
**EFFECTS OF EARLY MARRIAGE ON GIRL CHILD EDUCATION IN UGANDA. A CASE STUDY OF
HIGH WAY SECONDARY SCHOOL KIGANDA IN KASSANDA DISTRICT****1 Lutaaya Faisal, 2 Balunywa Ali, 3 Ngiri Andrew****1, 2, 3 Metropolitan International University**

ABSTRACT: The study aimed at the effects of early marriage on girl child education in Uganda with a case study of high way secondary school Kiganda in Kassanda district and was guided by the following objectives: To investigate the causes of early marriages among girl child education at high way secondary school Kiganda Kassanda district, to investigate the effect of early marriage on the girl-child at high way secondary school Kiganda Kassanda district and to investigate the relationship between early marriages and girl child education at high way secondary school Kiganda, Kassanda district. The study was largely a quantitative survey involving a large number of secondary school teachers as respondents thus the data collection method adopted was a survey which involved the use of self-administered questionnaires (SAQs). The research study targeted the students, marriage couples, teachers and institutions and village leaders totaling to 50 respondents. From the findings, more than sixty percent (64%) of the respondents in the research sample disagreed that in order to become independent the school girl becomes pregnant. This result is contrary to most research that found that by falling pregnant the adolescent schoolgirl perceives herself as an adult and thus independent concerning physical and sexual aspects (Bolton, 2003). These respondents might see a pregnant schoolgirl as still dependent as she still needs financial support to complete her education and care for the baby as well as someone to look after the baby during school time. Parents should counsel their daughters once they reach adolescent stage and equip them with necessary materials such as sanitary towels, books and little pocket money for lunch to protect them from the lures of businessmen and also teaching them on how to overcome teenage pregnancies.

Key words: early marriage, girl child and education**Background of the study**

Training is the method of offering knowledge and statistics to people. It is enshrined in international treaties and conventions which can be legally binding to signatory states inclusive of Uganda (Anthony et al., 2023). For instance, Article 26 of the UN assertion of human rights states that everyone has a proper to education which have to be unfastened and obligatory as a minimum in the standard and essential ranges. The conference on the removal of All sorts of

Discrimination towards women (Marsha et al., 2012) include complete units of enforceable commitment at the right to schooling and gender equality (Suzan & Kazaara, 2023).

Millennium improvement aim 2 (Nwonwu, 2008) also stresses the want for gender equality in education. However as much as these conventions and treaties are being enforced early marriages is consistently being practiced specially in Uganda, and that is

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appearing as a deterrent to lady child education (Joventa et al., 2023). UNICEF (2001), as an instance, states that during many growing counties, transition from children is compromised by using early marriage, a practice that has extreme results for his or her health and development. Early marriage is an appalling violation of human rights and robs women of their education, fitness and long-term prospects (UNICEF< 2001).

Early marriage is described as a casual marriage or casual union before the age of 18 (Joventa et al., 2023). Ango, (2013) described early marriage as both marriage of a youngster female/boy or marriage of a youngster woman to a matured man or vice versa and his occurs at puberty when the person is getting matured. The impact of early marriage at the women that impacts her wellbeing and that of the society consist of education, loss of financial empowerment and lack of information on reproductive health services to be able to allow them take informed decisions, enhance their capability to leverage assets and participate in community choice making (Aisha et al., 2023).

Early marriage has been a common exercise among many ethnic businesses in the international which include Uganda. but it has contributed to series of poor consequences both for young women rights mainly (Yudaya & Aggrey, 2023). For each girl and boys, early marriage has profound bodily, highbrow, mental and emotional affects, cutting off training and employment possibilities and possibilities of personal boom.

Problem Statement

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Early marriage has been regarding as the reason why most girls aren't in college in Uganda (UNICE, 2011). given that 2010, there has been a slow growth in early marriage in Uganda, in 2013 Uganda has been ranked sixteenth amongst 25 international locations with the highest charges of early marriage with 46% of women marrying before 18-12 months-old and 12% earlier than they are 15 (Vincent & Peter, 2023). these was no single clean cause for early marriage of female toddler in Uganda however alternatively it's an aggregate of numerous starting from social to cultural and monetary (Ahikirize, 2011). however political and religious leaders have come up to sensitive the hundreds about the poor influences of early marriage, go returned to high school campaign so as to be released in October2013 by using UNICEF to help girls' dropouts to rejoin faculty and the Programme has to this point registered fulfillment stories and also promoting the country wide method for ladies' education (NSGE) (Brighton et al., 2023). At high way senior secondary school in kassanda kiganda., each number one and secondary faculties have registered a decline in the girl child enrollment trends for the remaining five years (UNICEF 2016). Poverty at high way secondary school kiganda, was one of the causes which affect the lives of young girls (Mark et al., 2023). Their dad and mom simply "sell" them into marriage to cope with money owed and escape their miserable nation. Strategic cause is also every other massive trouble for early marriage at excessive way secondary school kassanda kiganda as an instance some mother and father get their children engaged in

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building strong relationships among clans or powerful families. excessive manner secondary college kassanda kiganda, politicians be crying the contributions of early marriages. The researcher was

therefore pressured to research the effect of early marriages on the female baby education the usage of high manner secondary school kassanda kiganda as a case observe (Oromo et al., 2023).

Specific objectives

- To investigate the causes of early marriages among girl child education at high way secondary school kiganda kassanda district
- To investigate the effect of early marriage on the girl-child at high way secondary school kiganda kassanda district.
- To investigate the relationship between early marriages and girl child education at high way secondary school kiganda, kassanda district.

Research questions

- What are causes of early marriage among girls at high way secondary school kiganda, kassanda?
- What is the effect of early marriage on the girl child education in high way SS, kiganda?
- What is relationship between early Marriage and child education at high way secondary school kiganda?

Methodology**Research design**

The study adopted both quantitative and qualitative research approaches the quantitative approach because the proposed study drew statistical inferences. The qualitative approach supplemented the quantitative approach by proving detailed information inform of statements from interviews for in depth analysis (Fassinga and Morrow 2013). This design was particularly selected because it took place at single point in time, allowing analysis of number variables at once and helped in looking at the provenance of the research problem in the study population (Borden sand Abbot, 2011).

Target Population

The research study targeted the students, marriage couples, teachers and institutions and village leaders totaling to 50 respondents.

Sample size and selection

Sample size refers to the number of items to be selected from the universe to constitute sample (Kothari, 2004). Technically the size of the sample depends on the type of research design being used, desired level of confidence in the result, the amount of accuracy wanted and the characteristics of the population of interest thus it is important to note that there is no single based way that can be used to determine sample size (Singh 2006) 30 students will be interviewed from secondary schools, 40 married couples, 20 teachers and 10 village administrators making up a total of 100 respondents.

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Sampling techniques

The study used stratified random sampling method for selecting respondents. This approach was preferred because it involves dividing the population into homogeneous sub groups and the taking a simple random sample in each group (Kombo and Tromp, 2006). The procedure of drawing a stratified random sample included all village respondents as unique identified according to the data given from administration system.

Data collection method

Data was collected by use of questionnaire and interview survey.

Questionnaire survey

The study was largely a quantitative survey involving a large number of secondary school teachers as respondent's thus the data collection method adopted was a survey which involved the use of self-administered questionnaires (SAQs). The method enabled the researcher to cover the respondents quickly and at a reasonable cost (Bordens and Abbot 2011).

Data collection instruments

The study employed a questionnaire and interviews guide.

The questionnaire

A self-administered questionnaire (SAQ) was administered on respondents. The questionnaire was chosen because it served to collect appropriate data, makes comparable and amenable to analysis, minimizes bias in formulating and asking of questions and makes questions varied. The questionnaire had identical sets of items for all respondents. The questions in section A in background characteristics were nominal questions with appropriate questions given. Questions in section B were scaled using a five point Like rat from a minimum of 1through 5. This instrument helped in collecting data that will be quantitative in nature.

Data analysis**Qualitative data**

Patterns and collections were within and between categories of data collected. Data were presented in form of notes, word -for –word transcripts, single words, belief phrases and full paragraphs (Powell and Rennaer, 2003). Data were interpreted by content analysis composing of explanations and substantiating them using the respondents' open responses. While analyzing qualitative data, conclusions were made on how different variables were related.

Quantitative data

Quantitative data was analyzed using statistical package for social sciences (SPSS 16.0) (Nelson et al., 2022). The data analysis will be done in different levels; namely invariant, bivariant and multi variant. At invariant level, the data analysis based on percentages from the frequency table and descriptive statistics particularly the mean. At a bivariant level, the dependent variable, early marriage will be correlated with girl child education. Independent variables (IVs).

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RESULTS**Age at Marriage**

The researcher sought to find out at what age the women were married. The purpose will be to investigate the rate of early marriages by women in the sub-county. Table 4.6 shows the distribution of the age brackets of the respondents at marriage.

Table 1: Respondents' age at marriage**Age Frequency Percentage**

	Frequency	Percentage
Less than 15 years	14	28.0
16-18	21	42.0
Above 18 years	15	30.0
Total	50	100.0

It is evident from Table 1 that a majority of the respondents were married at 16-18 years which is quite an early age for marriage.

Reasons for Marriage

The researcher also sought to know the leading reasons of marriages by the respondents. The reasons given were pregnancy, the right age and financial problems in the family. Table 4.7 summarizes the findings.

Table 2: Respondents reasons for getting married early**Reason Frequency Percent**

	Frequency	Percentage
I got pregnant	12	24.0
I will be of age	3	6.0
Financial issues in the family	35	70.0
Total	50	100.0

The table 2 indicates that 12 (24%) had gotten pregnant, 3 (6%) were of age, 35 (70%) had financial issues in the family.

Effects of Early Marriage on the Girl-Child Education

Early marriage is a distraction for the future of young girls-educationally, socially and economically. When a girl is married when young, she will not find time to socialize with other people or go to school. When a girl is married when she is still under-age, she will suffer from poverty and ignorance. Early marriage leads to maternal deaths

because when a young girl conceives before reaching maturity, this leads to maternal deaths especially when she does not deliver in hospital. She may also suffer obstructed labour which leads to vesical-vaginal fistula.

She may deliver underweight children because she does not know what to eat when pregnant and this may result in child illnesses and finally death of the child other than early marriage affecting the girl-child's education the researcher sought to find out other effects of early marriage. The suggested effects by the respondents are summarized in Table 3.

Table 3: Effects of early marriage

	Frequency	Percentage
One ends up marrying where one is not wanted	3	6.0%
It can result in divorce	4	8.0%
It can lead to various health issues	1	2.0%
It leads to lack of proper employment	3	6.0%
Girls can acquire HIV/AIDS	4	8.0%
One lacks experience to take care of children	2	4.0%
It leads to mistreatment	2	4.0%
It leads to maternal deaths	1	2.0%
It spoils a girl's future	3	6.0%
One ends up having many children when still young	3	6.0%
Unnecessary sufferings	4	8.0%
It leads to fights with husband	3	6.0%
One does not complete one's education	3	6.0%
Leads to ignorance	4	8.0%
Lack of knowledge on child nutrition	1	2.0%
Leads to unhappy life	4	8.0%
Leads to lack of skills to do business	4	8.0%
Total	50	100.0%

The researcher also sought to investigate if there were any positive effects of early marriage. The respondents were asked to indicate whether they agreed or not if there were any positive effects. The findings are summarized in Table 3.

Table 4: Responses on whether there are any positive effects of early marriage

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	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	4	8.0
No	46	92.0
Total	50	100.0

The findings indicated that a vast majority of the respondents disagreed with the suggestion that early marriage had any positive effect on the girl-child. This was also supported by one key informant. In her view; Early marriage has no positive effect on the girl-child in high way ss. Girls enter into marriage when they are still young and this may often lead them to divorce and enter into prostitution. Again, their illiteracy level goes up and they may not know what they are doing. By the time they were getting married the girl and husband may have been around 16 years old, and then they all of a sudden realize that there is a stage they passed. Then there is the issue of mobile phones. The girls can talk to other boy-friends on phone, and at times this phone is put on loudspeaker and the girl gives the same phone to her husband to use. There is gender-based violence in these homes-husbands beat up these young girls because they are ignorant, they do not report such cases because they do not know their rights (Damasus et al., 2023).

Regrets of Engaging in Early Marriage

The study sought to investigate if the engagement in early marriage had led to any regrets. The respondents regretted to have engaged in early marriage because they said they were experiencing a lot of financial challenges and hardships in their married life. The responses are summarized in Table 5.

Table 5: Responses on the extent to which early marriage had led to regrets

	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	47	94.0
No	3	6.0
Total	50	100.0

From the above results it can be pointed out that the majority **47 (94.0%)** of the respondents regretted the fact that they married at an early age. The study sought to find out the reasons for regrets. These reasons are summarized in Table 5.

Reasons for schoolgirls' pregnancies

Table 6: Frequency distribution according to the reasons for schoolgirl pregnancy

Possible reasons for pregnancy	Agree	Disagree	Uncertain	Total
Lack of knowledge about sexuality	65%	30%	5%	100%
Peer pressure	90%	7%	3%	100%
To become independent	21%	64%	15%	100%

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Examples of portrayed by the media	93%	6%	1%	100%
Early menarche	67%	23%	10%	100%
Beliefs about fertility	44%	53%	3%	100%
Contraceptive use	83%	14%	3%	100%
Low social economic status	86%	8%	6%	100%
Risk taking behavior	94%	2%	6%	100%
Role models	73%	25%	2%	100%

Knowledge about sexuality

Most of the respondents (65%) in the research sample agreed that because schoolgirls lack adequate knowledge about sexuality, they fall pregnant. According to Bezuidenhout (2004) sexuality issues are the topics least discussed by members of a family. Schoolgirls in the adolescent stage who experience physiological and emotional changes, often find it difficult to discuss these experiences with their mothers or older sisters. In need of information, they turn to their peers for guidance or seek information from books, magazine articles, the internet and the like (Aspire, 1999). However, not all the information obtained from these sources is correct which may be a reason for unwanted pregnancies. The main problem identified concerning knowledge about sexuality in the study conducted by Makola (2004) will be sexuality education in schools. It will be found that sexuality education will be not compulsory during the training of educators which resulted in many educators not having the appropriate skills to effectively teach such a sensitive subject. It will be also established that some educators are not comfortable or embarrassed to teach sexuality subjects. Nearly a third (30%) of the respondents disagreed with the statement which means that they do not view ignorance as one of the reasons for pregnancy amongst schoolgirls. This might be an indication that the schoolgirls have acquired proper sexual knowledge from parents, health workers, teachers, priests or the mass media but had other reasons for falling pregnant (Kanku & Mash, 2010)).

Peer pressure

Ninety percent (80%) of the respondents that partook in the research believed that peer pressure plays a significant role in role in schoolgirl pregnancy. According to Kaplan (2004) during the adolescent years peer groups seem to control areas such as dress style, music taste, recreation activities, and dating customs and sexual practices (Kalikula, 2023). Channing-Peace and Saville (2006) confirms that peer group pressure can be very strong as well as the desire to conform to be accepted. Ayer (2000) maintains that the peer group influence can be direct when peers exert pressure on the schoolgirls' sexual activities or indirect when the teenagers need to imitate certain forms of behavior for example that portrayed by the media (Victor et al., 2023).

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Independence

More than sixty percent (64%) of the respondents in the research sample disagreed that in order to become independent the schoolgirl becomes pregnant. This result is contrary to most research that found that by falling pregnant the adolescent schoolgirl perceives herself as an adult and thus independent concerning physical and sexual aspects (Bolton, 2003). These respondents might see a pregnant schoolgirl as still dependent as she still needs financial support to complete her education and care for the baby as well as someone to look after the baby during school time. Jewkes (2007) sees the pregnant schoolgirl as becoming more dependent because she lacks adequate education to secure continues to rely on relatives in caring for the baby.

The twenty one percent (21%) of the respondents that agreed with the statement possibly share the view of most researchers, namely, that the adolescent schoolgirl strives for independence in making her own decisions about her behavior and actions and wants to judge for herself about her sexual activities (Cunningham & Boulton, 2007). By falling pregnant the teenage schoolgirl perceives herself as independent concerning physical and sexual aspects and that she has attained adult status.

Media

More than a ninety percent (93%) of the participants in the research said that the media plays an important role in schoolgirl's pregnancy (Flavia et al., 2023). This high percentage of respondents that agreed confirm the findings of various researchers, namely, that film, internet websites, some periodicals and television programs containing sexual activities without having the necessary level of physical and emotional and psychological maturation (Makola 2004). Bezuidenhout (2004) claims that "together peer pressure and the influence of mass media are powerful triggers in encouraging teenagers to indulge in illicit sexual activities" (Davids et al., 2023). Rickel (2001) says the media contributes to sexual acts amongst teenagers because of all the explicit sexual acts they view on television and movies. As a result of this exposure teenagers engage in sexual activities as it looks easy, funny and glamorous without thinking about the consequences (Kazaara & Kazaara, 2023).

Early menarche

More than two thirds (67%) of the respondents in the research sample agreed that early menarche can be a reason for schoolgirl pregnancy. Recent research by (Buga et al., 2006) indicates that the age of menarche is decreasing. The implication of this is that sexual activity is likely to begin at an earlier age, with the risk of pregnancy amongst schoolgirls still in primary school. In an article in the Mercury newspaper, Mkamba and Moolla (2012) refer to statistics from the KwaZulu-Natal department of education that revealed that in 2010-2011 the number of primary school girls that fell pregnant will be 508.

Beliefs about fertility

The larger percentage (53%) of the participants in the research said that beliefs about fertility do not contribute to pregnancy amongst schoolgirls. This result is in accordance with the finding of Bhana et al. (2008) that there are a

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large number of adolescents who place a higher value on education and future economic success, than to prove their fertility at a young age. These respondents might be of the view that only older teenage girls, and not schoolgirls, may feel the need to prove that they are able to have children before marriage.

Contraceptive use

More than eighty percent (83%) of the respondents that partook in the research believed that the use of contraceptives is a reason for school girl pregnancy.

The concept "contraceptive use includes inter alia, the following Availability and access to contraceptives, Lack of knowledge that result in ineffective or non-use of contraceptives, Negative perceptions about contraceptives, health workers, reluctant to provide young teenagers contraceptives.

Low socioeconomic status

The majority of respondents (86%) in the research sample agreed that a low socioeconomic status is a possible reason for schoolgirl pregnancy. Low socioeconomic status is characterized by poverty which means people living without or with the minimum basic daily needs such as proper housing, food and clothes (Hughes, 2002). These conditions provide significant incentives for and pressure on teenagers (schoolgirls) to fall pregnant.

Risk-taking behavior

The data revealed that the majority of respondents (94%) in the research sample indicated that risk-taking behavior may result in teenage pregnancy (Jac & Kazaara, 2023). Hanford in Bezuidenhout (2008) explains

that alcohol and drugs affect the human body through depressant and general arousal, decrease inhibitions and causes young girls becoming promiscuous. Drugs affects the nervous system by numbing the part of the brain that controls a person's behavior in such a way that behavioral changes lead to risk-taking with respect to sexual encounters (Kazaara & Christopher, 2023).

Role models

Nearly three quarters (73%) of the participants in the research agreed that role models play a role in schoolgirl pregnancy. Preston-Whyte and Allen (2002) maintain that teenagers are exposed to role models in the media and their immediate society who are respected, and are single mothers. This observation gives adolescents (teenagers) the perception that it is possible to achieve success in life even if one falls pregnant while young and still at school.

However, a quarter (25%) of the respondents did not agree with the statement that role models play a role in schoolgirl pregnancy.

Conclusions

On the basis of the above findings, it can be concluded that early marriage exists in High way ss kiganda and it is as a result of poverty and culture. Early marriage imposes fundamental challenges on the advancement of the girl-child's education. Poverty and culture are intertwined, and they are the cause of girls not being in school in high way ss. Suba sub-County, being a rural area, experiences more poverty than urban areas. Globally, rural people and rural places generally disadvantage the rural people much more than the urban people. Every child, whether male or female, needs equal treatment from parents in order to realize their dreams.

Recommendations

On the basis of the conclusions, the study makes the following recommendations:

The laws prohibiting the practice of early marriage should be enforced so that anybody found committing the offence is criminalized and sentenced to jail.

Parents should counsel their daughters once they reach adolescent stage and equip them with necessary materials such as sanitary towels, books and little pocket money for lunch to protect them from the lures of businessmen and also teaching them on how to overcome teenage pregnancies.

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