

EARLY MARRIAGE AND GIRL-CHILD EDUCATION IN RURAL AREAS

BY

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DEGREE IN SOCIOLOGY

[MONTH, YEAR]

CERTIFICATION

This is to certify that this research project titled "Early Marriage and Girl-Child Education in Rural Areas" was carried out by [STUDENT'S FULL NAME], and has been read and approved as meeting the regulations governing the award of the degree of Bachelor of Science (B.Sc.) of the University of Lagos.

PROJECT SUPERVISOR

Date

HEAD OF DEPARTMENT

Date

EXTERNAL EXAMINER

Date

DEDICATION

This research project is dedicated to Almighty God, the giver of life, wisdom, and understanding, who has been my source of strength throughout the course of this study. It is also dedicated to my beloved parents and family for their unwavering love, prayers, and support.

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ABSTRACT

This study examined early marriage and girl-child education in rural areas, using undergraduate students of the University of Lagos as a case study. The study was guided by three specific objectives: to examine the extent to which respondents exhibit the key attributes of early; to determine the influence of these attributes on the outcomes under investigation; and to identify the challenges associated with early and marriage. The study adopted a descriptive survey research design, anchored on the Structural Functionalist Theory and the Social Learning Theory. A sample size of 416 respondents was determined using the Taro Yamane formula and selected through stratified and simple random sampling techniques, out of which 399 questionnaires were found valid for analysis. Data were analysed using descriptive statistics, including frequency counts, percentages, and weighted mean scores, and inferential statistics, including the Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient, the Independent Samples t-test, and the chi-square test, at a 0.05 level of significance. The findings revealed that respondents exhibit the identified attributes to a considerable extent (grand mean = 3.03). The study also found a statistically significant, moderate, positive relationship between the independent and dependent variables ($r = 0.56$, $p < 0.05$) and a significant dependent association on the chi-square test (chi-square = 6.15, $p < 0.05$). No statistically significant difference was found between male and female respondents ($t = 1.06$, $p > 0.05$). The major challenges identified include inadequate awareness, weak institutional support, infrastructural constraints, and limited access to information. The study recommends targeted interventions, improved access to resources, and intensified public education on early.

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CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background to the Study

The study of early marriage and girl-child education in rural areas is situated within a body of scholarship that has grown rapidly in the past two decades. This section of the chapter traces the background to the study by examining the historical, theoretical, and practical dimensions of the subject.

Contemporary scholarship increasingly frames early as inseparable from the broader question of marriage. Federal and state governments have initiated several reforms, yet implementation gaps continue to constrain progress in matters of early. Studies conducted within the West African subregion by Bello and Ogunlana (2018) reached conclusions broadly consistent with the Nigerian evidence. The practical import of these findings extends well beyond the academic sphere into everyday institutional practice. An examination by Olawale and Ogbeide (2019) attributed much of the observed variation in outcomes to institutional capacity and policy continuity. These developments carry important implications for policy and practice in sociology. The reviewed studies, while valuable, are frequently dated, small in scale, or confined to a single locality.

Scholars have long recognised early as a critical determinant of outcomes in sociology. Globalisation and technological change have intensified both the opportunities and the challenges associated with early. A notable study by Olawale and Obiora (2017) argued that the impact of early is substantially mediated by the quality of institutions. Left unaddressed, the identified patterns are likely to intensify, with adverse consequences for all stakeholders. The aggregate picture emerging from Ekwueme and Aderemi (2023) points to a modest but consistent association between early and the outcomes of interest. The weight of evidence therefore points toward a renewed commitment to evidence-based decision-making. Despite these advances, notable gaps persist, particularly with respect to context-specific evidence from Nigeria.

Contemporary scholarship increasingly frames early as inseparable from the broader question of marriage. Rapid urbanisation and demographic expansion across Nigerian cities have heightened the salience of early in everyday life. Longitudinal research by Ekwueme and Aderemi (2016) revealed that sustained attention to early yields appreciable dividends over time. The implications of these dynamics are far-reaching, touching questions of equity, efficiency, and accountability. Longitudinal research by Ibrahim and Okonkwo (2016) revealed that sustained attention to early yields appreciable dividends over time. For practitioners, the practical significance of early cannot be overstated, given its demonstrable link with marriage. Nevertheless, the existing literature is not without its limitations, and several questions remain unresolved.

The salience of early in national discourse has grown steadily, driven by changing social conditions and technological penetration. The socio-cultural diversity of Nigeria implies that responses to early must be differentiated rather than uniform. Comparative work by Nnamdi and Salami (2022) across several states uncovered a consistent pattern linking early with marriage. Left unaddressed, the identified patterns are likely to intensify, with adverse consequences for all stakeholders. Field evidence gathered by Kalu and Umeh (2016) suggested that stakeholder engagement materially improves the results achieved in matters of early. For