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Social Analysis of the Impact of Money Marriage on Psycho-Emotional State of Female Children in Becheve, Obanliku Local Government Area, Cross River State Nigeria

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Abstract

The study was focused on social analysis of the impact of money marriage on psycho-emotional state of female children in Becheve, Obanliku Local government Area of Cross River State. The study adopted the survey research design. Well, structured questionnaire was administered to 400 randomly sampled respondents consisting of families and dwellers in Utanga, Ugbakoko, Amana, Keyi and Imale, in Becheve. Data generated was analysed using descriptive statistics. Results revealed that money marriage is a serious problem and has a greater tendency of enhancing psychological and/or emotional abuse, physical abuse and sexual abuse of the female children. It was recommended that state and local governments should mobilize families and the wider community to raise awareness of the harmful consequences of child marriage can change attitudes and reduce the acceptance among those who make the decision to marry girls as children; and religious and traditional leaders, too, have the potential to play a key role in speaking out against child marriage and changing community attitudes towards money marriage.

Keywords: Money Marriage, Psycho-Emotional State, Female Children, Becheve, Nigeria

Introduction

Essentially, there are three most pivotal days in the life of a man: the day he is born, the day he gets married and the day he dies. In any case, it is by and large accepted that man has a full learning of just one of these three days, which is the day of his marriage as he doesn't have an inkling what occurs during his introduction to the world and his post-demise occasions. This makes marriage the very beginning of the most significant days in the life of a man and now and again considered the best and most joyful day in a man's life being multi-day of euphoria and decision. Sadly, the threat encompassing marriages makes this day the saddest in the lives of young girls, particularly the child brides; a number of them are offered to their spouses by their folks out of their desire or assent. This is the reason it is, at some point, alluded to as forced marriage or Money Marriage. A significant number of such helpless little youngsters or ladies must choose between limited options about the planning of their marriage or legitimate information of their partner as some are forced into it, while others are too youthful to even think about making an informed choice. A critical case which this study tends to investigate is that of Becheve Community of Obanliku Local Government Area of Cross River State where the practice of Money Marriage: An act of modern day's slavery still holds sway, in Nigeria.

Money marriage is an act of modern day girls' slavery. Money marriages have increased the level of girls molestation among men, trading girls for-profit and gains to the extent that young girls who are supposed to be giving formal education are out there undergoing hard labour to meet the demand of their 'money men.' These incidences could never have been possible if the parental consent is absent. The parent of the 'money women' play significant role in the sales of the children or wards which may be directly or indirectly linked to the socio-economical condition's prevalence at the time. Some of the practitioners are also of the argument that money marriage is a long-aged traditional practice that cannot be eradicated. Many believed the practice serves both marital and economic benefits to the people, hence the sustenance of the practice.

According to the National Survey of Child and Adolescent Well-Being (NSCAW, 2004), more than one-quarter of children who had been in foster care for longer than 12 months and are maltreated had some lasting or recurring health problem which however has a direct effect on their educational pursuit. Shaking a baby girl is a common form of girl child abuse. The injuries caused by shaking a baby girl may not be immediately noticeable and may include bleeding in the eye or brain, damage to the spinal cord and neck, and rib or bone fractures. A girl child who suffers from brain injury or has eye problem cannot read or write in the school, which by implication, will affect the academic performance of the girl child in school.

De Bellis and Thomas (2003) assert that girl child abuse causes important regions of the brain to fail to form or grow properly, resulting in impaired development. These alterations in brain maturation have long-term consequences for cognitive, language, and academic abilities. Flaherty (2006) added that several studies have shown that a teenage who experienced abuse or neglect during childhood is more likely to suffer from physical ailments such as allergies, arthritis, asthma, bronchitis, and ulcers.

Johnson, Rew & Sternglanz (2006) also stated that abused and neglected children are 25 percent more likely to experience problems such as delinquency, teenage pregnancy, low academic achievement, drug use, and mental health problems. Other studies like Springer, Sheridan, Kuo, & Carnes (2007) suggest that abused or neglected children are more likely to engage in sexual risk-taking as they reach adolescence, thereby increasing their chances of contracting sexually transmitted diseases. Dube, Anda, Felitti, Chapman, Williamson, & Giles (2001) relate that there is likelihood that abused and neglected girl child will prostitute, smoke cigarettes, abuse alcohol, or take illicit drugs during her lifetime. While Garvelf (2007) relates that depression is a common element in the lives of every abused girl child. Pupils who are often sexually or physically abused have been shown to possess a unique set of depression which can affect their daily experience.

There have been many research findings that show relationship between depression and students' academic performance. Depression affects memory retention. When a child abused victim is depressed, the more likelihood she forgets the facts and figures presented in class, and he will not be able to successfully recall the information on test, and on real life applications. Obviously, this is a problem for anyone who wants to do well in the school. Equally, girl child abuse causes anxiety. Female students/pupils who face a tremendous amount of abuse may suffer from anxiety ranging from mild cases of worry to severe cases of nerve problems. If a girl child is suffering from anxiety at any level, she will find it difficult to cope with school activities, including that of extra – curricular. Researches such as Springer, Sheridan, Kuo, & Carnes (2007) found that abused child experienced financial problems, rejection from loved ones, and feelings of low self-esteem. Neglect, physical, sexual and emotional abuse can turn an ambition driven girl child into one who is nervous and a failure. It is easy to feel sad when a child who supposed to resume early to school is made to wait at home to wash clothes, fetch water and do other odds kinds of work at home. This ill-treatment may affect the girl's drive for success in her life.

Despite the wake of globalization and the several human right proclamations which Nigeria is a signatory to, this odious practice is still seen in Nigeria. From the foregoing, the study was designed to investigate the effects of money marriage on psychological/emotional state of the girl child in Becheve Community, Obanliku Local Government Area, Cross River State.

Study objective

To investigate the relationship between money marriage and psychological/emotional abuse of the girl child in Becheve Community, Obanliku Local Government Area, Cross River State.

Study hypothesis

There is no significant relationship between money marriage and psychological/emotional abuse of the girl child in Becheve Community Obanliku Local Government Area, Cross River State, Nigeria.

Literature review

Money marriage and child emotional abuse

There is no single cause of emotional abuse. Instead, there are usually multiple and interacting contributors at the levels of the child, parent, family, community and society. Examples of contributors include a child with a disability, a parent struggling with depression or substance abuse, intimate partner violence, a father who is not involved in their child's life, a lack of community supports (e.g., affordable child care), the burdens associated with poverty, and inadequate policies to support families and parents. These characteristics greatly contribute to the intractability of the problem. Combinations of such problems may impair a parent's ability to ensure his or her child's needs are adequately met. It is apparent that other forms of maltreatment, physical and sexual abuse, as well as neglect, may, in different ways be emotionally abusive. Indeed, long after bruises have faded and fractures healed, the emotional scars may be long lasting.

Consequences of emotional abuse

The consequences of child emotional abuse can be devastating and long-lasting, and include: increased risk for a lifelong pattern of depression, estrangement, anxiety, low self-esteem, inappropriate or troubled relationships, or a lack of empathy. During their childhood, victims may experience a delay in their developmental progress. Research also indicates that emotional abuse may be a stronger predictor of psychological, emotional, and behavioral impairments and trauma than accompanying physical abuse. It is clear that the consequences of child emotional abuse extend far beyond the affected children and families. Enormous societal costs are involved. Prevent Child Abuse America estimated the economic impact of child abuse and neglect at \$104 billion in 2007; and this was likely a conservative estimate. Thus, in addition to the compelling human argument to help optimize children's development, health and safety, there is also a financial impetus to help prevent the neglect of children. The aphorism that "our children are our nation's most valuable resource" should be more than a slogan. Finally, at the heart of child neglect is a concern with their basic rights, their human rights. The costs associated with the pervasive and long-lasting effects of child abuse and neglect are as undeniable as our obligation to prevent – not just respond to – this problem. In 2007, \$33 billion in direct costs for foster care services, hospitalization, mental health treatment, and law enforcement were supplemented by over \$70 billion in indirect costs like loss of individual productivity, chronic health problems, special education, and delinquent and criminal justice services. As with physical abuse, the consequences of emotional abuse or deprivation are severe and can often last into adulthood. Emotional abuse is likely to be interpreted by a child that she is unloved or unwanted or responsible for the abuse.

Again, there are several effects of emotional abuse on girl children. These include the following:

- Difficulty maintaining healthy relationships: Emotional abuse can interfere with a child's ability to form healthy attachments to adults. Attachment issues in early childhood have been linked to insecure attachments in adulthood. That may lead to a higher risk of poor peer relations, trouble with intimacy, difficulty with conflict resolution, and relational aggression.

- Increased risk of mental health issues: Adolescents who experienced emotional abuse are more likely to have at least one mental illness. Depression, anxiety, or other mental illnesses may last into adulthood. People with a history of emotional abuse are also more likely to attempt suicide.
- Increased social problems: Emotional abuse has been linked to delinquency and aggression in adolescents.
- Greater risk of repeating the cycle of abuse: Without appropriate intervention, children who were abused are more likely to abuse their own children when they grow up.

Not everyone who has a history of emotional abuse experiences lifelong scars, however. The duration, severity, and age of onset all play a role. Boys who experience abuse prior to the age of 12 are more likely to exhibit behavior problems, for example. They are more likely to be arrested or exhibit serious delinquency if the abuse began at a younger age. Having a positive relationship with an adult, however, can be a protective factor. A loving, nurturing parent, grandparent, or other individual, for example, can help buffer some of the negative effects of emotional abuse. Emotional abuse also strains society as a whole. It places a burden on the health and social care systems, and is costly in terms of the increased educational failure, crime, and need for mental health services.

Method of study

Research design

Survey research design was adopted for this study. Data for the study was collected through a well-developed research questionnaire instrument which was divided into two major segments, part A and B. Part “A” was comprised of the demographic data of the respondents which included the sex, age, religion, marital status and educational attainment. Part “B” consisted of the questionnaire items which were divided into three sections. For easy coding, the items were systematically arranged under the variable sub-headings respectively just as enunciated in the literature review.

The population of the study comprises of selected villages in Becheve which include: Utanga, Ugbakoko, Amana, Keyi and Imale, in Obanliku Local Government Area of Cross River State. The selected villages were five in number including men and women from the five (5) selected villages in Becheve Community. In order to obtain a representative sample for the study, the researcher employed the simple random sampling in determining the sample size. Simple random sampling is a probability sampling procedure that gives all the elements an equal chance of being selected in the research work (Ndiyo, 2005).

In selecting the element for the study, respondents in each of the five (5) villages randomly selected out of Becheve community to actually ascertain the described sample so that no one feels bias by the entire exercise. By this process, 80 community members were selected from each of the five (5) villages giving a sample of 200 community members. The 400 respondents (men and women) selected to serve as subject for the study are shown below on the table.

Table 1: Distribution of sample among men and women of communities in Becheve Community in Obanliku Local Government Area of Cross River State

S/N	Names of Communities	No. of Men	No. of Women	Total
1	Utanga	40	40	80
2	Ugbakoko	40	40	80
3	Amana	40	40	80
4	Keyi	40	40	80
5	Imale	40	40	80
	Total	200	200	400

A sample of 400 respondents was used for this study. Respondents were selected based on researcher's judgment of their competence to handle the issues under investigation. The selection consists of families and dwellers in Utanga, Ugbakoko, Amana, Keyi and Imale, in Becheve Community in Obanliku Local Government Area of Cross River State. The researcher used random sampling techniques to select 400 people (men and women) from the five (5) selected communities. This was made possible because the heterogeneous nature of the population in question. A total of 80 people (40 men and 40 women) were randomly selected from each of the community making a total sample of two hundred (400) people for the study.

Results and discussion

Table 2 shows the demographic characteristics of respondents. The distribution of respondent's responses by their sex segregation shows that out of the sample population of 375, 203 responses representing 54.1 percent are males while 172 responses representing 45.9 percent are females making a total of 100 percent. This indicates that there male response were more in the course of this study.

From distribution of responses according to their age assortment/segregation shows that out of the sample population of 375, 111 responses representing 29.6 percent falls within the age bracket/range of 20-30 years, 97 responses which represent 25.8 percent falls within the age bracket of 31-40 while 85 responses representing 22.7 percent falls within the age range of 41-50 years and 82 responses representing 21.9 percent falls within the age range of 51 and above thereby making a total of 100 percent. This shows that those within the age range of 20-30 years had more responses than others in the course of this study.

Items on the distribution of respondent's responses base on their marital status shows that out of the sample population of 375, 116 responses representing 39.9 percent are single while 203 responses representing 54.2 percent are married and 56 responses representing 14.9 percent are divorced constituting a total of 100 percent. This shows that respondents who are married responded more during the study.

The data on distribution of respondent's responses according to their educational status revealed that out of a sample population of 375, 152 responses which represent 40.5 percent have FSLC, 126 responses representing 33.6 percent have WASSCE and 97 responses which represent 25.9 percent are holders of Ph.D./M.Sc/M.Ed/PGD/B.Sc/B.Ed/HND/NCE, respectively. It signifies that FSLC holders' responses were more in the course of study.

Analysis of the distribution of respondent's responses in accordance with their Religious affinity shows that out of the sample population of 375, 283 responses representing 75.5 percent are Christian religion adherents while 11 responses representing 2.9 percent are adherents of Islam, and 81 responses representing 21.6 percent are adherents of African Traditional Religion. This indicates that responses from Christian religion adherents were more during the course of study.

In terms of the distribution of respondent's responses by their Occupation it is revealed that out of the sample population of 375, 108 responses representing 28.8 percent are students, 79 responses representing 21.1 percent are Civil servants, whereas 107 responses which represents 28.5 percent are Traders/Farmers and 11 responses representing 2.9 percent falls under the category of other occupations which constitute a total of 100.

Table 2: Demographic distribution of respondents

Variables	Group	No. of respondents	Percentage
Sex	Male	203	54.1
	Female	172	45.9
	Total	375	100
	"20-30 years"	111	29.6

Age			
	“31-40 years”	97	25.8
	“41-50 years”	85	22.7
	“51years and above”	82	21.9
	Total	375	100
Marital status	Single	116	30.9
	Married	203	54.2
	Divorced	56	14.9
	Total	375	100
Educational qualification/status	Primary(FSLC)	152	40.5
	Secondary(WASSCE)	126	33.6
	Tertiary	97	25.9
	Total	375	100
Religious Affinity	Christianity	283	75.5
	Islam	11	2.9
	African Traditional Religion (ATR)	81	21.6
	Total	375	100
Occupation	Student	108	28.8
	Civil servant	79	21.1
	Trader/Farmer	107	28.5
	Teacher	70	18.7
	Others	11	2.9
	Total	375	100

Source: Field work, 2019.

Money Marriage and Psychological/Emotional abuse of girl children

The independent variable is money marriage while psychological/emotional abuse is the dependent variable. To answer this research question, descriptive statistics of simple percentages were used and the result is shown in table 4.2. The responses were graded on four likert scale (A, SA, D, SD), but for the purpose of convenience; agree and strongly agree were collapsed into agree, while disagree and strongly disagree were collapsed into disagree for percentage calculation, analysis and interpretation.

Table 3: Percentages analysis for money marriage and psychological/emotional abuse in Becheve, Obanliku Local Government Area, Cross River State.

Questionnaire items	No of respondents			
	Agree	%	Disagree	%
Girls who are victims of Money Marriage always experience some level of emotional/psychological abuse	269	(71.7)	106	(28.3)
Most girls are sent into money marriage at a tender age or as teens and have little or no experience to fight through hard times and thus, they end up being psychologically/emotionally derailed	205	(54.7)	170	(45.3)
The knowledge of being sold out into money marriage	260	(69.3)	115	(30.7)

or exchanged for whatever commodity it may be by her parents leave the girl child with a long lasting emotional scar				
The emotional/psychological wellbeing of the girl child is not really considered in money marriage	245	(65.3)	130	(34.7)
Total	979	(65.3)	521	(34.7)

Source: field work, 2019

Results in Table 3 revealed the distribution of respondents' responses of all the four questions that measured Money Marriage and Psychological/Emotional abuse in Becheve, Obanliku Local Government Area, Cross River State. The distribution of respondent's responses of questionnaire question one on "Girls who are victims of money marriage always experience some level of emotional/psychological abuse?" out of 375 responses (respondents), 269 respondents representing 71.7 percent agreed (positive) to the statement above and 106 respondents representing 28.3 percent disagree (negative) to the statement above which constitute a total of 100 percent. From the above indication, it clearly shows that Girls who are victims of money marriage always experience some level of emotional/psychological abuse.

Items 2 shows the distribution of respondent's responses of questionnaire statement on "Most girls are sent into money marriage at a tender age or as teens and have little or no experience to fight through hard times and thus, they end up being psychologically/emotionally derailed" out of the 375 respondents which the questionnaires were administered to, 205 respondents representing 54.7 percent agreed (positive) while 170 respondents representing 45.3 percent disagreed (negative) making a total of 100 percent. Therefore, it clearly portrays that most girls are sent into money marriage at a tender age or as teens and have little or no experience to fight through hard times and thus, they end up being psychologically/emotionally derailed. Questionnaire item 3 shows the allocation of respondent's responses of questionnaire on "The knowledge of being sold out into money marriage or exchanged for whatever commodity it may be by her parents leave the girl child with a long lasting emotional scar" from the above statement, out of the 375 respondents, 260 respondents representing 69.3 percent agreed (positive) whereas 115 respondents representing 30.7 percent disagreed (negative) it therefore means that the knowledge of being sold out into money marriage or exchanged for whatever commodity it may be by her parents leave the girl child with a long lasting emotional scar.

Item 4 shows the distribution of respondent's responses of the questionnaire on "The emotional/psychological wellbeing of the girl child is not really considered in money marriage" out of the 375 respondents, 245 representing 65.3 agreed (positive) while 130 respondents representing 34.7 percent disagreed (negative) totaling 100 percent. From the above description, it however shows that the emotional/psychological wellbeing of the girl child is not really considered in money marriage.

H_i: There is a significant relationship between money marriage and psychological/emotional abuse of the girl child in Becheve Community, Obanliku Local Government Area, Cross River State.

The independent variable of this hypothesis is Money marriage while the dependent variable is psychological/emotional abuse of the girl child in Becheve Community. The statistical tool is Pearson Product Moment Correlation analysis. The result is presented in table 4.6 below.

This hypothesis was guided by the four questions under item on sub-scale 1, Money marriage and psychological/emotional abuse Becheve community.

Table 4: Pearson Product Moment Correlation analysis of the relationship between Money marriage and psychological/emotional abuse of the girl child in Becheve community, Obanliku Local Government Area, Cross River State. (N = 375)

	ΣX	ΣX^2			
Variables	ΣY	ΣY^2	ΣXY	r_{xy}	Sig.
Money marriage (X)	4,743	61,131			
			62,440	0.47*	.000
Psychological/e motional abuse of the girl child in Becheve community (Y)	4,895	65,013			
* $p < .05$; $df =$ 373; critical $r =$ 0.113					

Table 4 shows that at .05 level of significance and degrees of freedom 373, the critical r-value is 0.113. The calculated r-value obtained in establishing the relationship between money marriage and psychological/emotional abuse of the girl child in Becheve community is 0.47 ($p < .05$). The calculated r-value is seen to be greater than the critical r-value with the obtained significant value less than .05 level of significance used in the study. With these results the null hypothesis which stated that there is a negative relationship between money marriage and psychological/emotional abuse of the girl child in Becheve community, Obanliku Local Government Area, Cross River State was rejected. It was alternately accepted that there is a positive relationship between money marriage and psychological/emotional abuse of the girl child in Becheve community, Obanliku Local Government Area, Cross River State. The obtained correlation coefficient was positive indicating positive correlation between the independent and the dependent variable; meaning that increase in variable X will bring about increase in variable Y. This showed that increase in money marriage will bring about increase in psychological/emotional abuse of the girl child in Becheve community, Obanliku Local Government Area, Cross River State.

Conclusion

Findings from the study revealed that money marriage is a serious problem and has a greater tendency of enhancing psychological and/or emotional abuse, physical abuse and sexual abuse of the girl child. Resolving it requires the involvement of many sectors working together at community, national and international levels. At each level, responses must include empowering women and girls, reaching out to men, providing for the needs of victims and increasing the penalties for abusers. The progress made in each of these areas will be the key to achieving global reductions in violence against women/girls.

This research study has carefully examined the impact of money marriage and modern day slavery in Becheve community, Obanliku Local Government Area, Cross River State: Nonetheless, findings from this study have copiously proven that girls are pivotal for the functionality of any society and as such should be freed from any form of modern day slavery and be given the best treatment they can receive.

Recommendations

In accordance with the findings of the study, some recommendations were brought to the fore towards the elimination of money marriage and modern day slavery in Becheve community, Obanliku Local Government Area, Cross River State.

- A. Government should mobilize families and the wider community to raise awareness of the harmful consequences of child marriage can change attitudes and reduce the acceptance among those who make the decision to marry girls as children.
- B. *Religious and traditional leaders, too, have the potential to play a key role in speaking out against child marriage and changing community attitudes. In communities where religious and traditional leaders play a prominent role in decision-making or influencing the prevailing norms, targeted interventions can support them to become positive advocates for change who fully understand the implications of child marriage for girls and their families.*
- C. Child protection services need to be accessible via a number of channels, including education, healthcare providers, community workers and the police. Working with service providers to build their capacity can help to ensure that cases of child marriage in the community are responded to effectively.

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