

IMPLICATIONS OF POLYGAMY IN EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT OF PUBLIC SENIOR SECONDARY SCHOOL STUDENTS IN RIVERS STATE, NIGERIA.

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Abstract

This research study examined Implication of Polygamy in Educational Attainment of Public Senior Secondary School Students in Rivers State, Nigeria. Three research questions and three corresponding hypotheses were used. The research design adopted for this study is a descriptive survey design. The population for the study is 27,317. A sample size of five hundred and forty-nine (549) was used. Simple random sampling technique was used. The instrument for data collection is a self-structured questionnaire titled 'implication of polygamy in educational attainment of public senior secondary school students' in rivers state' Questionnaire (IPEAPSSRS) containing twenty four items covering the objectives. 549 copies of the questionnaire were administered to the respondents. The research questions were analysed using mean while the hypotheses were tested with Analysis of Variance (ANOVA). Based on the findings of this study it was discovered that rivalry among wives in polygamous homes, number of siblings, and available educational opportunities, in polygamous home influence educational attainment of these students. The study therefore, concluded based on the results that rivalry among wives in polygamous marriages, number of siblings, and limited available resources for education of children in polygamous homes has been discovered to negatively influence educational attainment of secondary school students in Rivers State. It was therefore, recommended that the stakeholders in education should as a matter of priority carry out sensitisation exercise on the importance of a peaceful environment for students and for financial implications to be considered while birthing children: also, educationist/teachers should pay more attention to students, especially those from polygamous homes.

Keywords: Polygamy, Educational Attainment, Public, Senior Secondary School, Students

Introduction

Education is the process of nurturing the mind through experiences. It is the greatest force that can be used to bring about change. It is also the greatest investment that a nation can make for the quick development of its economic, political and social and human resources. This must be in line with the educational philosophy of the nation. It is in this regard that the National Policy on Education was formulated for the country. Education is for life and for living. It is a vital instrument which improves quality, shapes destiny and transforms man from what he is to what he hopes to become. In Nigeria, direct involvement in education is anchored on the philosophy of education of the nation. It is aimed at achieving integration of the individuals into sound and effective citizens of the nation for sustainability. The philosophy of education of the nation as stated in the Second National Development Plan include a free and democratic society, a just and egalitarian society, a united strong and self-reliant nation, a great and dynamic economy, and a land of bright and full opportunities for all citizens.

According to FRN (2014), the aims and objectives of formal education on the basis of the philosophy of Nigerian education include:

- i. The inculcation of national consciousness and national unity,

- ii. The inculcation of the right values and attitudes for the survival of the individual and the Nigerian society,
- iii. The training of the mind in the understanding of the world around, and
- iv. The acquisition of appropriate skills, abilities and competence, both mental and physical as equipment for the individual to live in and contribute to the development of his society.

Parents, government and educational managers are therefore concerned with the process of directing, coordinating and modifying the efforts of children and machinery towards achieving the stated objectives for good living in Nigeria. The objective number two has remained a problem to Nigerian educational development system pose by the family as a result of family background and up bringing occasioned by polygamy

Family which is the first agent of socialisation is an institution in which life revolve in any society. Marriage which forms the foundation of the family comes in various forms; paramount among others in this research is the polygamy. Many have viewed the marriage practice described as polygamy in many different ways in different societies. Polygamy is described as the custom or practice of marrying more than one wife or husband at the same time (Natali 2017). The greatest common form of polygamy occurs when a man takes more than one wife at the same time, and this is identified as polygamy. The male desire for more than one spouse has remained more frequently expressed than that of the female desire for more than one spouse, which is called polyandry.

Examination is very important aspect of the educational process. At this stage the learner's knowledge, ability, skills and competencies are evaluated, and decision made about his/her performance through examination. The outcome of his/her evaluation is used for identifying the student as well as placement of such students. Performance is a measure of competence, skills, ability and knowledge acquired on particular information transmitted across for the benefits of the students involved. Academic performance refers to how well a student accomplishes his/her assignments and educational tasks, but there are quite a number of factors that determine the level and quality of students' academic performance. The most famous indicator of academic performance or grades is the student's "score" for their classes and overall grades. The decline of academic performance manifesting today in the job interviews and attitude being displayed by these students have raised a concern to check the factors responsible for this ugly trend in our society.

Although there are many negative impacts of polygamy academically, some positive impacts can be noted as well. The psychological influences that polygamous life might exert on learners have been considered by several researchers. According to Al-Krenawi, Bart & Parson, (2011) learners in polygamous family are more likely face family stress and mental health issues than those in monogamous families. The risk of psychiatric illness is particularly acute for first or senior wives and their children in a polygamous marriage and these children are undoubtedly affected educationally in these scenarios. These children also experience other mental health problems, such as anxiety and depression, and take these feelings unconsciously into school and these affects their academic performance seriously.

Statement of the Problem

The researcher's interaction with some teenagers revealed that most of the teenagers perpetuating crime in the society are from polygamous families. This is not to say that every crime in the society is carried out by teenagers from polygamous home. Conflicts associated with polygamous home have

exposed some teenagers to stay out of school and engage in crimes as a result of lack of parental care. Nevertheless, there are lots of factors which could be responsible for the teenagers not being in school and as well as poor academic performance. It is in the light of this that this study is deemed necessary to examine the impact of polygamy on educational attainment of secondary school students in South- south region, Nigeria.

Research Questions

- i. To what extent does rivalry of wives in polygamous marriage affect educational attainment of the secondary school students in Rivers State Nigeria?
- ii. To what extent does number of siblings influence educational attainment of secondary school students in Rivers State Nigeria?
- iii. To what extent does the availability of educational opportunity for children from polygamous home affect the educational attainment of secondary school students in Rivers State Nigeria?

Hypotheses

The following hypotheses were postulated and each of them was tested at 0.5 alpha level of significant.

- i. There is no significant influence between the rivalry of wives in polygamous marriage and educational attainment of secondary school students in Rivers State Nigeria.
- ii. There is no significant influence between the number of siblings in polygamous home and educational attainment of secondary school students in Rivers State Nigeria.
- iii. There is no significant influence between the availability of educational opportunity for children from polygamous home and educational attainment of secondary school students in Rivers State Nigeria.

Methodology

The basic design for this study is the descriptive survey design which enables the researcher collect data from a large sample drawn from a given population and describes certain features of the sample as they are at the time of the study and which are of interest to the researcher, however, without manipulating any independent variables of the study. According to Inyang (2013), this research methodology is often used in empirical research methods. Osaat (2009) explains that research design is a systematic plan of how data relating to an investigating problem should be collected, analysed and interpreted.

The area of the study is Rivers State, Nigeria. It is one of the regions located in the Nigeria, West Africa.

The population for this study will consist of twenty-seven thousand three hundred and seventeen (27317) students drawn from the following secondary schools in the six states in south-south region: of which Bishop Dimieri Grammar School, Bayelsa State, St. James Grammar Secondary School Afuze, Edo State, St. Augustine Secondary School, Akwa Ibom, Government Girls School, Igoli, Ogoja, Cross River, and Abraka Grammar School Delta State are part of and served the purpose of this study.

The sample for this study consisted of 549 students from, which represent 12.5% of the total population for the study drawn from the schools in the six states that make up the Rivers State, Nigeria. The selection of the samples was based on simple random sampling technique. In specific

term, simple random sampling technique was used to draw 549 students, from the schools in the Rivers State, Nigeria.

This research study adopted the use of questionnaire titled: Implication of Polygamy in Educational Attainment of Public Senior Secondary School Students in Rivers State (IPEAPSSS). It contained 24 items which was divided into two parts: Part A and part B. Part A contains the background or demographic information of the students from polygamous families (respondents) while part B contained twenty four structured questions that covers all the areas in the study which the work focused at in the aim and objectives of the study and the research questions. The instrument adopted the modified four point scale of Very High Extent (VHE) , High Extent (HE), Low Extent (LE) and Very Low Extent (VLE).

The validity of this instrument was done by the expertise skill of the supervisors and their colleagues. They offered appropriate advice, suggestions, correction through proper scrutiny that will ensure that the instrument was appropriate in scope, coverage, content, relevance, and clarity.

To ascertain the reliability of the instrument, the researcher adopted a test re-test method. Some students from polygamous family in South-South from the schools which were not among the sample schools was given the instrument to find out if the instrument can measure what it is purported to measure and its stability and consistency. After an interval of two weeks, the same instrument was given again to the same respondents. The reliability co-efficient obtained from the correlation of these two test was at 0.70 using Pearson product moment correlation coefficient (r). This result confirmed the reliability of the instrument.

The researcher used primary data that is self-structured questionnaire. The questionnaire was administered by the researcher to the respondents (students from polygamous family) after an official permission from the school authority. This was done to forestall any possibility of external influence on respondents.

This research data was coded and analyzed using statistical tool such as mean. The mean was used to obtain the value that was used as a value to agree or disagree with the value. The hypothesis was tested using the analysis of variance (ANOVA).

Results and Discussion

Research Question One: To what extent does rivalry among wives in polygamous marriage affect educational attainment of the secondary school students in South-south region, Nigeria?

Table 1: Mean and decision on rivalry among wives in polygamous marriage affect educational attainment of the secondary school students in Rivers State, Nigeria.

S/No	Items	VHE	HE	LE	VLE	Total	Decision
	The following are factors that causes rivalry among wives in polygamous marriage influence educational attainment						
1	Due to many wives and children finance are always inadequate for each child's	271	179	79	20	549	3.28 Agree
2	The quarrel amongst wives annoyed my father, hence he refused to pay school fees for the term.	291	192	51	15	549	3.38 Agree
3	My mother sees the rivalry among wives as a challenge, hence determine to ensure I complete my education	13	71	185	280	549	1.67 Disagree

4	The major factor responsible for my academic failure is quarrel amongst	299	197	46	7	549	3.44	Agree
	Total						11.7	
	Grand mean						2.93	

Based on the data presented on Table 1 above, the mean responses of the respondents on items 1, 2 and 4 ranged from 3.28 to 3.44 which are greater than the criterion mean of 2.50 except that of item 3 which 1.66. More so, since the grand mean of 2.93 is greater than the criterion mean, it is concluded that the rivalry among wives in polygamous marriage influence educational attainment. with an aggregate weighted mean of 2.93 which is above the criterion mean of 2.50, the respondents agreed that Rivalry among wives enables my father care for my academic needs without compromising, the Rivalry among wives has denied me my term school fees, the Rivalry among wives have created an opportunity for me to complete my education, the Rivalry among wives is a major factor for my academic failure.

Research Question Two: How does the number of siblings influence educational attainment of secondary school students in Rivers State, Nigeria?

Table 2: Mean and decision on the number of siblings influence educational attainment of secondary school students in Rivers State, Nigeria.

S/No	Items	VHE	HE	LE	VLE	Total	Decision	
5	The number of siblings influence education attainment of secondary							
6	Irrespective of the free UBE scheme students are still ask to pay money for exam fee which my father could not	297	201	45	6	549	3.44	Agree
7	Environmental, PTA etc. hence am not avail the opportunity.	299	205	40	5	549	3.45	Agree
8	The high number of siblings in my family made my father to ask the female children to marry earlier.	99	110	250	190	549	2.21	Disagree
9	The high number of siblings in my family made my father to encourage his children to learn a trade.	95	106	150	200	549	2.18	Disagree
	Total						11.28	
	Grand mean						2.82	

Based on the data presented on Table 2 above, it is observed that the mean responses of the respondents on items 1 and 2 ranged from 3.44 to 3.45 which are greater than the criterion mean of 2.50 except that of items 3 and 4 which 2.18 and 2.21 Also, with an aggregate weighted mean of 2.82 above the criterion mean of 2.50, the respondents agreed that the number of siblings in my family has denied me educational attainment, the number of siblings in my family could not allow my father offer me education, the number of siblings in my family offered my educational opportunity and the number of siblings in my family offered my educational opportunity. It is therefore concluded that the number of siblings influence educational attainment of secondary school students in Rivers State.

Research Question Three: How does the availability educational opportunity for children from polygamous home affect the educational attainment of secondary school students in Rivers State, Nigeria?

Table 3: Mean and decision on availability educational opportunity for children from polygamous home affect the educational attainment of secondary school students in Rivers State, Nigeria.

S/No	Items	VHE	HE	LE	VL	Total	Decision
	The following are factors that create lack of availability of educational opportunity						
9	My father gave birth to me at the age of seventy	285	190	52	22	549	3.34 Agree
10	Am the 21 st child of my father among twenty-five children	290	201	41	17	549	3.39 Agree
11	My mother is the one who pays my school fees.	19	48	203	279	549	1.64 Dsagree
12	My father was on retirement before my birth	69	92	189	199	549	2.05 Disagree
	Total					10.42	
	Grand mean					2.60	

The data presented on Tablen3 above showed that the mean responses of the respondents on items 1 and 2 ranged from 3.34 to 3.39 which are greater than the criterion mean of 2.50 except that of item 3 which 1.66. with an aggregate weighted mean of 2.60 above the criterion mean of 2.60, the respondents agreed that with the numbers of my father's children I have no available educational opportunities, I had no educational opportunity due the family size, The size of my family offered me educational opportunities and I had no educational opportunity due the my parent economic status. Since the grand mean of 2.60 is greater than the criterion mean, it is concluded that the availability educational opportunity for children from polygamous home affect the educational attainment of secondary school students.

Testing of Hypotheses

Hoi: Rivalry among wives in polygamous marriage has no significant influence on educational attainment of secondary school students in Rivers State.

Table 1: ANOVA: Rivalry among Wives in Polygamous Marriage.

	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	12.898	1	3.786	1760.66	.000
Within Groups	.032	418	.002		
Total	12.930	419			

From the ANOVA table above, the F-calculated value is 1760.66 which are higher than the F-critical (table value) of 3.84. From the decision rule, the null hypothesis (Hoi) will be rejected since F-calculated > F-critical. Also, the significant value of 0.000 ($P < 0.05$) showed a significant influence. Therefore, rivalry among wives in polygamous marriage had significant influence on educational attainment of secondary school students in Rivers State, Nigeria.

Hoz: Number of Siblings in Polygamous Home Has No Significant Influence on Educational Attainment of Secondary School Students in Rivers State.

Table 2: ANOVA: Number of Siblings in Polygamous Home.

	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	14.367	1	5.746	1570.132	.000
Within Groups	.082	418	.012		
Total	14.449	419			

From table 2 above, the F-calculated value is 1570.132 which are higher than the F-critical (table value) of 3.84. From the decision rule, the null hypothesis (H_{02}) will be rejected since $f\text{-calculated} > F\text{-critical}$. Also, the significant value of 0.000 ($P < 0.05$) showed a significant influence. Therefore, number of siblings in polygamous home had significant relationship on educational attainment of secondary school students in Rivers State.

H_{03} : Availability of educational opportunity for children from polygamous home has no significant influence on educational attainment of secondary school students in Rivers State, Nigeria.

Table 3: ANOVA of Availability of Educational Opportunity for Children from Polygamous Home.

	<i>Sum of Squares</i>	<i>Df</i>	<i>Mean Square</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>Sig.</i>
Between Groups	13.898	1	5.216	1462.112	.000
Within Groups	.055	418	.014		
Total	13.953	419			

From the ANOVA table 3 above, the F-calculated value is 1462.112 which are higher than the F-critical (table value) of 3.84. From the decision rule, the null hypothesis (H_{03}) will be rejected since $F\text{-calculated} > F\text{-critical}$. Also, the significant value of 0.000 ($P < 0.05$) showed a significant influence. Therefore, availability of educational opportunity for children from polygamous home had significant influence on educational attainment of secondary school students in Rivers State, Nigeria.

Discussion of Findings

The study showed that rivalry among wives in a polygamous influence educational attainment of the children negatively, resulting in poor educational attainment. Consequently, Okpe (2009) in his view found that; that lack of proper communication and struggle for power and wealth were the major causes of marital conflict among co-wives affects their children educational attainment, lack of sexual satisfaction contributed to conflicts, High expectation of a particular gender in the family causes conflicts and couples and children from homes with marital conflict among co-wives loose self-esteem from the society as a result don't believe on them self and perform academically very poor and a failed educational attainment.

Furthermore, based on the findings of the study, the number of siblings in polygamous home has negative influence on educational attainment. Family types like nuclear family, extended family and compound family invariably affects the academic performance of a pupil. Nwezeh in Whitaker (2006) suggests that parents affect their children's performance, aspirations, expectations and maturity. The family set up contributes in the motivation and de-motivation of the child to learn. Parents in monogamous marriages have interest in their children's education and they are interested in the number of children they can cater for. Salami (2007) is of the idea that monogamous families are always eager to see their children progressing in their education, they do everything possible to encourage them to learn, and one wonders whether it is the same with the polygamous set up. On the other hand, Whitaker (2008) states that the characteristics in a polygamous family influence the type of children that come from that family, especially if the family mothers are jealous of each other and are always quarreling.

Finally, the study revealed that there is less educational opportunities for children from polygamous families, especially in the middle income family because of their sizes and number. However, there is no available literature to support this.

Conclusion

The respondents in this study revealed that all the variables used as independent variables of this study had weighted mean of 3.14 and above which is above the criterion mean of 2.50 as such had negative influence on students' educational attainment of secondary school students in Rivers. The study therefore, concluded base on the results that rivalry among wives in polygamous marriage, number of siblings, available educational opportunities, family conflicts, attitude of parents towards children and polygamous marriage have been discovered to negatively influence educational attainment of secondary school students in Rivers State. However, parents who engage in polygamous marriage should adopt positive life style.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of the study above on the implication of polygamy in educational attainment of public senior secondary school students in rivers state, the researcher therefore recommends as follows;

- i. The stakeholders in education should sensitise and educate the husband who is the head of the family to ensure that he create a peaceful atmosphere that will curtail the excess of his wives and ensure that there is a peaceful co-existence among members of the family and prepare the children for a healthy competition towards educational attainment.
- ii. Educationist and teachers should pay more attention to students, especially those from polygamous homes.
- iii. The father and mothers who make up this family should always consider their economic status in giving birth to children to enable the children have access to educational opportunity without compromising the sibling educational attainment.

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