



## An Evaluation of the Effect of Early Marriage on Girl Child Development in Borno

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**Abstract.** The study assesses the effect of early marriage on girl child development in Jere L.G.A. Metropolis, Borno State. Related literatures were reviewed based on specific objectives of the study. This study was a survey research method. The target population of the study comprise some selected residence in Maidugiuri, Borno State. The research instrument used for this study was a well-structured questionnaire. The data were analyzed using frequency count and its equivalent percentages score as well as likert scale. The result of the study indicates that many of the respondents strongly agrees that early marriage can make it too difficult for a girl to attend school and perform her duties as wife and mother. Some of the respondents agree with the statement that Education is useful to a girl child even after marriage. While some of them strongly agree to the statement that early marriage increases risk for sexual transmitted diseases (HIV/AIDS). Majority of the respondents strongly agree that early marriage affects girl child in providing health services to their children. It is therefore, recommended that Government should create awareness on the negative effect of early marriage and how it makes girl child education almost impossible. Government should create a policy that will be geared towards discouraging early marriage as death may occur during birth.

### 1. Introduction

Marriage is an obligation of couples that has a very noble goal to build harmonious life. Marriage is a process learning about one's self and one's spouse, is all about sharing, growing up, being a member of the family team" (Brown 2013). Marriage has several purposes, including performing sexual desire, to have children, and to achieve a peaceful and happy life (UNICEF, 2008).

Marriage before the age of 18 is a fundamental violation of human rights. Many factors interact to place a child at risk of marriage, including poverty, the perception that marriage will provide 'protection', family honor, social norms, customary or religious laws that condone the practice, an inadequate legislative framework and the state of a country's civil registration system (Schurmann, 2009).

In many parts of the world parents encourage the marriage of their daughters while they are still under age hoping that the marriage will benefit them both financially and socially.

In actual, child marriage is a violation of human rights, compromising the development of girls and often resulting in early pregnancy and social isolation, with little education and poor vocational training reinforcing the gendered nature and poverty (Schuler, Bates, Islam, & Islam. 2006).

Child marriage often compromise a girl's development by resulting in early pregnancy and social isolation, interrupting her schooling, limiting her opportunity for career and vocational advancement and placing her at increased risk of domestic violence. Although the impact of child grooms has not been extensively studied, marriage may similarly place girls in an adult role for which they are unprepared, and may cause economic pressures on them and curtail their opportunities for career advancement (Samandari & Speizer, 2010).

Girl child is considered to be a female of under age, while marriage is said to be a union of man and woman. Though differs from society to society (Santhya, Ram,

Acharya, Jejeebhoy, Ram & Singh, 2010). Parent gives their hand in marriage at the early stages that have barely reached adolescence or sometimes even

before their menstruation period. Truly indeed, a girl will immediately or can biologically begin to bear children once she attains puberty and this could be as early as 11-13 old (Schuler, Bates, Islam, & Islam, 2006). But, the age at which a girl or young woman marries is largely determined by parents, religious and socio-cultural characteristics of a particular society as well as civil laws with little or no regards to medical or health consideration. Although, in Nigeria the fertility survey shows that female of 24.3% were married before 13years old, and 37% were married at the age of 14, while 51.1% were married off before they reach the age of 15years.

Early marriage is in so many ways, a "child assault". This is because girls that get married are still young women. They are psychologically, physically and emotionally to appreciate and carryout the obligations of marriage. But in our own society tradition i.e. Borno State. Women live through their reproductive year either pregnant or breastfeeding, they marry young and their fertility is unregulated. They do not use any modern contraceptive methods (Omwancha, 2012).

Early pregnancies place women face to face with death. Various studies show that death as a result of causes related to pregnancy labour (Anemia in pregnancy, malaria, obstructed labor toxemia of pregnancy) is a very common in young or adolescent mothers particularly with pregnancy. However, when a girl child marries early, her schooling is usually interrupted. More often than not she winds up losing opportunities to improve her socio-economic status. In short, girl early marriage is and must between as one of the deepest roots of socio economic inequality between male and female particularly in Jere local government and Nigeria in general. A girl who is married at once deprived of an opportunity to acquired adequate professionals skills and competence (Nguyen, Wodon. 2012).

Since marriage is a union between two opposite sex to form a family, the functionalist perspective on family or marriage has prescribe marriage or family as "a social group characterized by common residence, economic cooperation and reproduction." It includes adults both sexes, at least two of whom maintain a socially approve sexual relationship and one or more children, own or adopted, of the sexually cohabiting adults. Murdock (2000), argued that the family is functioned with what he termed sexual, reproduction, economic and educational responsibilities.

In all societies especially in Africa marriage is a union which include not just the husband and wife but between families and lineages, Fatima (2013) Marriage is regarded as a relatively permanent bond and in some societies marriage is virtually

irrevocable, this could be exemplified in the regular words of marriage ministers thus this two are now one and both in sickness and health (Ministry of Education, Movement of Ethiopia, 2010) However, this work looks into the causes and consequences of early marriage among the entire community of Jere Local Government area of Borno state. The causes and consequences is an important issue to be address due to the fact that it has become a common practice in both rural and urban centers, but often more common in rural settlement. Early marriage is a union between the ages which could be regarded as early and late adolescent of (13-20) years, period (Mensch, Singh and Caster line. 2005), this according to Sigmund Freud is a turbulent traumatic and distress period

## **2. Jere Local Government Area comprises both rural and suburban centers**

Which embraces early marriage amongst it youths especially females. According to the traditional belief, a female is not supposed to be fully grown into adulthood in their father's house and since adultery and fornication is against the norms and Values of the community, it allows early marriage so that the question of Immorality to satisfy sexual desire both in male in female will be minimized.

Studies has been undertaken by different organizations in an attempt to look at the reasons behind early marriage and how it imposed several consequences on the health of the mother as well as the effect on the child. Thus, according to Women Feature Service (1999), in many regions of the world where virginity is given high social values, girls are married off at a young age often to men, many years older. A child face greater unearth risk and experience real physical violation and trauma as a young girl is forced to deal with early sexual activity, in worse case many are divorced or abandoned and become social outcasts (Mensch, Grant and Blanc, 2006).

It is for those reasons that will call persistently for a legislation pegging the minimum age for marriage at least at the age of 18 years (Mahmud and Amin, 2006). In view of the above therefore, it becomes necessary and imperative to look upon the effect of early marriage so that the age at which marriage would occur would be ascertained, effect of early marriage would be brought time light and thus, minimize the related effect of early marriage. This research work will focus on effect of early marriage on girl child in Jere Local government Area of Borno State and this assessment will focus on the educational, Cultural, health issue, Social and economic background as some of the forces that affect early marriage in every region of the world in general and Jere Local Government in specific.

### 3. Literature Review

One of the most respected African scholars that captured concept of marriage is John Mbiti in 1969. He described marriage as a complex affair with economic, social and religious aspects which often overlap so firmly that they cannot be separated from one another. It is the point where all the members of a given community meet: the departed, the living and those yet to be born. All the Dimensions of time meet here and the whole drama of history is repeated, renewed and revitalized (Mahmud and Amin, 2006). Marriage is a drama in which everyone becomes an actor or actress and not just a spectator. Therefore, marriage is a duty, a requirement from the corporate society, and a rhythm of life in which everyone must participate. Otherwise, he who does not participate in it is a curse to the community, he is a rebel and a law breaker, he is not only abnormal but 'under human'. Failure to get married under normal circumstances means that the person concerned has rejected society and society rejects him in return (Mbiti, 1969). Anjo (1991) defined early marriage as either marriage of an adolescent girl/boy or marriage of an adolescent girl to a matured man or vice-versa and this happens at puberty when the individual is getting matured. The marital age according to Molokwu (2000) is above the age of 18 years, when the individual is physically, socially, academically and emotionally matured to cope with the challenges of marriage. The Nigerian review draft decree put the marriageable Age of the girl-child at 18 years. Also, the UNICEF (2001) on the rights of the child recommends that children should not be separated from their parents before 18 years unless it is considered necessary.

### 4. Early Marriage

Early marriage, also referred to as child marriage, is defined as any marriage carried out below the age of 18 years, before the girl is physically, physiologically and psychologically ready to shoulder the responsibilities of marriage and childbearing (Mahmud and Amin, 2006). While more women are marrying in their thirties in developed countries, overall, 20 to 50 percent of women are married by the age of 18 in the developing world with the highest percentages in West African within Sub-Saharan Africa and South Asia. Approximately 40% of women aged 20-24 worldwide who were married before the age of 18 live in Sub Saharan Africa, thus resulting in early marriage being largely sub-Saharan African phenomena (Walker, 2012). The context of early marriage in this zone must be understood within an environment of poverty, gender inequality, and cultural taboos against premarital sex for girls, religious beliefs and patriarchal predisposition for

controlling female sexuality. Not surprisingly (Walker2012). Early marriage is more prevalent in developing countries, and in particular in poorer communities (Lloyd & Mensch, 2008). Current estimates show that by the age of 18, about 82 million girls in developing countries (excluding China) who are presently aged between 10 and 17 will be married, while 163 million of the 331 million girls who are presently aged between 10 and 19 will be married before they are 20 (Bruce 2002). Early marriage is predominantly a female problem; although some boys may be forced to marry early, the overwhelming burden of this problem falls on girls. In sub-Saharan Africa and South Asia, only about five percent of young men marry under the age of 19 (Naana, & Pobi, 2003) the term early marriage or child marriage refers to any marriage of a child younger than 18years old in accordance to Article of the Convention on the Rights of the child. UNICEF (2005) describes it as both formal marriage and informal unions in which a girl lives with a partner as if married before the age of 18. It can also be defined as any marriage carried out below the age of 18 Years, before the girl is physically, physiologically and psychologically ready to shoulder the responsibilities of marriage and child bearing. Some scholars and activists have argued that instead of looking for a universal age at which girls and boys should marry, the focus should be put instead on eliminating the unwanted effects of early marriage (Women's human rights resources). The argument is that societal understanding of what it means to be a child differs. The situation in the regions of Africa tends to support this argument. Lefebvre (2004) states that while more women are now marrying at later age, early marriage remains a norm in sub-Saharan Africa and South Asia. Overall, 20-50 per cent of women are married by the age of 18 in these regions. Bayisenge (2010) observed that African women in general marry at a much earlier age than their non-African counterparts, leading to early pregnancies. The Health Demographic Survey (HDS) for 1995 to 2003 shows that in Niger, 47 percent of women aged between 20 and 24 were married before the age of 15, and 87 percent before the age of 18, a total of 53 percent had also had a child before the age of 18. Bayisenge (2010) provided data on child marriage prevalence in II African countries that suggest a normative situation. The countries include: Niger (77 percent), Chad (71 percent), Mozambique (57percent), Guinea (65 percent), Mah (65 percent), Uganda (54 percent), Burkina Faso (52 percent). Ethiopia, Togo and South Africa had prevalence rates of 49 percent 3 1 percent and 8 percent respectively (Khan and Mishra, 2008). Reports from IRIN Africa (2008) indicate that in Northern Nigeria, an estimated more than half of the girls are married before age 15. Among Nigerians predominantly Muslim northern states only Jigawa state has passed a Law to enforce the

UN Child Rights Act, which prohibits child marriage (Jensen, and Thornton, 2003). The 2007 law itself does not specify an age, referring only to "puberty" to please the people. The law itself has never been enforced. In 2010, a Nigerian Senator was reported by the news media to have married a 13-year-old Egyptian girl. The report generated opprobrium in various circles but soon died down. The lesson learnt is that implementation of relevant laws are still a far cry from expectations in Nigeria (Jensen and Thornton, 2003).

### 5. Reasons behind Early Marriage

Several reasons may be adduced for early marriage of the girl-child.

#### 5.1 Economic Reason

Poverty has been identified as one of the major causes of early marriage. Where poverty is acute, a young girl may be regarded as an economic burden (UNICEF, 2001). Poverty is a critical factor contributing to child marriage and a common reason why parents may encourage a child to marry, in belief that such marriage may bring both financial and social gain to the family. The Forum of Marriage and the Rights of Women and Girls, 2001 provides the following case of a Zimbabwean girl who was married off at a very young age due to economic constraints. In August 2001, a ten-year-old girl in Zimbabwe was reportedly sold to a 40-year-old man as wife in order for the family to obtain cash for food.

#### 5.2 Socio-Cultural and Religious Values

In societies, where early marriage is prevalent. There is strong pressure on families to conform. The old notion of an ideal age for marriage, the desire for submissive wives, and other customary requirements are all enshrined in local customs or religious norms (Bayisenge, 2010). In the northern part of the country, religion plays major part in perpetuating early marriage. In the southern part of Nigeria, where the extended family system is strong, the influence of relations in early marriage phenomenon cannot be over-emphasized (Jensen and Thornton, 2003).

#### 5.3 Notions of Morality and Honour

It has been suggested that the dominant notion of morality and honour are important factors encouraging the practice of child marriage. The importance of maintaining family honour and the high value placed on virginity. Pregnancy outside marriage is not welcome in many societies. Yet, Giving the prevalence of teen pregnancy, many societies settle for early marriage for girls (Hindin & Fatusi, 2009). Awake (2004) reports that 3 1,857

children between 10 and 14 years of age gave birth in Brazil in 1998; in Britain, 90 percent of teenage births in 1997 born outside marriage: while in the United States, 4 in 10 teenage girls get pregnant at least once before they reach the age of 20.

## 6. Effects of Early Marriage

Early marriage is associated with certain consequences which include physical, developmental, psychological and social implications.

### 6.1 Physical Health Effects

Early marriage subjects the girl-child to an early sexual experience with her husband. At an age where the bride is not physically and sexually mature, this has severe health consequences. It is reported that the worldwide incidence of premature birth and low birth weight is higher among adolescent mothers. Bayisenge (2010) stated that the young married girls are under tremendous pressure to prove their fertility in the first year of marriage. They therefore have children early. UNICEF (2005) states that there is a strong correlation between the age of a mother and maternal mortality. Girl's ages 10-14 are five times more likely to die in pregnancy or child birth than women aged 20-24 and girls aged 15-19 are twice as likely to die. There is also the problem of heavy bleeding during child birth and the Vesico Vaginal Fistula (VVF) ravaging young girls in some parts of Northern Nigeria. Moreover, the age difference between the girl and her husband tends to reinforce the Powerlessness of the girl she is therefore at greater risk of abuse and less likely to assert herself. Bayisenge (2010) noted that young married girls are more likely to be beaten or threatened and more likely to believe that a husband might sometimes be justified in beating his wife. The international Center for Research on Women (ICRW, 2008) reports that in Egypt 29 percent of married adolescents were beaten by their husbands of these, 41 percent were beaten when they were pregnant.

### 6.2 Psychological and Social Effects

Girls are not adequately prepared for the roles expected of them in the family. This therefore becomes a burden and has serious impact on their psychological welfare, their perception of themselves and also their relationship. Early marriage can lead to psychological disadvantage which is a psychological development in and interaction with a social environment. Early marriage leads to less of freedom and a feeling of isolation for the girl-child as well as an unhappy marriage.

### 6.3 Denial of Education

Early marriage results to school-drop-out and its chain effects. In Northern Nigeria, 12 million girls aged around 13-14 are married in the region (IRIN Africa, 2008). The denial of education reduced such girls to that of dependence and subservience. Fairaa (2007) states that the gender inequality present in all aspects of society, including education leads to girls often lacking life skills and negotiating power. Husbands of young wives are often older man who expects their wives to follow tradition, stay home and undertake household and childcare duties. The thought of continuing schooling is often lost. Schools often have a policy of refusing to allow married or pregnant girl or girls to return. Even if they do not permit girls with babies to return, the school environment rules, time tables and physical conditions can make it difficult for a girl to attend school and perform her duties as wife and mother at the same time. Early marriage subsequently undermines the Millennium Development Goals (2 and 3) that seeks to achieve universal primary education, and promote gender equality and empower women (Hindin & Fatusi, 2009).

This also affects, not only the health of the child of the illiterate mother, but the child's all-round development (UNICEF, 2001). A study by Treffgarne (2002) found association between maternal literacy and school child's academic achievement. A longitudinal study by Burchfield R, Rumar & Resser (2002) also supports that literate women are more aware of health and reproductive issues and the importance of children's education. But early marriage limits girls' educational opportunities. Lioyd and Mensch (2006) found that early marriage is more likely to limit girls' educational opportunities than early childbirth.

### 6.4 Effect of Early Marriage on Education of a Girl Child

In Nigeria, about 73% of young married girls receive no formal schooling at all, compared with 8% of young girls who are unmarried. Research also shows that only 2% of young married girls between the ages of 15 and 19 are currently in school. This is compared to 69% of their unmarried Counterparts. Literacy rate among these young girls is low as well (Bello and Erulkar, 2007). There is evidence that the immaturity and lack of education of young mothers undermines their ability to nurture their children (UNICEF 2001). Educated women are also more likely to immunize their children, and seek prompt treatment when they are ill (Kabeer 2003). The first area of work focuses on the right of girls and women to have a full education and training in life skills to ensure that they can earn a livelihood.

Innovative and gender-sensitive programmes should provide tailored education and vocational training for both unmarried and married girls. Creating employment opportunities for women in 'non-servile occupations', i.e. non-domestic work. Can help to promote girls' education (UNICEF, 2001). Studies consistently show that marriage of minor aged girls is more likely to occur in rural and impoverished areas with low access to health care; regional conflict and instability further exacerbate these vulnerabilities. However, the primary contextual factor heightening risk for girl child marriage is gender inequity, often characterized, at least in part, by lower access to education and employment Opportunities for females relative to males. Across national contexts, it is the poorest and least educated girls who are most vulnerable to early marriage, and even among girls receiving an education, early marriage appears to impede continuation of that education (Raj, 2010). Education continues to be a strong indicator whether or not a girl will marry as a child in Nigeria. Screaming statistics reveal that virtually all married girls are out of school. UNICEF (2013) report show that 82% of women aged between 20 and 24 who have no education were married by the age of 18, as opposed to 13% of women who have at least finished secondary education. Early marriage abruptly terminates any form of schooling and introduces the girl child to early sexual life, early motherhood with a myriad of health problems and a cycle of illiteracy and poverty. According to UNESCO reports, not only has Nigeria and sub-Saharan countries failed to achieve the 2015 "Education for All" (EFA) goals, indeed they are very far from achieving them (Grant & Hallman, 2008). In the words of Kate

Redman, "Nigeria now has more children out of school than when the global goals were set" (as cited in Eno-Abasi, 2015), and this is obviously traceable to a myriad of challenges inhibiting most especially the girl child (Eno-Abasi, 2015). Having realized that legislation alone may not adequately tackle the menace of child marriage, we must look for more effective means, capable of addressing beliefs rooted in the hearts of men (Grant & Hallman, 2008). Education, if harnessed from the prism of a fundamental human right as recognized in many domestic and international legal instruments, can be an effective tool in tackling child marriage. Education rights are essential for the exercise of all other human rights (Garg, 2012). It has been established that education enhances individual freedom, provides empowerment, and promotes multiple developmental gains. Millions of young girls however remained deprived of educational opportunities as a result of early marriage (Grant & Hallman, 2008). Statistics support the hypothesis that poverty, strong cultural norms, and low societal values for the girl child are the primary forces that

fuel early marriage. Almost all child brides receive little or no schooling. Those who were in school immediately drop out after their marriage. UNICEF study shows clearly that high prevalence of child marriage is correlated with less education for girls. A shortened education is both a cause and effect of early marriage. From this perspective, child marriage is a gross violation of child rights and of course a great inhibition to the realization of education rights. If the timing of marriage does not change, over 100,000,000 children will be married as children in the next 10 years (Council on Foreign Relations). Thus, eradication of child marriage is an imperative for the actualization of child education rights (Garg, 2012). The clear indicators are that child marriage is closely associated with no or low level of schooling for the girl child. A little delay in marriage for the girl child translates into longer years of schooling. The benefits of education include improved economic productivity (Garg, 2012).

### **6.5 Effect of Early Marriage on Socio-Economy of a Girl Child**

Native Authority (NA) (which transformed to Local Government Authority) had to force parents to send the girl-child to enroll in formal schools. The NA fully funded the education of these girls who were conscripted to various schools often located outside their province (Erulkar, 2004). However, the socio-cultural and religious practices that evolved later in Northern states, particularly the North East and North West changed' with the highest number of girl-child not enrolled in school and those who drop out to get married (Garg, 2012). The majority of these girls never return to school to complete their education, learn a trade, or acquire vocational skills that would economically empower and make them self-reliant. Every society and culture have some basic norms and beliefs that guide the people. In Nigeria for instance, specifically the Northern Nigeria (Hausa – Fulani dominated) allowed early marriage of the girl-child (Gimba and Joseph, 2014). Erulkar and Bello (2007) argued that the reason for acceptance of early marriages among Northern region is to preserve the value of virginity, fears about marital sexual activity, to reduce promiscuity of the girl-child, and other socio-cultural and religious norms. However, due to the ignorance and selfish nature, more often than not they forget the effect it has on the girl-child as well as their community development. It is worrisome that the girl-child has no power to resist the offer. The effect of early marriage on the girl-child that affects her wellbeing and that of the society include education, lack of economic empowerment and lack of knowledge on reproductive health services which will enable them take informed decisions, enhance their ability to leverage resources and participate in community decision making (Gimba and Joseph,

2014). Regression analyses reveal that with younger age at marriage there are increased socioeconomic vulnerabilities and greater gender inequities including spousal violence (Raj, 2010): Father's education and mother's education are generally known to be strong correlates of the socioeconomic status of the family. In the context of social change, youths from families with higher socioeconomic status are likely to behave less traditionally (Erulka, 2004). For this reason, higher levels of father's and mother's education are expected to be associated with lower probability of early marriage, lower probability of delayed consummation of marriage and lower probability of early motherhood (Choe, Thapa& Mishra.2005). The economic context in which early marriage exist in Africa is one of household poverty, vulnerability, uncertainty, seasonality of labor, labor surplus economies in a low productive rural setting. In this context, poverty is a significant risk factor as marrying girls off before the age of 18 is experienced positively for poor families who are relieved of the responsibility of feeding, clothing and protecting the girl child in an uncertain and insecure society (Walker,20 12). Poverty has been identified as one of the major causes of early marriage. Where poverty is cute, a young girl may be regarded as an economic burden (UNICEF, 2001). Poverty is a critical factor contributing to child marriage and a common reason why parents may encourage a child to marry, in belief that such marriage may ring both financial and social gain to the family. The Forum of Marriage and the Rights of Women and Girls, 2001 provides the following case of a Zimbabwean girl who was married off at a very young age due to economic constraints. In August 2001, a ten year-old girl in Zimbabwe was reportedly sold to a 40-year-old man as wife in order for the family to obtain cash for food (Erulkar.2004).

### **6.6 Effect of Early Marriage on Health Issues of a Girl Child**

Studies on harmful effects of early marriage on girl's health reveal that girls who are married off before the age of consent, 18 years, experience earlier sexual debut, give birth to more children and loose more children to neonatal and childhood diseases. Studies show a strong positive correlation between an early median age of first marriage and an early median age of first birth (Erulkar and Muthengi-Karei, 2012). This explains in part the high maternal mortality and morbidity amongst this population. Moreover, research findings by the Inter-national Centre for Research on Women (ICRW) argue that girls younger than 15 are 5 times more likely to die in childbirth than women in their 20s. Pregnancy is are the leading cause of death worldwide for women 15 to 19. Similarly, recent studies based on DHS data demonstrate a strong positive correlation

between HIV prevalence and the median age of first marriage as well as first sex. While the correlation between early marriage and vesico-vaginal fistula (VVF) has been arguably contested, case reviews of VVF patient's shows clearly that most are young wives with limited education who often married to older men (Erulkar and Muthengi-Karei, 2012). Hence the significant incidence of VVF in locations with high rates of early marriage such as Ethiopia, Niger, Mali and in Northern Nigeria where education rates are low (Judith-Ann, 2012). Pregnancy and its outcome as childbearing are the most special events in the women life and their families, hence, care of mother during that partum period is the necessary and effective interventions for safer and healthier outcome, and it is most essentials if the mother is in teenage stage. As a group, however, teenagers have quite different needs, in terms of reproductive health services, from adult's mothers in different important ways (Navodava. & Chauhan, 2014). Moreover, an increasing body of evidence from diverse settings suggests that the long-held assumption that marriage is a safe haven for adolescent girls is untenable and that a number of health consequences are associated with early marriage (Santhya, 201). A common belief is that child marriage protects girls from promiscuity and, therefore, disease; the reality is quite different (Duflo, Dupas and Kremer, 2012). Married girls are more likely than unmarried girls to become infected with STDs, in particular HIV and human papilloma virus (HPV) (Erulkar, 2013). In sub-Saharan Africa, girls ages 15-19 years are 2-8 times more likely than boys of the same age to become infected with HIV (12) (Duflo, Dupas and Kremer, 2012). The risk of acquiring HIV from a single act of unprotected vaginal intercourse is 2-3 times greater for women than men (73) (Erulkar, 2013a). Globally, the prevalence of HIV infections among women is highest from ages 15 to 24; the risk for men peaks 5-10 years later (12). Marriage by age 20 has become a risk factor for HIV infection for young and adolescent girls (13), as has been shown by several studies of African populations (14-16) (Erulkar, 2013a; Duflo, Dupas and Kremer, 2012).

A study in Kenya demonstrated that married girls had a 50% higher likelihood than unmarried girls of becoming infected with HIV. This risk was even higher (59%) in Zambia. In Uganda, the HIV prevalence rate for girls 15-19 years of age was higher for married (89%) than single girls (66%): for those 15-29 years of age, HIV prevalence was 28% for married and 15% for single girls. This study noted that the age difference between the men and their wives was a significant HIV risk factor for the wives (16) (Duflo, Dupas and Kremer, 2012). All of these studies showed that girls were being infected by their husbands. A hypothesis relevant to this finding is that a young girl may be physiologically

more prone to HIV infection because her vagina is not yet well lined with protective cells and her cervix may be more easily eroded. Risk for HIV transmission is also heightened because hymenal, vaginal, or cervical lacerations increase the transmission rate, and many of these young girls lose their virginity to HIV-infected husbands. Also, STDs such as herpes simplex virus type 2 infection, gonorrhea, or Chlamydia enhance girls' vulnerability to HIV (17-19) (Erulkar, 2013a). Research findings show that child marriage damages the mental, physical wellbeing and life chances of young girls. Studies on education reveal that early marriage denies school age children the right to education and access to a school environment for self and community development. The literature on early marriage and economic development also identifies an inverse relationship between the phenomenon and the effectiveness of development assistance (Duflo, Dupas and Kremer, 2012).

## 7. Methodology

Data for the study were obtained from both primary and secondary sources. Primary data is data that was collected by the researcher from first-hand sources, using methods like surveys, and interviews. Secondary data is data gathered from studies, surveys. Experiments that have been run by other people or for other research. The analytical tools employed for this study include, descriptive statistics.

**Survey:** Survey method is one of the primary sources of data which is used to collect quantitative information about items in a population. Surveys are used in different areas for collecting the data even in public and private sectors.

**Observations:** Observation as one of the primary sources of data. Observation is a technique for obtaining information involves measuring variables or gathering of data necessary for measuring the variable under investigation. Observation is defined as accurate watching and noting of phenomena as they occur in nature with regards to cause and effect relation.

**Interview:** Interviewing is a technique that is primarily used to gain an understanding of the underlying reasons and motivations for people's attitudes, preferences or behavior. Interviews can be undertaken on a personal one-to-one basis or in a group.

**Questionnaires:** Questionnaire as one of the primary sources of data and is an observation or a technique which comprises series of items presented to a respondent in a written form, in which the individual is expected to respond in writing. (Ajayi, 2017). This clearly explains the fact that early marriage significantly affects child education in Jere L.G.A, Borno state. This is in line with Population

Council (2004) the lack of education is a major consequence of girls who marry young. All 100% of the respondents strongly agree that early marriage makes completion education almost impossible. Lioyd and Mensch (2006) found that early marriage is more likely to limit girls' educational opportunities than early childbirth. 80.6% of the respondents also strongly agree that early marriage can physically unable to allow girl child to attend school because of pregnancy or medical complications associated with pregnancy.

In the same spirit a longitudinal study by Burchfield. Rumar & Resser (2002) also supports that literate women are more aware of health and reproductive issues and the importance of children's education. The study reveals that 51.1% of the respondents agree that Husbands do not support their Spouse to go to school. 27.2% of them strongly agree with the statement. 52.8% of the respondents agree with the statement that Education is useful to a girl child even after marriage. 86.9% of them strongly agree to the statement that early marriage increases risk for sexual transmitted diseases (HIV/AIDs). All the respondents 100% strongly agree that Offspring are at premature birth and death neonates. 87.5% of the respondents also strongly agree to the statement that Death during birth is possible for girl child during early marriage. All the respondents 100% strongly agree that Girl child face problem concerning personal hygiene because of lack of education. Majority 82.8% of the respondents strongly agree that early marriage affects girl child in providing health services to their children. Highest proportion 49.2% of the respondents agrees that Girls leave schools to marry early due to inability of parent to pay their fees. 35.6% of them neither agree nor disagreed with the statement. Majority 50.3% of the respondents strongly agree that girl's child early marriage reduces the ability of households to meet their basic needs. All 100% of the respondents strongly agree that Girl child early marriage makes them not useful to the community, 88.9% of the respondent strongly agrees that early marriage does not support girl child to be self-employed. Erulkar and Bello (2007) argued that the reason for acceptance of early marriages among Northern region is to preserve the value of virginity, fears about marital sexual activity, to reduce promiscuity of the girl-child, and other socio-cultural and religious norms.

## 8. Conclusion

Based on the findings of the study, the following conclusions were drawn: early marriage can make it too difficult for a girl to attend school and perform her duties as wife and mother. Early marriage makes completion education almost impossible. Education is useful to a girl child even after marriage. Early

marriage increases risk for sexual transmitted diseases (HIV/AIDs). Offspring are at premature birth and death neonates. Death during birth is possible for girl child during early marriage. Girl child face problem concerning personal hygiene because of lack of education. Early marriage affects girl child in providing health services to their children. Girls leave schools to marry early due to inability of parent to pay their school fees. Early marriage reduces the ability of households to meet their basic needs. Girl child early marriage causes Vesico-Vaginal Fistula (VVF) makes them not to be useful to the community. Early marriage does not support girl child to be self-employed. Early marriages among northern Nigerian region are to preserve the value of virginity fears about marital sexual activity, to reduce promiscuity of the girl-child, and other socio-cultural and religious norms.

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