



Research Paper

The Consequences of Early Marriage on Girl Child Education In Geidam, Yobe State, Nigeria

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ABSTRACT

This study examines the consequences of early marriage on girl- child education in Geidam town, Yobe State, Nigeria. The research surveyed five (5) densely populated wards of Geidam local government area. The wards include Hausari, Asheikri, Kolori, Gumsa and Dilawa/ Jororo Wards. However the work has cover some frequent questions by many people such as what are the consequences of early marriage on females in Geidam local government area? What are the factors responsible for early marriage on females? And what are the possible solutions to the consequences of early marriage? A Multistage sampling techniques is used. The study randomly selected 200 individuals (respondents) as the sample size. An interview questions through questionnaire was used for the data collection. Data collected were analyzed using descriptive Statistics, percentage method and Chi - square (X^2) was used to interpret the hypotheses. The study revealed among other that there are consequences of early marriage on females' child education, which include discontinuation of education, high rate of divorce, Vesico vaginal Fistula (VVF) and cesarean section (CS) in the study area. The study also recommends that Government and policy makers at all level should encourages continuation of Girl-child education at least up to secondary school level in the study area.

KEY WORDS: Girl-Child Education, Education, Early Marriage, Consequences, Female

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I. INTRODUCTION

Early marriage has consequences for wellbeing of the families in Geidam Local Government Area of Yobe State, where girls are uneducated and ill-prepared for their roles as mothers and contribution to the society. Those are costs to be borne at every level from the individual household to the nation as a whole. Early marriage has effects on psychologically and is disadvantageous toward the loss of adolescence, the forced sexual relationship and the denial of freedom and personal development.

Attendances on early marriage have profound physiological and emotional consequence. The impact can be subtle and insidious and even lead to damage hard to access. It includes such intangible factors such as the effect of a girl loss of mobility and her household roles. Adolescent health covers all aspects of the improvement on reproduction process including a satisfying and safe experience. As a child the right not to engage in sexual relation and this right was violated by early marriage. Their education disrupted and they become victims of early marriage. The issue of early marriage especially in Geidam local government area has become so frequent that it has become a stumbling block standing on the way of the educational advancement of majority of girls in the study area. The issue of early marriage is accepted and preached by most families in Geidam, where you can witness a girl child and a teenager boy are married out. It may be very difficult for this type of accepted practice to be eradicated among such society where parents feel that, they are duty bound to arrange for marriage of their daughters and sons as earlier as possible. Therefore, this study is aim to focus on the consequences of early marriage and it implication(s) and to proffer solution(s) on Girl child education in Geidam. The paper is segmented into five sections with introduction as first segment. Other segments of the paper are: section two which present literature reviews, section three is concerned with methodology used in collecting data for the study. Section four was for data analysis, discussions and findings. Section five is concerned with conclusion and recommendations.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

Literature review it tells you what others have done and what was not covered, hence this section will deal with the following sub-headings:

Theoretical Framework

Early marriage is seen as a time for given out for marriage at an age which the girl is biologically and physically not matured enough to give out birth to a child on her own and emotionally not matured enough to play out the role of the wife and mother. Furthermore, the effect of early marriage is contracted between two very young couples of the same age, may be in experience and immature to cope with the demands of the family and child bearing (Owuamanam, 2000).

Early marriage of a girl-child may interrupt the education of the couples, this is particularly so because child bearing begins almost immediately after marriage. Couples need emotional stability to be able to cope with the strains and stresses of marriage and this could only be achieved by maturation. Early marriage of a girl-child may also have adverse effect on the family standard of living thereby causing tension and lack of interest in their marriage. Marriage contracted between two adolescents may have its peculiar problems, in order to discuss the consequences of early marriage, verily in assessing the prevalence many of the early marriages are unregistered and unofficial and are not therefore counted as part of any standard data collection system. Very little country data exist about marriages under the age of fourteen (14) even less about those below ten (10). The customs surrounding marriages, including the desirable age and way in which a spouse is selected, depend on a society's view of the family: its role, structure, pattern of life and the individual and collective responsibilities of its members. The idea and function of state of constant evolution on early marriage as strategy for economic survival, poverty is one of the major problem of factor underpinning early marriage, that is to say, where poverty is acute a young girl may be regarded as an economic burden and her marriage to a much older, sometimes, even elderly men, a practice common in the middle eastern and south Asians societies is a family survival strategy and may be seen as in her interest, (Msheliza, 1983).

Other consequences of early marriage that makes a country example Nigeria, to face economic difficulties and political instability, age marriage has barely risen and in the northern part of the country the average age has fallen since 1990. The early, marriage as an effect is in the sense that the strategy of high fertility when mortality decline due to health improvement and under pressure of urbanization and modernization, that is to say, the extended family starts to break up into nuclear components and some couples leave for the towns. Msheliza (1993), "individual wage labour replaces family based children becomes a cost".

Finally, the consequences of early marriage is an issue, but young girls may endure misery as a result of early marriage and the number of those who would seek help, if they thought it existed, is impossible to calculate until more is known about their situation, there can be no reliable estimates of the scale of their predicaments or of the social damages that is called 'forward in upbringing they give to their children. About the girls and to a lesser extent boys is a wide ranging, within a right perspectives, three of the major concerns are the denial of childhood and adolescence, the right of personal freedom and the lack of opportunity to develop a full sense of selfhood as well as the denial of psychological and emotional wellbeing, reproductive health and educational opportunity Abubakar (1970).

The consequences of early marriage among females

Right from the beginning of ages, the effect of early marriage among female children's national day, the UNICEF in collaboration with the minister of education in Nigeria, had a presentation of statistical result of schooling children in the contemporary society. The research presentation shows that over 7.2 million Nigerian children are out of schools as they engaged themselves in hawking, as maid to people or otherwise.

Meanwhile, from the above result 87% of these children found outside school were girls, in a press briefing organized by the chairman of national orientation agency Dr. Chukwuemeka Chukwudi the major reason why more girl- child are found outside school was because female children are given out on marriage at an early age. It is no longer a matter of argument that females constitute more than fifty percent (50%) of world active population (UNESCO, 2008). Although, they make immense contribution to national development, they still face a number of difficulties that limits their potentials in promoting personal and collective development. A key area of concern in this regard is that of their education, which can only at best be described as dwindling as and less than equal to that of the male (Obaya, 2003).

Religion and Purdah System

There is no reason to doubt that misinterpretation of religion to a greater extent militates against the education of the girl child. If you look at the two major religions that is to say; Islam and Christianity, there is nowhere or place, where it is stated categorically that parents should not give equal educational opportunities to their children irrespective of gender. Consequently, education should and ought to be the rights of the citizens

than early marriage. (Ishak, 2007) the *Purdah* system is a system where a married woman stays within the four walls of her husband's home especially during the day time. She is not allowed to be seen outside. Moreover, she must not allow herself to be seen outside by other men. This practice is common among Muslim. As a result of this, some women who cannot adequately be catered for their husbands send their daughters at tender age into streets to engage in petty hawking. This type of practice has its own negative effect on the life of the girl as may not encourage them to go to school by their parents especially their mothers.

Parental attitude toward female's education

A look at parental attitudes being one of the causes of early marriage cannot be over emphasized. Msheliza (1983) expressed the view that most parent marry off their daughters at an early age between twelve (12) and thirteen (13). It becomes a source of pride of their daughters are found to be virgin on their marriage day. The girl and her parent as a sign of appreciation receive gift from the bridegroom. This type of feeling on the part of the parent again support why they marry off their daughters at very early age to prevent coming into contact with a man before marriage. This is no doubt disrupting educational aspiration of many girl- children. Meek (1971) in his book titled "The Northern Tribes of Nigeria" has written at length on the question of social contact with a man before the marriage in Nigeria especially in the southern part hold great importance to pre-nuptial chastity. Saddens of virgins are severely punished and among most ethics groups, a young husband who finds that his newly wedded wife is not a virgin can claim the return of pre-nuptial gift from the parent of his wife. In Hausa society, if a husband discovers that the girl he has married is not a virgin, he will proclaim it to the entire town by breaking a pot outside his house.

Economics background of suitors and parents

There is no reason to doubt that early marriage due to a greater extent affect the education of a girl-child. When a girl married at an early age, it is a clear license that such a girl is bound to drop-out of formal school system. This is because marital life comes along with responsibilities such responsibilities includes conception and bearing of children. No doubt such responsibilities are enough to discriminate such girl from her peers. It is true that such girl will find it very difficult to attain school while pregnant. This is because in such condition, she will be shy to go to school and interact with students who are no longer looking the same like her. Such condition will discourage the girl-child from school attendance because she will be a laughing stock before her friends and peers, Ishak, (2017).

Nigeria being a third world country has most of her population living in the rural areas. As a result of this, most parents in the rural areas are farmers and their source of income is merger, therefore, much attention is given to the upbringing of boys since they will have families to support in future. Due to this poor economic background, many girls are kept at home and could not attend school. As a result of this, many of these girls are married at tender age. The dowry which is obtained from such marriage is used in maintaining the family for some time.

How culture affect girl-child education and its influence on the early marriage

Culture to a greater extent has influence on the education of a girl-child and on early marriage itself. The girl-child education in the rural environment believe to be valueless, they believe that it is better to educate the boy child than educating the girl child.

Reason being the fact that, if you educate your girl-child, whatever education she acquired at the end of the day all the income she will get, will go into the income of another family, that is to say, the husband, so, therefore, their believe is that one day this girl child will be married out into another family, Ishak, (2017) "women in development".

Marnagas (1999) in this article "traditional marriage in Hausa land" argued that culture is an important factor which encourages early marriage among youths, he added that in Hausa land, girls get married at twelve or thirteen (12-13) years of age and in the suburbs they could marry out their daughters at a younger age than twelve. This is done to prevent the girl from being exposed to pre-marital sex. The second reason for early marriage in Hausa and according to Musa is that at the age of ten to twelve, the girl could obediently accept her father's choice of a husband.

III. METHODOLOGY

Study area

Geidam is among the seventeen local governments of Yobe State, Nigeria. It is located on latitude 120 54'33"N and longitude 110 55' 21"E. Geidam town is its capital with a population of about 89,595 (9). (Census, 2006). The major climatic seasons are rainy season which begins in March or April and ends in October and the dry season which begins in November and ends in March or April. Farming is the main occupation of the people and groundwater is the main water source for both irrigation and domestic uses during dry seasons.

Religious belief

Predominate peoples of Geidam populaces are Muslim following the teaching of prophet Muhammad (SAW) as enacted in holy book Quran revealed to prophet Muhammad (SAW) direct from Almighty Allah and Hadith from the prophet, that part of the parents obligation in following the sunnah to arrange for marriage of their daughters and sons as early as possible particularly to marry off their daughters at an early age between twelve (12) and thirteen (13) to prevent her from coming into sexual contact with a man before marriage. Which is clearly prohibited or (Haram) in Islam

Population and sampling

All people in Geidam local government area naturally calls for the use as population but for the purpose of this study, five (5) wards were selected as sample for the proportion. The target population are five wards within Geidam metropolitan which include Hausari, Kolori ,Gumsa Asheikri and Dilawa/Jororo ward. 200 individuals were considered as the sample involved in the study which were randomly selected. An interview questions was used for the data collection.

Research instrument

A Focus group discussion (FGD) of 10 peoples in each ward (10 times 5 equals 50) was organised to have their view and key ward Interview (KWI) of 20 peoples across the prescribed wards will be arrange for vivid discussion and also a printed questionnaires was administer to some random selected 30 households per wards (30 times 5 equals 150) which yield 200 respondents in the study area as an instrument for the purpose of this research, the research questionnaire contained three (3) sections A, B and C which contained fifteen (15) interview questions, the fifteen (15) interview questions reflects our research questions which include:

1. What are the factors responsible for early marriage on females?
2. What are the consequences of early marriage among Girl-Child in Geidam local government of Yobe State?
3. What are the possible solutions to the consequences of early marriage on the education of the Girl-Child?

IV. DATA PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS

The data collected is analyzed statistically, using the descriptive Statistic, Representations like tables and graphs were used to ensure easy and quick interpretation of data. Responses are expressed in percentages. Chi-square is used in testing the hypothesis formulated.

Table I: Responses on factors that lead to early marriage

Alternative	Responses	Percentage (%)
Poverty	40	20
Traditional belief	50	25
Pre-marital sex prevention	99	49.5
Others	11	5.5
	200	100

Source: Survey Report, 2021.

Table one above revealed that majority of the respondents (99, 49.5%) are of the view that avoidance of pre marital sex is what encourages them. Furthermore (50, 25%) of the respondents are attached to various traditional believes while (40, 20%) and (11, 5.5%) are of the inclination of economic poverty and other tendencies leads/ make them to supports early marriage among Girl-child in the study area.

Test of Hypothesis

The two hypotheses earlier formulated will be tested using the chi-square (X^2) method.

Decision Criteria:

The decision rule is that if the calculated values of X^2 is greater than the tabulated value (or critical value), we accept the alternative hypotheses and reject the null hypotheses or vice versa.

Hypothesis One

Ho₁: There are no consequences of early marriage on females' child education in Geidam local government area.

Table II:

Alternatives	Responses	Percentage (%)	Aggregate
Strongly agree	110	55	110
Agree	50	25	50

Undecided	10	5	20
Disagree	20	10	10
Strongly disagree	10	5	10
Total	200	100	200

Source: Survey Report, 2021.

Table III: Contingency Table

Alternatives	O _i	E _i	O _i -E _i	(O _i - E _i) ²	(O _i - E _i) ²
					E _i
Strongly agree	110	40	70	490	12.25
Agree	50	40	10	100	2.5
Undecided	10	40	(30)	900	22.5
Disagree	20	40	(20)	400	40
Strongly disagree	10	40	(30)	900	22.5
X² cal					99.5

E_f = Total Frequency

Number of Responses

$$200/5 = 40$$

Level of significance (α) = 5% (0.05)

Critical Value = ($\mu - 1$), α

Where; μ = No of options

$$= (5 - 1), 0.05$$

$$= 40 (0.05)$$

$$X^2 \text{ Tab} = 15.51$$

Decision: Since X² calculated is greater than the X² tabulated, (99.5 > 15.51) we accept alternative hypothesis and reject the null hypothesis. Hence, we conclude that there are consequences of early marriage on female's child education in Geidam local government area. Some of these consequences of early marriage are: Discontinuation of education, high rate of divorce, Vesico vaginal Fistula (VVF) and cesarean section (CS) during labour and delivery in the study area.

Hypothesis Two

H₀₂: There are no possible solutions to the consequences of early marriage on Girl-child in Geidam local government area.

Table IV:

Alternatives	Responses	Percentage (%)	Aggregate
Strongly agree	70	35	70
Agree	80	40	80
Undecided	20	10	20
Disagree	10	5	10
Strongly disagree	20	10	20
Total	200	100	200

Source: Survey Report, 2021.

Table V: Contingency Table

Alternatives	O _i	E _i	O _i -E _i	(O _i - E _i) ²	(O _i - E _i) ²
					E _i
Strongly agree	70	40	30	900	22.5
Agree	80	40	40	1600	40
Undecided	20	40	(20)	400	10
Disagree	10	40	(30)	900	22.5
Strongly disagree	20	40	(20)	400	10

X ² cal					105
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Ef = Total Frequency

Number of Responses

$$200/5 = 40$$

Level of significance (α) = 5% (0.05)

Critical Value = ($\mu - 1$), α

Where; μ = No of options

$$= (5 - 1), 0.05$$

$$= 8 (0.05)$$

$$X^2 \text{ Tab} = 15.51$$

Decision: Since X^2 calculated is greater than the X^2 tabulated, ($105 > 15.51$) we accept and reject the null hypothesis. Hence, we conclude that there are possible solutions to the consequences of early marriage on Girl-child in Geidam. Some of possible solutions identified to eradicate/alleviate early marriage in the study area are: encouraging continuation in western education up to secondary school level and special bursary/scholarship to Girl-child would assist greatly in the study area.

V. DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

The research analysis revealed that there are consequences of early marriage on female's child education in Geidam local government area. This is in line with Msheliza (1983) expressed the view that most parent marry off their daughters at an early age between twelve (12) and thirteen (13). It becomes a source of pride of their daughters are found to be virgin on their marriage day.. The study also revealed that there are possible solutions to the consequences of early marriage on female's child education in Geidam local government area, by encouraging continual in western education in the area of the study, the attitude of early marriage as to be eradicated as well.

VI. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

In spite of government policies aimed at providing educational and technical support for the promotion of females education in Nigeria, they have performed less satisfactorily largely because of operational bottlenecks including lack of depth of the female education system, inadequate infrastructural facilities, poor management practices and low level commitment to mention but a few. The agencies which are supposed to provide adequate learning facilities in compliance to government policies usually becomes complex.

Based on the exploratory survey of this study, the research makes the following recommendations:

- Government should encourage the communal to enrol their Female children in western education in the area.
- Government should create a medium that will be use to inform the communal about the implication of early marriage on Girl-child education.
- It is also recommended that attitude of early marriage as to be eradicated within the community.
- Government should oriented people on the importance of Female education to the society in particular and the country in large.
- State Ministry of Women affairs should intervene on the matter by creating awareness on the contribution of Women to the society and their position within the community.

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