

University of Minnesota Morris Digital Well

University of Minnesota Morris Digital Well

Undergraduate Research Symposium 2015

Undergraduate Research Symposium

4-2015

Exploring Reasons for the Persistence of Girl-Child Marriage in Nigeria

Oluwatomisin Bello

Follow this and additional works at: https://digitalcommons.morris.umn.edu/urs_2015



Part of the [Gender and Sexuality Commons](#), and the [Inequality and Stratification Commons](#)

Recommended Citation

Bello, Oluwatomisin, "Exploring Reasons for the Persistence of Girl-Child Marriage in Nigeria" (2015). *Undergraduate Research Symposium 2015*. 10.
https://digitalcommons.morris.umn.edu/urs_2015/10

This Book is brought to you for free and open access by the Undergraduate Research Symposium at University of Minnesota Morris Digital Well. It has been accepted for inclusion in Undergraduate Research Symposium 2015 by an authorized administrator of University of Minnesota Morris Digital Well. For more information, please contact skulann@morris.umn.edu.

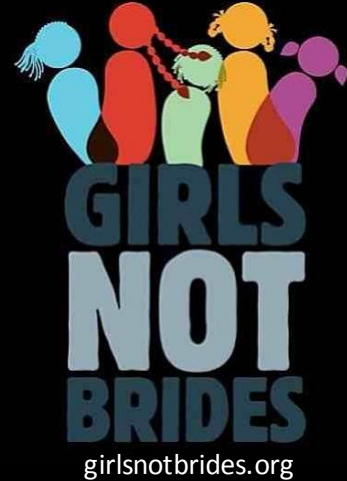
Exploring Reasons for the Persistence of Girl-Child Marriage in Nigeria

Tinu Bello



What is Child Marriage?

- Marriage after the onset of puberty but before age 18
- Adolescent girl



Scope of the Problem

Girl-child marriage (GCM) - persisting problem in Nigeria

- Criminalized by 2003 Child's Right Act
- Has negative impacts in areas in which it is practiced

The question my research sought to answer is why GCM still persists in Nigeria.

Nigeria

- Population: ~ 178 million
- Major languages: English, Yoruba, Igbo & Hausa.
- Ethnic groups: Over 250, majorly Yoruba, Igbo & Hausa
- Religions: Christianity (50%), Islam (45%), & indigenous religions (5%)



greatspeech.co

www.bbc.com, www.cia.gov

GCM in Nigeria

- Nationwide - 20% at 15, 40% at 18
- Northwest - 54.3% at 15, 81.3% at 18



infoplease.com

www.popcouncil.org, www.unfpa.org

Impacts of GCM

Health impacts

- Maternal and infant death
- Fistulas - VVF, RVF

Socio-economic impacts

- Stunted education
- Continuous cycle of poverty

Thesis

Poverty, lack of education, unique family and religious practices, and loopholes in social policy have led to the persistence of GCM in Nigeria

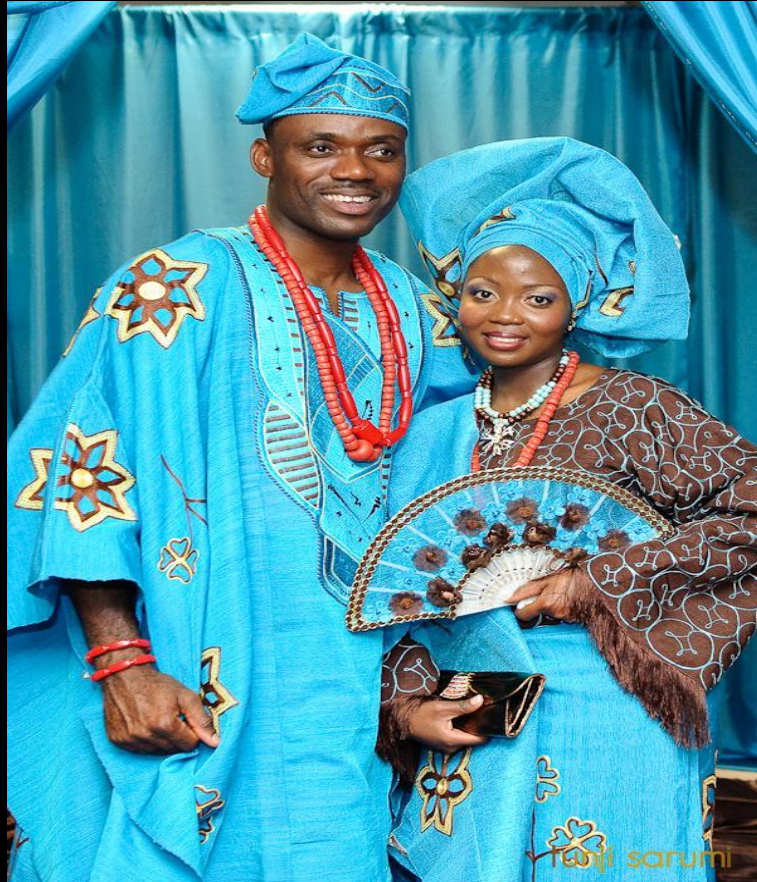
Sociological explanation

- Structural Functional theory – function/dysfunction in societal institutions
 - Economic
 - Educational
 - Family
 - Religious
 - **Political**

Reasons for persistence

- Economic – poverty
- Educational – lack of education
- Family & religious – unique practices
- **Political – loopholes in social policy**
 - Civil law
 - Islamic law
 - Customary law

Traditional wedding



www.tunjistudio.com/blog

Church wedding



www.namywedding.com

Conclusion

Although poverty, lack of education, unique family and religious practices are all significant contributors to the persistence of GCM, loopholes in social policy, is the leading factor for its persistence.

Suggestions for change

- Reduce isolation and empower girls by increasing educational opportunities
- More importantly, elimination of non-civil laws on marriage to remove loopholes

Literature Cited

- Akpan, Eno-Obong. "Early Marriage in Eastern Nigeria and the Health Consequences of Vesicovaginal Fistulae (VVF) among Young Mothers." *Gender & Development* 11.2 (2003): 70-76. Print.
- "A Third of African Countries Have Discriminatory Minimum Age for Marriage or Allow Child Marriage – ACPF." *Girls Not Brides*. N.p., 2013. Web. 09 Apr. 2014.
- "Child Marriage." *Forward*. Forward, n.d. Web. 14 Jan. 2014.
- "Child Protection from Violence, Exploitation and Abuse." *UNICEF*. UNICEF, n.d. Web. 13 Sept. 2013.
- "Fact Sheet on Child Marriage." *Population Reference Bureau*. Population Reference Bureau, 2011. Web. 27 Dec. 2013
- "Nigeria." *Central Intelligence Agency*. Central Intelligence Agency, n.d. Web. 13 Mar. 2014.
- "NIGERIA: Customary Law Marriage of Nigeria." *Online Nigeria*. N.p., n.d. Web. 01 Apr. 2014
- "Nigeria." *Population Council*. Population Council, n.d. Web. 14 Feb. 2014.
- "Nigeria Profile." *BBC News*. BBC, 27 Nov. 2013. Web. 09 Apr. 2014.
- "State of World Population 2005." *State of World Population 2005*. N.p., 2005. Web. 19 Jan. 2014.
- "The International Center for Research on Women (ICRW)." *RSS*. N.p., n.d. Web. 28 Feb. 2014.
- "UNFPA - United Nations Population Fund." *UNFPA - United Nations Population Fund*. N.p., n.d. Web. 01 Apr. 2014.