays, within these communities. This involves emphasizing their roles and responsibilities, particularly in light of the recently issued implementing rules and regulations of the Anti-Child Marriage law. This approach ultimately empowers these entities to proactively prevent and address issues related to child marriage.

The campaign can take various forms, such as community meetings, workshops, public events, or social media campaigns to effectively reach the target audience. A significant portion of the youthful demographic, especially those who are vulnerable, dedicate a substantial amount of time to online platforms. Given this, it would be valuable to underscore the significance of averting child marriage and spotlight the potential repercussions it poses to the futures of both young girls and boys through these online channels which will be further discussed in succeeding recommendations.

Through this advocacy campaign, it seeks to foster a sense of urgency and encourage community members to act in preventing child marriages. By promoting awareness, this not only to challenge existing social norms and cultural practices that perpetuate child marriage, but also to influence local policies and public services of the local government units, leading to positive changes within these communities.

In a broader sense, integrating an advocacy awareness campaign into intervention programs represents a forward-looking approach to tackling child marriage. Yet, the study's results underscore that solely disseminating knowledge about the potential ramifications of child marriage is insufficient. Instead, by concurrently addressing the possible outcomes while also fostering community involvement and facilitating alternate livelihood or economic prospects to at-risk families, it can also establish a nurturing atmosphere that places the well-being and empowerment of young individuals at the forefront. This comprehensive strategy will inherently lead to the postponement of child marriage within the community.

7.2. Parental dialogue initiative

By fostering regular peer counseling or interaction between parents of unmarried children and parents of married children, this initiative creates an opportunity for valuable conversations and knowledge sharing. This platform will allow parents to delve deeper into the subject of child marriage and gain a more nuanced understanding of its possible effects.

Through open and respectful discussions, parents can exchange personal experiences, insights, and observations related to child marriage. They can share stories about the challenges faced by married children, the impact on their overall well-being, and the long-term consequences for their physical, emotional, and educational development. By hearing firsthand accounts from parents of married children, parents of unmarried children can gain a clearer perspective on the potential risks and repercussions associated with this practice.

Moreover, this peer interaction can facilitate the exploration of preventive measures and solutions. Parents can collectively brainstorm strategies to protect their children from the adverse effects of child marriage. They can discuss alternative approaches such as promoting education, empowering girls and boys, advocating for legal reforms, and raising awareness within their communities.

By expanding the dialogue and fostering empathy, parents can develop a stronger commitment to preventing child marriage and work together to create a supportive environment for their children. This collaborative approach empowers parents to become agents of change within their respective circles, influencing attitudes, norms, and practices surrounding child marriage, and together they can challenge existing social norms (and faith norms).

7.3. Interfaith capacity building and training

Research underscores the profound sway that faith and religious leaders hold, as their counsel and teachings wield a pivotal role in shaping the values, convictions, and behaviors of community members, especially in matters as momentous as marriage. Nonetheless, the study has brought to light that a majority of these leaders lack awareness about the potential impacts and outcomes tied to child and early marriage. The FGD and SSI sessions have revealed that many of them refrain from providing any guidance on this topic.

Thus, a proposed interfaith capacity building and training programs aim to provide faith and religious leaders with comprehensive knowledge on the consequences of child marriage, enabling them to make informed decisions and engage their communities in meaningful discussions. These initiatives seek to foster a deeper understanding of the issue among religious leaders and empower them to take appropriate action within their respective contexts.

By equipping religious leaders with accurate information about the potential social, health, and psychological consequences of child marriage, these programs will encourage critical thinking and enable leaders to contribute to informed decision-making processes. The training content will cover a range of topics, including legal frameworks, international conventions, cultural beliefs, and debunking myths surrounding child marriage. Sensitivity to cultural and religious contexts is of utmost importance, ensuring that the training is respectful and acknowledges diverse perspectives.

7.4. Utilizing visual media and social network platforms

In the latest report released by research firms Hootsuite and We Are Social,[57] the Philippines remains as the top country worldwide whose citizens spend the most time on the internet and social media. More specifically, younger generations[58] tend to more time socializing online.

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[57] Baclig, C.E. (01 February 2021). Filipinos remain most active internet, social media users globally — study. INQUIRER.net. https://technology.inquirer.net/107561/filipinos-remain-most-active-internet-social-media-users-globally-study#ixzz7s9Jpil4Z
[58] Dela Peña, K. (02 February 2023). PH social media craze: 77% of Filipinos more engaging online than in real life. INQUIRER.net https://newsinfo.inquirer.net/1724608/ph-social-media-craze-77-of-filipinos-more-engaging-online-than-in-real-life

In fact, based on the most recent 2021 Young Adult and Fertility Survey (YAFS),[59] social media emerges as the second most prominent source of information about sexual health and related issues for Filipino youths aged 15-24.

By leveraging the power of compelling visual storytelling through documentaries and films, as well as popular social platforms, we can bring to life the stark realities faced by children forced into early marriages. Through captivating narratives, emotional interviews, and powerful visuals, this initiative can effectively convey the hardships, limitations, and lost opportunities that result from this harmful practice. This approach will engage audiences on a deeper level, fostering empathy and understanding.

Additionally, this initiative envisions to inspire children and young individuals to become active participants in these endeavours, affording them opportunities to engage meaningfully and lend their voices and experiences.

7.5. Youth employment training

The objective of this program focuses on empowering at-risk youth and young parents who have experienced the detrimental effects of child marriage. By expanding their economic opportunities and improving livelihood prospects, this initiative aims to address the challenges they face and help them build sustainable futures.

To achieve this, such programs will provide a range of initiatives tailored to their specific need. They should offer comprehensive employment training that equips young people with essential skills, knowledge, and expertise necessary to succeed in the job market. This training will encompass various vocational skills, professional development workshops, and practical experience, ensuring they are prepared to meet the demands of their chosen fields.

Additionally, this initiative will facilitate access to economic resources and financial support to help participants establish their own businesses or income-generating activities. By offering guidance on entrepreneurship, financial management, and business planning, WVDF will empower them to become self-reliant and create long-term economic stability for themselves and their families.

This initiative intends to cultivate collaboration with local enterprises, industries, and associations to establish avenues for job placements, internships, and apprenticeships for programme beneficiaries. Additionally, it's crucial to initiate partnerships with the government to ensure their steadfast commitment to augmenting these programs, which upholds the sustainability of such initiatives from the outset.

Ultimately, this program seeks to break the cycle of limited opportunities, and empower at-risk youth and young parents who have experienced child marriage to become self-sufficient, economically independent, and contribute positively to their communities. By investing in their economic empowerment, this initiative can create lasting change and improve their overall well-being.

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[59] Young Adult and Fertility Survey (YAFS) 2021: Material sources of information about sex. University of the Philippines Population Institute. https://www.uppi.upd.edu.ph/sites/default/files/pdf/YAFS5_National_Dissemination_Slides_FINAL.pdf

APPENDIX

1. CHILD AND EARLY MARRIAGE: HOUSEHOLD SURVEY QUESTIONNAIRE

World Vision

WVDF Research on Child and Early Marriage in Select Areas in Mindanao (Philippines)
INFORMED CONSENT

Introductory text

Consent statement: My name is _____. I have come here on behalf of World Vision. I will ask you some questions regarding faith and marriage before 18 years old in your community. Information given by you will be used only for research purpose.

Voluntary Participation
All participation in this survey is voluntary. You are free to decide if you want to take part or not. If you do agree to take part now, you can also change your mind at any time during the discussion, without any implications.

Procedures
The survey will take about 50 minutes. There are no right or wrong answers, and we hope that you will share your experiences with us. If you do not understand a question, please let me know.

Benefits
The findings of the research will help us with future activities on child protection.

Confidentiality and Anonymity
All information will be kept confidential and will not be shared with anyone outside the research and project implementers.

Do you have any questions? Do you agree to take part in this interview?

○ If yes, continue with the interview
○ If no, thank the respondent

_____
Printed Name and Signature of the Respondent

Date: _____

Child and Early Marriage (PHILIPPINES) - ENGLISH
Household Survey Questionnaire

SECTION 1. DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION

Date of Interview (YYYY-MM-DD): _____

1. City of Residence: ○ Cotabato City
                       ○ Marawi City

2. Barangay of Residence:

Cotabato City	Marawi City
○ Kalanganan Mother	○ Lomidong
○ Kalanganan II	○ Dimaluna
○ Poblacion Mother	○ Rorogagus Proper
○ Bagua II	○ Bangon
○ Others (pls. specify): _____	○ Others (pls. specify): _____

3. Place of Residence: ○ Urban
                        ○ Rural

4. Name of the Respondent (optional): _____

5. Category of the Respondent:
   ○ Community Member
   ○ Faith Leader
   ○ Community Member (or parent who has married their daughter/s or let their live in a partnership martially (unofficial marriage) before the age of 18

6. What is your current age? _____
(Note for the enumerators: If a respondent does not know their age and does not have a documentation, then please refer to a memorable/important event that happened when they were born or the earliest memories of memorable/important event that they have to estimate an approximate age)

7. Gender of the Respondent: ○ Female
                              ○ Male
                              ○ Others (pls. specify):
                              _____

8. What is your Religion? (If Respondent answered MUSLIM, proceed to **question #9, otherwise skip to question #10**)

   ○ Muslim
   ○ Catholic
   ○ *Iglesia ni Kristo*
   ○ Born Again-Christian
   ○ Seventh Day Adventist
   ○ Bible Baptist
   ○ Tribal Religion
   ○ No Religion
   ○ Does not want to answer

9. To what Muslim tribe do you belong to?
   ○ Meranao
   ○ Tausug
   ○ Iranun
   ○ Maguindanaon
   ○ Iyakan
   ○ Does not want to answer
   ○ Not Applicable

10. What is your current marital status? (If Respondent answered SINGLE, skip to **question #12, otherwise proceed to question #11**)

○ Married officially
○ Live with a partner (not officially married)
○ Divorced
○ Separated
○ Widowed
○ Single
○ Does not want to answer

11. What was your age at first marriage or living with a partner maritally (whichever comes first)? _____
(Note for enumerators: How old were you when you got married or started living with a partner (for the first time if the respondent has had multiple marriages)?)

12. What was your highest level of education?
○ Never attended school
○ Some primary education
○ Completed primary level
○ Some elementary education
○ Completed elementary level
○ Some high school education
○ Completed high school level
○ Some college education
○ Completed college level
○ Completed vocational course
○ Some postgraduate units
○ Completed postgraduate level

13. How many people are in your present household? ____
(Note for enumerators: these include individuals who contribute to the household's income, share the household's expenses, and live in the same place for the most of the time. These can include children who got married but who have not left the parents' household yet)

14. Do you have children (those below 18 years old) in your household? (If Respondent answered YES, **proceed to question #15, otherwise skip to #17**)
○ Yes
○ No

15. What is the gender of your children (those below 18 years old) in your household?
○ Female
○ Male
○ Female and Male
○ Not Applicable

16. How many of your children (below 18 years old) in your household are:
a. Girls: _____
b. Boys: _____

17. Are you involved in any income-generating activity? (If Respondent answered YES, **proceed to question #18, otherwise skip to #20**)
○ Yes
○ No
○ Does not want to answer

WVDF Research on Child and Early Marriage in Select Areas in the PHILIPPINES (ENGLISH) – Household Survey Questionnaire | 3

18. What is your job (pls. specify)? _____

19. What industry does it belong to?
(Note for enumerators: Choose the main industry classification based on the answer given by the respondent)

- ○ Agriculture, forestry and fishing
- ○ Mining and quarrying
- ○ Manufacturing
- ○ Electricity, gas, steam and air conditioning supply
- ○ Water supply, sewerage, waste management
- ○ Construction
- ○ Wholesale and rental trade, repair of motor vehicles
- ○ Transportation and storage
- ○ Accommodation and food service activities
- ○ Information and communication
- ○ Financial and insurance activities
- ○ Real estate activities
- ○ Professional, scientific and technical activities
- ○ Administrative and support service activities
- ○ Education
- ○ Human health and social work activities
- ○ Arts, entertainment and recreation
- ○ Other service activities

20. How well you are managing financially right now, which one would you choose?

- ○ No difficulty at all
- ○ A little bit of difficulty
- ○ A moderate amount of difficulty
- ○ A lot of difficulty
- ○ Not managing at all

21. Do parents/caregivers in your community marry off or let their **DAUGHTER** live with a partner martially (unofficial marriage) before she is 18 years old? (If Respondent answered ALWAYS, MOST OF THE TIME, or SOMETIMES, **proceed to question #22, otherwise skip to #19**)

- ○ Always
- ○ Most of the time
- ○ Sometimes
- ○ Never
- ○ Do not know
- ○ Does not want to answer

22. Why could parents/caregivers not wait until their **DAUGHTER** is 18 years old or above to let her marry/live with a partner maritally (unofficial marriage) then?

_____

23. Do parents/caregivers in your community marry off or let their **SON** live with a partner martially (unofficial marriage) before he is 18 years old? (If Respondent answered ALWAYS, MOST OF THE TIME, or SOMETIMES, **proceed to question #24, otherwise skip to Section 2**)

- ○ Always
- ○ Most of the time

○ Sometimes
○ Never
○ Do not know
○ Does not want to answer

24. Why could parents/caregivers not wait until their **SON** is 18 years old or above to let him marry/live with a partner maritally (unofficial marriage) then?

_____

SECTION 2. GENERAL ITEMS ON CEFM

1. At what age do **FEMALES** in this community get married/live with a partner maritally (unofficial marriage)? _____

2. At what age do **MALES** in this community get married/live with a partner maritally (unofficial marriage)? _____

3. Should a **FEMALE** have a right to choose the age of marriage?

   ○ Yes
   ○ No
   ○ Does not want to give an answer

4. Should a **FEMALE** have a right to choose her husband?

   ○ Yes
   ○ No
   ○ Does not want to give an answer

5. Should a **MALE** have a right to choose the age of marriage?

   ○ Yes
   ○ No
   ○ Does not want to give an answer

6. Should a **MALE** have a right to choose her husband?

   ○ Yes
   ○ No
   ○ Does not want to give an answer

7. What are some of the **POSITIVE BENEFITS** for **GIRLS** of getting married/live with a partner maritally (unofficial marriage) before 18?

   (Note for enumerators: Please make sure that the respondent understands the question – why is it good for girls to get married before 18?)

   _____

8. What are some of the **NEGATIVE BENEFITS** for **GIRLS** of getting married/live with a partner maritally (unofficial marriage) before 18?

   (Note for enumerators: Please make sure that the respondent understands the question – why is it bad for girls to get married before 18?)

   _____

WVDF Research on Child and Early Marriage in Select Areas in the PHILIPPINES (ENGLISH) – Household Survey Questionnaire | 5

81

9. What are some of the **POSITIVE BENEFITS** for **BOYS** of getting married/live with a partner maritally (unofficial marriage) before 18?

(Note for enumerators: Please make sure that the respondent understands the question – why is it good for boys to get married before 18?)

_____

10. What are some of the **NEGATIVE BENEFITS** for **BOYS** of getting married/live with a partner maritally (unofficial marriage) before 18?

(Note for enumerators: Please make sure that the respondent understands the question – why is it bad for boys to get married before 18?)

_____

2.1 Knowledge on the consequences of CEFM

ITEMS	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
1. A woman who has her first child before age 18 is likely to have difficulties giving birth.					
2. A woman who has her first child before 18 is more likely than older women to have injuries and infections after birth.					
3. A girl who is married before 18 is more likely to be beaten by her husband.					
4. Children born to girls under 18 are more likely to be underweight and premature or born early.					
5. Girls who marry before age 18 have children more quickly one after the other/					
6. A young married wife (under 18 years old) cannot make wise decisions about how to run the household. Her husband needs to take the decisions about money, education of children and other things.					
7. Marriage soon after puberty does not have negative consequences for the girl.					

SECTION 3. FAITH AND RELIGIOSITY

3.1 Faith beliefs

ITEMS	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
1. God or something divine/transcendent is important in my life.					
2. My faith gives meaning to my life.					
3. My faith gives meaning to my life.					
4. My faith beliefs are important for my decision-making.					

3.2 Individual experience of God/divine

ITEMS	Never	Rarely	Occasionally	Often	Very often
1. How often do you experience situation in which you have the feeling that you are in one with all?					
2. How often do you experience situation in which you have the feeling that God or something divine intervenes in your life?					

3. How often do you experience situation in which you have the feeling that you are touched by a divine power?					
4. How often do you have experience situation in which you have the feeling that God or something divine is present?					

3.3 Private practice of faith

ITEMS	Not at all	Not very much	Moderately	Quite a bit	Very much so
1. How important is personal prayer for you?					

ITEMS	Several times a day	Once a day	More than once a week	Once a week	One to three months a month	A few times a year	Less than few times a year	Never
2. How often do you pray?								
3. How often do you pray spontaneously when inspired by daily situations?								

3.4 Intellectual interest in religion

ITEMS	Never	Rarely	Occasionally	Often	Very often
1. How often do you read or listen to Holy Scriptures?					
2. How often do you keep yourself informed about religious questions through radio, television, internet, newspapers, or books?					
3. How often do you think about religious issues?					

ITEMS	Not at all	Not very much	Moderately	Quite a bit	Very much so
4. How interested are you in learning more about religious topics?					

3.5 Public practice of religion

ITEMS	Several times a day	Once a day	More than once a week	Once a week	One to three months a month	A few times a year	Less than few times a year	Never
1. How often do you take part in religious services (this means going to a mosque, temple or church)?								

ITEMS	Not at all	Not very much	Moderately	Quite a bit	Very much so
2. How important is to take part in religious services?					
3. How important is it for you to be connected to a religious community?					

3.6 Religion at the societal level

ITEMS	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
1. In my country religion is very important to people.					
2. Community leaders who don't believe in Allah/God/Gods should not have a leadership position or role.					
3. Community leaders should be guided by religious values in their decision-making and work.					
4. Religious leaders should not have a say in decisions that affect their community.					
5. No aspect of public life in the community is separate from religion.					
6. Religion is the basis of everything, including leadership.					

3.7 The role of faith leaders and faith communities

ITEMS	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
1. I always follow the advice of my faith leader.					
2. I get advice about problems with my family from my congregation members at the mosque/church/temple.					
3. My family's opinions are more important to me than what my faith leader says.					

4. How would **PEOPLE or MEMBERS** in your faith congregation (this can be anyone from your faith community) react if you did not follow their advice? (If Respondent answered <u>NEGATIVE or BAD</u>, **proceed to question #4a**. If <u>POSITIVE or GOOD</u>, **proceed to question #4b**. Otherwise, **skip to question #5**).

(<u>Note for enumerators</u>: Tick answers without reading them to the respondent)

○ Their reaction would be negative or bad
○ Their reaction would be positive or good
○ Do not react in any way
○ Others (pls. specify): _____

4a. Can you elaborate on their <u>**negative reaction**</u>? What would they do? (Multiple answers allowed)

(<u>Note for enumerators</u>: Tick answers without reading them to the respondent)

○ Get upset with me
○ Condemn me
○ Do not involve me in future activities
○ Withdraw support
○ Others (pls. specify): _____

4b. Can you elaborate on their <u>**positive reaction**</u>? What would they do? (Multiple answers allowed)

(<u>Note for enumerators</u>: Tick answers without reading them to the respondent)

○ Provide more explanation to me on their advice
○ Continue supporting me
○ Others (pls. specify): _____

5. How would **FAITH LEADERS** in your faith congregation (this can be anyone from your faith community) react if you did not follow their advice? (If Respondent answered <u>NEGATIVE or BAD</u>, **proceed to question #5a**. If <u>POSITIVE or GOOD</u>, **proceed to question #5b**. Otherwise, **skip to Section 4**).

(<u>Note for enumerators</u>: Tick answers without reading them to the respondent)

○ Their reaction would be negative or bad
○ Their reaction would be positive or good

○ Do not react in any way
○ Others (pls. specify): _____

5a. Can you elaborate on their <u>negative reaction</u>? What would they do? (Multiple answers allowed)

(<u>Note for enumerators</u>: Tick answers without reading them to the respondent)

○ Get upset with me
○ Condemn me
○ Do not involve me in future activities
○ Withdraw support
○ Others (pls. specify): _____

5b. Can you elaborate on their <u>positive reaction</u>? What would they do? (Multiple answers allowed)

(<u>Note for enumerators</u>: Tick answers without reading them to the respondent)

○ Provide more explanation to me on their advice
○ Continue supporting me
○ Others (pls. specify): _____

SECTION 4. CHILD MARRIAGE, FAITH AND CULTURE

4. 1 Faith norms (direct norms)

ITEMS	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
1. My faith says that marriage or living with a partner maritally (unofficial marriage) before age of 18 is not allowed.					
2. Girls in my faith community should only be married/living with a partner maritally (unofficial marriage) as adults (over 18).					
3. Boys in my faith community should only be married or living with a partner maritally (unofficial marriage) as adults (over 18).					
4. Those who want to end marriage or living with a partner maritally (unofficial marriage) before age of 18 are opposing our faith beliefs and values.					
5. My faith says that the most important role for females is to become a wife and a mother.					
6. God/Allah/Gods/Higher Power/Transcendent has created male as superior over female.					

4. 2 Faith and culture norms (proximal direct and indirect norms)

ITEMS	Agree mostly because my faith supports this	Agree mostly because our traditions and supports this	Agree mostly because of other reason (pls. specify)	Disagree mostly because my faith does not support this	Disagree mostly our traditions and customs do not support this	Disagree mostly because of other reason (pls. specify)	Neither agree or disagree	I do not know or prefer not to answer
1. We would marry our **DAUGHTERS** off or let our daughters live with a partner maritally (unofficial marriage) young to reduce family burden.								
2. We would marry our **SONS** off or let our sons live with a partner maritally (unofficial marriage) young to reduce family burden.								
3. It is the duty of a parent to ensure that a **DAUGHTER** is married/living with a partner maritally (unofficial marriage) before the age of 18.								
4. It is the duty of a parent to ensure that a **SON** is married/living with a partner maritally (unofficial marriage) before the age of 18.								
5. Marrying a girls/letting a girls live with a partner maritally (unofficial marriage) early protects her from sexual violence.								
6. Girls should get married/live with a partner maritally (unofficial marriage) when they reach puberty/menstruation to protect their family's honour.								
7. Female should not be the head of family or head of any institution, organization and a country.								

WVDF Research on Child and Early Marriage in Select Areas in the PHILIPPINES (ENGLISH) – Household Survey Questionnaire | 11

SECTION 5. REFERENCE GROUP

1. Whose opinion matters most when deciding to marry your daughter or let your daughter live with a partner maritally (unofficial marriage)? (list as many as possible, but no names, just their position, e.g. mother-in-law, friend, neighbour etc.) _____

   (Note for enumerators: This question should appear only if the respondent says that he/she has a daughter in **question #15**)

2. Does this person **(PERSON 1)** think you should marry your daughter or let your daughter live with a partner maritally (unofficial marriage) before 18? (If Respondent answered YES, **proceed to question #3**. Otherwise, **skip to question #4**)

   ○ Yes, this person think I should marry my daughter before 18
   ○ No, this person think I should not marry my daughter before 18

3. Does this person **(PERSON 1)**...

Actions	Yes	No
3.1 Offer advice and information for marriage		
3.2 Offer practical help with arranging the marriage (e.g. dowry, in-kind support)		
3.3 Others (pls. specify): _____		

4. Does this person **(PERSON 2)** think you should marry your daughter or let your daughter live with a partner maritally (unofficial marriage) before 18? (If Respondent answered YES, **proceed to question #5**. Otherwise, **skip to question #6**)

   ○ Yes, this person think I should marry my daughter before 18
   ○ No, this person think I should not marry my daughter before 18

5. Does this person **(PERSON 2)**...

Actions	Yes	No
5.1 Offer advice and information for marriage		
5.2 Offer practical help with arranging the marriage (e.g. dowry, in-kind support)		
5.3 Others (pls. specify): _____		

6. Does this person **(PERSON 3)** think you should marry your daughter or let your daughter live with a partner maritally (unofficial marriage) before 18? (If Respondent answered YES, **proceed to question #7**. Otherwise, **skip to question #8**)

   ○ Yes, this person think I should marry my daughter before 18
   ○ No, this person think I should not marry my daughter before 18

7. Does this person **(PERSON 3)**...

Actions	Yes	No
7.1 Offer advice and information for marriage		
7.2 Offer practical help with arranging the marriage (e.g. dowry, in-kind support)		
7.3 Others (pls. specify): _____		

8. Does this person **(PERSON 4)** think you should marry your daughter or let your daughter live with a partner maritally (unofficial marriage) before 18? (If Respondent answered <u>YES</u>, **proceed to question #9**. Otherwise, **end of interview**)

   ○ Yes, this person think I should marry my daughter before 18
   ○ No, this person think I should not marry my daughter before 18

9. Does this person **(PERSON 4)**...

Actions	Yes	No
9.1 Offer advice and information for marriage		
9.2 Offer practical help with arranging the marriage (e.g. dowry, in-kind support)		
9.3 Others (pls. specify): _____		

Thank you very much for answering our questions and taking the time to participate in our research.

Area: _____

Name of enumerator: _____

Contact Number: _____

2. CHILD AND EARLY MARRIAGE: FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSIONS (FGDS)

World Vision Research Project

Faith Dimension of Social & Behaviour Change

Focus Group Discussion (FGD) with Community Participants

Participant Numbers of those participating _____

Location _____

Informed Consent Given? Yes/No. If no, do not proceed.

Have all participants given Informed Consent given to audio record the discussion? Yes/No. If no, then the discussion must not be recorded but detailed notes taken.

Date of Focus Group Discussion _____

Name of Facilitator _____ _____

Equipment needed: audio recording device is mobile phone, notebook and pen to take notes during the conversation with respect to the process and body language and also a reflection by the Facilitator on how the FGD went. Post it notes and flip chart to facilitate the influential people mapping activity. Camera/mobile phone to take photos of the flip charts etc.

Introduction

Thank you for agreeing to take part in this focus group discussion.

My name is _____ and I am a researcher from _____.

I am part of a team conducting a research study on the faith dimension of social and behaviour change concerning Child Marriage in your community. The study is funded by World Vision but is being managed by independent researchers from the UK.

I would like to explore with you as a group, the linkages between faith and religion and Child Marriage in your community.

The discussion will cover the following topics:

- The importance of faith and religion to the continuation/ending of Child Marriage in your community.
- The main faith-based/religious reasons for the continuation of the practice including the faith-based/religious rewards of compliance and the sanctions for non-compliance.
- Examples of any faith-based/religious campaigns and activities designed to end Child Marriage in your community.
- Recommendations on faith-based and religious activities to end Child Marriage in your community.
- Identifying where/from whom the community gets its faith-based/religious information and advice concerning Child Marriage.

The FGD will last about 60 minutes. If you need a break at any time please do tell me. That will not be a problem.

As was explained to you earlier, you can decline to answer any questions or stop participating in the FGD at any time without giving any reasons.

You have agreed to allow the discussion to be audio recorded. However, you can ask at any time for the recording to be switched off and/or deleted.

Are you happy to proceed?

Focus Group Discussion Guide

1. Ask participants to give a short summary/description of the practice of Child Marriage in their community.

2. Ask participants to discuss the main reasons for the continuation of Child Marriage in their community. Agree a list of the five main reasons (put on a flip chart).

3. If participants indicate a decline in Child Marriage in their community, ask them to discuss the main reasons for the decline. Agree a list the main five reasons for the decline (put on a flip chart).

4. Ask participants to discuss the importance of faith and religion to the continuation/ending of Child Marriage in their community by using the lists produced in 2 and 3 above. Note the reasons on the flipchart.

5. Ask the participants to discuss and agree what are the main benefits/rewards/advantages of complying/undertaking Child Marriage in your community.

6. Ask the participants to discuss and agree what are the main sanctions/disadvantages/of not performing Child Marriage in their community.

7. Ask the participants to discuss what they perceive to be the role of faith and religion to the continuation/ending of Child Marriage in their community.

8. Ask participants to list on a flip chart any faith-based or religious campaigns and/or community efforts, to prevent Child Marriage in their community. Note down who is running/organising them, what are the key messages, who is the intervention aimed at.

9. Ask participants to comment on how knowledgeable they think their community is concerning faith-based and religious interventions to prevent Child Marriage. Ask them to discuss any opposition to the interventions and if so why and from whom.

10. Ask the participants if they know of any faith-based or religious resources or have access to such resources to support efforts and interventions to prevent Child Marriage in their community.

11. From a faith and religious perspective what recommendations would you give concerning the best ways to end Child Marriage in your community (complete the table below).

Recommendation Ranked in importance	Description of the faith-based/religious recommendation to end Child Marriage	Who or what organisation should be responsible for implementing the recommendation.	What is the role of faith-based/religious leaders and organisations?	How should the recommendation be funded/resourced?
1				
2				
3				
Others?				

12. Participants should now be asked to identify who are the key people or organisations that their community goes to for information and advice on Child Marriage.

13. Participants should now be asked to assess their community's readiness to end Child Marriage by completing the Community Readiness to End Child Marriage Assessment as a group

14. We have reached the end of the focus group discussion. Are there any other issues you would like to raise, or any questions you wish to ask?

Thank you very much for your participation.

END.

3. CHILD AND EARLY MARRIAGE: COMMUNITY READINESS TO PREVENT

World Vision Research Project

Faith Dimension of Social and Behaviour Change

Community Readiness to Change Behaviour Assessment:

Faith and Child Marriage

Tool

To be undertaken at the end of the **Focus Group Discussion** as a group exercise.

FGD Identification Code_____ -

Location _____   Date _____

Name of Researcher/Facilitator _____

Informed consent will have already been given by participants as this activity is part of a FGD.

The assessment comprises 6 statements relating to 6 Dimensions of Change. The researcher should read out (and/or write on a flip chart) the sentence. Participants should be given a few minutes to think and discuss the sentence. Participants should then be asked to raise one of three cards then ask participants to raise one of three coloured cards as follows:

Smiley card= *Agree with the statement.*

Neutral (not smiling or sad) card=*Agree somewhat with the statement.*

Sad card=*Disagree with the statement.*

Researcher should add up the 'votes' and enter them in the template below.

The assessment should take 15-20 minutes to complete.

Once completed the answers should be sent to the qualitative research team (Hazel Barrett/Pascal Niyonkuru) who will score the results and will determine the stage of behaviour change for that community with respect to faith/religion and Child Marriage.

Community Readiness to End Child Marriage Assessment:

To be undertaken at the end of each FGD.

Smiley card= Agree with the statement.

Neutral (not smiling or sad) card=Agree somewhat with the statement.

Sad card=Disagree with the statement.

1. Undertake the Community Readiness to End Child Marriage Assessment below:

Dimension of Change	Please consider each statement and then each participant will 'vote' on the statement using the emotive cards.
Dimension A (Community knowledge concerning the linkages between faith/religion and Child Marriage)	**Statement:** **My community believe that performing Child Marriage is a religious/faith-based requirement.** Number of votes: Smile [ ] Neutral [ ] Sad [ ]
Dimension B (Community faith-based/religious belief systems and attitudes towards Child Marriage)	**Statement:** **People in my community are questioning the religious/faith-based reasons for performing Child Marriage.** **Statements:** Number of votes: Smile [ ] Neutral [ ] Sad [ ]
Dimension C (Faith-based/religious community efforts to end Child Marriage)	**Statement:** **My community is aware of religious/faith-based efforts and interventions to end Child Marriage** Number of votes: Smile [ ] Neutral [ ] Sad [ ]
Dimension D (Community knowledge of faith/religious efforts to end Child Marriage)	**Statement:** **My community is actively engaging with religious/faith based efforts and interventions to end Child Marriage.** Number of votes: Smile [ ]

	Neutral [⊐] Sad [⊐]
Dimension E (Attitudes of faith and religious leaders as well as other influential people to ending Child Marriage)	Statement: Faith/religious leaders and other influential people are actively involved in efforts and interventions to end Child Marriage. Number of votes: Smile [⊐] Neutral [⊐] Sad [⊐]
Dimension F (Faith-based/religious resources available to support community efforts to end Child Marriage)	Statements: There are reliable, religious/faith-based resources for existing and new community efforts and interventions to end Child Marriage in my community. Number of votes: Smile [⊐] Neutral [⊐] Sad [⊐]

Adapted from: Plested et al, 2006; Barrett et al, 2015.

2. We have reached the end of this activity. Is there anything you would like to add or any other issues you would like to raise, or questions you want to ask? If you have any comments or questions please ask them now.

Thank you so much for your participation.

END

4. CHILD AND EARLY MARRIAGE: INFLUENTIAL PEOPLE MAPPING

World Vision Research Project

Faith Dimension of Social & Behaviour Change

Influential People Mapping Tool

To be undertaken at the end of the **Focus Group Discussion** as a group exercise.

Focus Discussion Group Code_____-

Location _____   Date _____

Name of Researcher/Facilitator _____

Informed consent will have already been given by participants as this activity is part of a FGD.

Equipment needed: audio recording device ie mobile phone, notebook and pen to take notes during the conversation with respect to the process and body language and also a reflection by the Facilitator on how the FGD went. Post it notes and flip chart to facilitate the influential people mapping activity. Camera/mobile phone to take photos of the flip charts etc.

Once completed the results should be sent to the qualitative research team (Hazel Barrett/Pascal Niyonkuru) who will score the results.

Introduction

Thank you for agreeing to take part in this activity.

My name is _____ and I am a researcher from _____.

I am part of a team conducting a research study on the faith dimension of social and behaviour change concerning Child Marriage in your community. The study is funded by World Vision but is being managed by independent researchers from the UK.

I would like to explore with you as a group, the linkages between faith and religion and Child Marriage in your community.

This activity will:

- Explore where your community gets information and advice concerning Child Marriage.
- Identify who or which groups of people does the community view as influential people with respect to Child Marriage.
- Highlight the role of faith and religious leaders.

The activity will last about 15-20 minutes. If you need a break at any time please do tell me. That will not be a problem.

As was explained to you earlier, you can decline to answer any questions or stop participating in the activity at any time without giving any reasons.

You have agreed to allow the activity to be audio recorded. However, you can ask at any time for the recording to be switched off and/or deleted.

Are you happy to proceed?

Influential People Mapping Tool

1. Explore where their community gets information/advice concerning Child Marriage

2. Discuss and agree on who or which groups of people the community view as influential people with respect to Child Marriage.

3. Discuss the role and importance of religious/faith-based leaders/institutions with respect to accessing information and advice concerning Child Marriage.

4. As a group rank the faith-based/religious influential people or other influential people in terms of the most important/influential to the community.

Rank	Name	Approximate Age/ <18 or >18 years	Gender	Summarise their views on Child Marriage	How and when do they express their views/give advice?	What faith or religious evidence do they use to justify their views?	Why and how are they influential within your community?
1							
2							
3							
4							
5							
Others?							

5. We have reached the end of this activity. Is there anything you would like to add or any other issues you would like to raise, or questions you want to ask?

Thank you very much for your participation. END

World Vision Research Project

Faith Dimension of Social & Behaviour Change

Individual Semi-Structured Interviews (SSI) with Influential People

Participant Number _____   Location _____

Informed Consent Given? Yes/No. If no, do not proceed.

Informed Consent given to audio record the conversation Yes/No. If no, then conversation must not be recorded but detailed notes taken.

Date of semi-structured interview _____

Name of Researcher/Facilitator _____

Equipment needed: audio recording device ie mobile phone, notebook and pen to take notes during the conversation with respect to the process and body language and also a reflection by the Researcher on how the SSI went.

Introduction

Thank you for agreeing to take part in this semi-structured interview.

My name is _____ and I am a researcher from _____.

I am part of a team conducting a research study on the faith dimension of social and behaviour change concerning Child Marriage in your community. The study is funded by World Vision but is being managed by independent researchers from the UK.

I would like to explore with you, as somebody identified as an influential person within the community, the linkages between faith and religion and Child Marriage within your community.

The interview will cover the following topics:

- The importance of faith and religion to the continuation/ending of Child Marriage in your community.
- The main faith-based/religious reasons for the continuation of the practice including the faith-based/religious rewards of compliance and the sanctions for non-compliance.
- Examples of any faith-based/religious campaigns and activities designed to end Child Marriage in your community.
- Where you get your faith-based/religious information and advice concerning Child Marriage.
- Recommendations on faith-based and religious activities to end Child Marriage in your community.

This interview will last about 60 minutes. If you need a break at any time please do tell me. That will not be a problem.

As was explained to you earlier, you can decline to answer any questions or stop the interview at any time without giving any reasons.

You have agreed to allow the interview to be audio recorded. However, you can ask at any time for the recording to be switched off and/or deleted.

Are you happy to proceed?

Influential People Semi-Structured Interview Guide

1. Ask participant to give a short summary/description of the practice of Child Marriage in their community.

2. Ask participant to identify and discuss the main reasons for the continuation of Child Marriage in their community.

3. If participant indicate a decline in Child Marriage in their community, ask them to identify and discuss the main reasons for the decline.

4. Ask the participant to discuss what are the main benefits/rewards/advantages of complying/undertaking Child Marriage in their community.

5. Ask the participant to discuss what are the main sanctions/disadvantages/of not performing Child Marriage in their community.

6. Ask participant to discuss the importance of faith and religion to the continuation/ending of Child Marriage in their community.

7. Ask the participant to identify and describe the faith-based or religious rewards/benefits/advantages of complying/undertaking Child Marriage in your community.

8. Ask the participant to identify and describe the faith-based or religious sanctions/disadvantages of not performing Child Marriage in their community.

9. As an influential person within their community ask the participant what is their view of the faith-based or religious rewards/sanctions concerning Child Marriage and do you support these rewards/sanctions.

10. Where and from whom, does the participant get their faith-based and religious information/advice concerning Child Marriage?

11. Does the participant know of any faith-based or religious campaigns and/or community efforts, to prevent Child Marriage? Who is running/organising them?

12. How knowledgeable does the participant think their community is concerning faith-based and religious interventions, to prevent Child Marriage? Is there any opposition to the interventions and if so why and from whom?

13. Does the participant know of any faith-based or religious resources or have access to such resources to support efforts and interventions to prevent Child Marriage in your community?

14. Ask the participant from a faith and religious perspective what recommendations would they give concerning the best ways to end Child Marriage in their community.

Recommendation Ranked in importance	Description of the faith-based/religious recommendation to end Child Marriage	Who or what organisation should be responsible for implementing the recommendation.	What is the role of faith-based/religious leaders and organisations?	How should the recommendation be funded/resourced?
1				
2				
3				
Others?				

15. Ask the participants if there are sometimes different values and norms to Child Marriage in their culture that are different from those in their faith/religion?

16. How does the participant perceive their role as an influential person in their community to be with respect to ending Child Marriage? How important do they think faith and religion are?

17. We have reached the end of my questions. Are there any other issues you would like to raise, or any questions you wish to ask?

Thank you very much for your participation. END.

6. SUMMARY OF MAIN THEMES AND SUB-THEMES IDENTIFIED USING THE DATA COLLECTED FROM THE FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSIONS (FGDS), PER STUDY SITE

Main Theme	Study Site		Overall Key Themes
	Marawi	Cotabato	
I. Trend of the practice of Child Marriage			
a. Perceived extent of the practice of Child Marriage	Child marriage exists among family members, peers, and community members ranging from 10 to 18 years old		
b. Perceived extent of the practice of Child Marriage	• Politics as highlighted more in Marawi • Influencing factor is focused on external environment	• Influencing factors in Cotabato rely more on personal choices	• Teenage pregnancy • Sex before marriage • Chose to elope with lovers • Undergo parental • Own choice among young people • Implications of poverty • Culture and Islamic perspective
c. Perceived reasons behind the decrease of the practice of Child Marriage	• Considers the objections from relatives and community members	• Considers women's welfare	• Access to education • Aspirations for a brighter future • Loss of influence • Financial stability
II. Faith/Religion-based influences on the continuous/ending the Child Marriage			
a. Perceived importance of faith/religion on to the continuation/ending of Child Marriage	• Men as the providers of the family as stated in Islamic law • Premarital sex as haram in Islam • Avoiding *fitnah* or *zinah* early		
b. Perceived faith-based reasons for the continuation on Child Marriage	• Eloping as disgrace to the family in Islam • Early marriage as sunnah in Islam • Disapproval for a pregnant woman to get married • Islamic notion that a good woman is only for a good man as stated in Quran • Marriage should be pursued while the body is still young • Children perceived as sellable by the parents, especially dowry		
c. Perceived faith/religion-based rewards/benefits/advantages of undertaking Child Marriage	• Avoiding issues with relatives • Avoiding *zinah* or *fitnah* early • Expansion of family lineage • Poverty alleviation • Sense of independence • Increase in political power		
b. Perceived faith/religion-based sanctions/disadvantages of not performing	• *Suicidal tendencies • *Disturbance to the community • *Having third party in the relationship (interesting to take note the possibility of ex-marital affair in the first place) • Opinions and judgement from community members		
III. Faith-based activities to end the Child Marriage			
a. Perceived source of information on Child Marriage	• Little to no efforts to prevent child marriage in the community • Influence of religious and cultural leaders • Interventions from parents		
b. Perceived faith-based/religious interventions/campaigns to end Child Marriage	• No available materials and resources to support efforts and interventions to prevent Child Marriage		
c. Perceived other interventions/activities	• Advocacy awareness campaigns and capacity building programs • Policy agenda against child marriage • Access to education, especially through scholarships • Strong community involvement, especially with influence of religious and cultural leaders • Interventions from the public and private sectors		

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