DETERMINANTS OF EARLY MARRIAGES AMONG TEENAGERS IN GANJONI AREA, MOMBASA COUNTY

Joshua K. M.[1]
[1]Assistant Lecturer,
Department of Medical Sciences,
School of Pure and Health Sciences,
Technical University of Mombasa,
Kenya

Aggrey A[2]
[2]Lecturer,
Department of Mathematics and Physics,
School of Pure and Health Sciences,
Technical University of Mombasa,
Kenya

Marriam A[3]
[3]Community Health Student,
Department of Medical Sciences,
Kenya Coast National Polytechnic,
Kenya.

ABSTRACT

The purpose of the study was to investigate reasons contributing to early marriage among the teenagers living in Ganjoni, Mombasa County, Kenya. The objective of the study was to establish the extent to early marriage among teenagers, contributing factors and the effects of early marriage among teenagers. The study employed cross sectional study design with a target population of 18,000. The study was recruited a sample size of 196 that was derived using Fishers formula. Structured questionnaire was used to collect quantitative data and interview for qualitative data then data was analyzed using SPSS version 20. The study results were presented using tables and pie charts. The predominant age group was 19-29 years (57.1%). About 82% had gone through primary education and 89.6% dropped from education in order to be married off. Based on bivariate analysis; the respondents age (p= 0.001), marital status (p = 0.001), occupation (p = 0.003) and income (p = 0.000), maternal and child health were significant to teenage marriage.

KEY WORDS: *Teenage, marriage, Mombasa*

INTRODUCTION

Early marriage defined as any legal or customary union involving a person below the age of 18. Although child marriage is considered a human right violation more than 30% of today`s women in developing countries were married before their 18 birthday and a total of 70 million girls worldwide are affected (WHO, 2012)

Early child marriage risk the beginning of frequent and an protected sexual intercourse, leading to a greater risk of sexual transmitted infections (STIs), HIV, early pregnancy and a high number of children with limited spacing (Williamson 2013). Research indicates that worldwide 90% of the teenage pregnancy take place within marriage and the complication related to this pregnancy and child birth are among the leading causes of death among young women aged 15-19 in low and middle income countries (WHO, 2012)

Young brides often have less excess to information, education and health services, which is directly linked to decrease investment in education and health for their children (Persons *et al*; 2015). Literature on child marriage highlights that when young women marry early, their formal education often terminate, which prevents them from acquiring knowledge and skills that determine their prospects for employments (Muthengi *et al*; 2015). School do not only provide education but also allow girls to develop social skills and networks; less chance of participation in decision making, greater risk of being subjected to

violence, isolation from school, friends and work places and therefore lack social support which is critical for their emotional-wellbeing and economic opportunities, and also less abilities to negotiate safe sex, birth spacing, contraceptive use and to protect themselves from gender-based violence (Williamson, 2012).

In Kenya especially in Mombasa, the research shows that the age at first marriage has increased over time, from 19-20 as the mean age UNICEF 2015. First marriage among women age 25-49 (KDHS, 2014, 2003, 1998). However, child marriage is common even though is illegal (KNBS and ICF macro 2010). Data indicate that the percentage of women first marriage by the age of 18 was 32.6% in 2003 and 28.7% in 2014 (KDHS, 2014, 2003)

OBJECTIVES
Broad Objective
To establish the determinants of early marriage among teenagers in Mombasa County
Specific Objective
a) To establish the extent of early marriage among teenagers in Mombasa County.
b) To establish teenage marriage contributing factors in Mombasa County.
c) To determine the effects of early marriage among teenagers in Mombasa County.

METHODOLOGY
The study employed a descriptive cross sectional design. This design was appropriate for the study because it aim at identifying factors that contribute to teenage marriage in the area of the study. Both qualitative and quantitative data were collected by use of questionnaires and interviews. Structured questionnaires were administered face to face and interviews were conducted among selected group of respondents and data recorded.

SAMPLING
Systematic random sampling was used to recruit the subjects within the study area. Ganjoni has an approximate of 1800 households (KNBS, 2012). The respondents were recruited using a 5th interval amongst household until desired sample size was obtained. A written informed consent was given to the respondents to sign before taking part in the study. The collected data was checked for consistency with data obtained from questionnaire in order to eliminate misleading data which could arise from misrepresentation of questions in the questionnaire. Data was gathered and coded for analysis using SPSS version 20

SAMPLE SIZE
The required sample size was calculated using fisher`s formula (Mugenda, 2006)

$$N = \frac{z^2 q p}{d^2}$$

n= desire sample size
z= standard normal deviation (1.96)
p= anticipated population proportion (15%)
q= 1 – p
d= allowable error

$$n = \frac{(1.92)^2(0.15)(0.85)}{(0.05)^2}$$

=196

STUDY AREA
Ganjoni is located in Mombasa urban city city. It has a large population of both local and immigrant communities where the predominant tribe is the Mijikenda. Mombasa County is one of the 47 counties of Kenya. It's the capital and the only city in the county of Mombasa. Initially it was one of the former districts of Kenya but in 2013 it was reconstituted as a county, on the same boundaries. It is the smallest county in Kenya, covering an area of 229.7 km^2 excluding 65 km^2 of water mass. The county is situated in the south eastern part of the former Coast Province. It borders Kilifi County to the north, Kwale County to the south west and the Indian Ocean to the east. Administratively, the county is divided into seven divisions, eighteen locations and thirty sub-locations.

RESULTS
The purpose of this study was to examine determinants of early marriage among teenagers in Ganjoni area. The study achieves the questionnaire return rate of 100 percent. Demographic

Finding shows that the predominant age group was 19-29 years (57.1%) and 64.2% of the respondent were married below the age of 18 years. About 66.3% of the respondents were married, while others were single, divorced or widowed. The education level was low among the respondents, where 82% had gone through primary education and 89.6% dropped from education in order to be married off. On occupation, about 54.1% of the respondents were unemployed while 60.2% of those employed were earning an income of below ksh. 10,0000. The bivariate analysis of socio demographic factors show the respondents age (p= 0.001), marital status (p = 0.001), occupation (p = 0.003) and income (p = 0.000) to be statistically significant to teenage marriage.

FIGURES

Figure 1: Level of teenage marriage among the respondents

Figure 2: Teenage marriage contributing factors

TABLES

Table1: Socio demographic factors of the respondents

Variable	Category	Frequency (%)	Marriage age	
			< 18 years (n=134)	>18 years (n=62)
Age	<18 years	59 (30.1%)	28 (20.9%)	31 (50%)
	19-29 years	112 (57.1%)	86 (64.2%)	26 (41.9%)
	> 30 years	25 (12.8%)	20 (14.9%)	5 (9.1%)
Marital status	Single / divorced / widowed	66 (33.7%)	32 (23.9%)	30 (48.4%)
	Married	130 (66.3%)	98 (73.1%)	32 (51.6%)
Occupation	Employed	90 (45.9%)	52 (38.8%)	38 (61.3%)
	Unemployed	106 (54.1%)	82 (61.2%)	24 (38.7%)
Education	Primary	173 (82.3%)	120 (89.6%)	53 (85.5%)
	Secondary	16 (8.2%)	9 (6.7%)	7 (11.3%)
	Tertiary	7 (9.5%)	5 (3.7%)	2 (3.2%)
Monthly income level	<Ksh. 10,000	118 (60.2%)	112 (83.6%)	16 (9.7%)
	>Ksh. 10,000	78 (39.8%)	22 (16.4%)	56 (90.3%)

Table 2: Bivariate analysis of respondent's demographic factors

Variable	Category	Marriage age		Df	Chi square	P – value
		< 18 years	> 18 years			
Age	<18 years	28 (20.9%)	31 (50%)	2	17.162	0.000
	19-29 years	86 (64.2%)	26 (41.9%)			
	> 30 years	20 (14.9%)	5 (9.1%)			
Marital status	Single / divorced / widowed	32 (23.9%)	30 (48.4%)	1	10.850	0.001
	Married	98 (73.1%)	32 (51.6%)			
Occupation	Employed	52 (38.8%)	38 (61.3%)	1	8.629	0.003
	Unemployed	82 (61.2%)	24 (38.7%)			
Education	Primary	120 (89.6%)	53 (85.5%)	2	1.275	0.529
	Secondary	9 (6.7%)	7 (11.3%)			
	Tertiary	5 (3.7%)	2 (3.2%)			
Monthly income level	< Ksh. 10,000	112 (83.6%)	16 (9.7%)	1	74.950	0.000
	> Ksh. 10,000	22 (16.4%)	56 (90.3%)			

Table 3: Effects of teenage marriage

Variable	Category	Marriage age (%)		Df	Chi square	P – value
		<18 years n=134	>18 years n=62			
Maternal health	Delivery complication	78 (58.2%)	15 (24.2%)	1	32.409	0.000
	Family planning	47(35.1%)	58 (93.5%)			
Childhealth	Immunization	98 (73.1%)	60 (96.8%)	2	82.195	0.000
	Malnutrition	92 (68.7%)	2 (3.2%)			
	Infections (diarrhea)	105 (78.3%)	1 (1.6%)			
Family conflicts	Agree	83(61.9%)	5(8.1%)	1	1.186	0.276
	Common	110 (82.1%)	12(19.4%)			

The study findings shows that among 196 respondents 134 (68%) were below the age of 18 years. A study by Manda and Meyer (2005) study found out those 67% women aged 20 to 24 with no education and 57 per cent with primary education were married below the age of 18 years. In a study by UNFPA in developing countries found out that 70% girls were likely to be married before 18th birthday (UNFPA, 2007)

On cultural practices; the study found 46% of the respondents entered into teenage marriage due to cultural practices. Muslim being a predominant religion in the area, most children are sent to attend *madrasas* (religion school) than formal school. The person live as polygamy families set up and inter marriage between cousins is promoted. When a family die, the community usually eulogize by playing music (*Ngoma*) for a number of days. These among others give the teenage opportunity to explore marriage at early age

According to Chege and Sifuna study finding, religion beliefs constrain girls from making their own opinions. While Choe *et al* (2004), show 63% - 82% of adolescent girls are married off due to parents wish. The study also found out that 17.9% of the respondents were influenced by peer pressure to enter into teenage marriage and 68.4% of the respondents entered marriage due to family related factors. The respondents feel their family set up was not supporting them realize the career goals (90%) and encouraged them being married off at early age using examples of other girls who had married off and were successful. The family was also eager to get dowry and other monetary rewards as soon as their daughters got married early

Save the Children (2005) indicates that cultural norms and beliefs constrain girls' economic empowerment especially in many developing parts of the world. In these societies, traditional values and some religious beliefs constrain girls from making their own decisions and expressing their own opinions.

According to Marston and King (2006), cultural norms in Kenya impose barriers for discussing about sexual matters. Even mentioning the word sex" can imply the sexual experience and promiscuity that may damage reputation. Hence, many adolescent girls ignore sexual issues discussion in order to preserve their reputation. Some parents also think that if they marry their daughter earlier then they can reduce the expenditure of food and education (Sharma, 2002).

Parents are also prompted to arrange early marriage for daughters due to a perceived need to preserve girls" pre-marital virginity and to protect her and her family from the risk of shame or dishonor attached to the "immoral" or "inappropriate" behavior of sex outside marriage. If a girl becomes pregnant outside marriage, the stigma can lead families to view her rights and well-being as secondary to the preservation of family honor. Child marriage is also used to punish or control girls who rebel against family or communities" expectations.

On effects of maternal and child health, the study found out that 58.2% of the respondents who had been married below age of 18 years developed delivery complications on their first delivery while 6.5% using family planning services. The bivariate analysis findings show maternal health (p = 0.000) to be statistically significant to teenage marriage. About 96.8% of the respondents who were married past 18 years of age better utilize infant immunization services and their children rarely develop common ailments like diarrhea (8.3%). However, 68.7% of the children from women married below 18 years had developed nutrition related disorders. Bivariate analysis found out that child health was statistically significant (p = 0.000) to teenage marriage. Family domestic conflicts were common (61.9%) among women married below 18 years
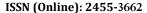
Specific studies investigating the determinants of child marriage are conducted mostly in developing countries. In India, Johnson-Lans and Jones (2011) examines the relative importance of economic and social factors in determining the probability of a girl becoming a child bride. The findings reveal that economic factors is way behind social conformity in explaining child marriage as none of economic variables such as household income, poverty status, and land ownership significantly affect the probability of child marriage in rural India.

CONCLUSION
Traditional cultural practices among Ganjoni community significantly influenced early marriage

Statistics indicates that most of the residents among the Ganjoni community were not economically independent because of them are unemployed thus most parents do prefer teenage marriage to their daughters in order to get wealth as well avoid responsibilities.

Most of the respondents were primary certificate holders and therefore access to education by both parent and children are significant determinant on decision to early marriages among Ganjoni community. Level of teenage marriage is high in Ganjoni community therefore many teenagers are involved in early marriage poverty is high effect of early marriage in Ganjoni community.
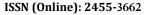
RECOMMENDATIONS

To be effective and transformative, to eliminate child marriage most span multiply sectors and Include different approaches. Based on findings discussed, the study recommends that;

I. Expanding access to primary, secondary and tertiary education by the government offering financial aid to the disadvantaged girls to stay in school in order to reduce dropout rate which delay early marriage.

II. The community and religion leaders should be key stakeholders on issues of girl child empowerment in order to fight outdated cultural practices.

III. The girl child should be trained from childhood about importance of education and related benefits as well as the possible outcomes of teenage marriage

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