KNOWLEDGE AND PREVALENCE OF EARLY MARRIAGE AMONG ADOLESCENTS IN SASA, AKINYELE LOCAL GOVERNMENT AREA, NIGERIA

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Introduction

- Early Marriage (EM) - union between two people; one or both partners is <18 years.

- More in females than males

- The practice of early marriage is most common in sub-Saharan Africa, Middle East and South Asia (UNICEF, 2005).
In Nigeria;

- 16.4% - 15 yrs
- 39.4% - 18 yrs

(NDHS 2008)

Married by 18 yrs (Erulkar et al., 2007).
Introduction cont’d

- Reasons for Early Marriage (EM); poverty, protection of girls, unplanned pregnancy, family honor, etc. (Anagbogu 2005, UNICEF, 2005).
- EM denies adolescents their right to education.
- Adolescents in EM have inadequate information and access to contraception.
- More susceptible than older women to sexually transmitted infections, vessico-vagianal and obstetric fistula.
Introduction cont’d

- **Rationale:** Adequate information on adolescents’ knowledge of EM and its associated problems would help to plan measures to prevent the practice.

- **Objective:** To determine the knowledge of EM and its associated problems, and the prevalence of EM among adolescents in Sasa (a multi-ethnic community), Akinyele LGA, Nigeria.
Description of study site

- **Study Area**: Akinyele LGA – consists of 12 wards.
- **Study Site**: Sasa- community in ward 8, consist of about 12 compounds (Agbo-ile).
- Population - about 4,237 males and 3,755 females.
- Predominantly Yoruba and Hausa.
- Major occupation - farming and trading.
- Religion – Islam & Christianity.
Methodology

- **Study design**: Qualitative & quantitative
- **Sampling Technique**: Multi-stage sampling technique was used to select 400 adolescents.
- **Data Collection**: Semi-structured, interviewer-administered questionnaire and an in-depth interview guide
- **Data analysis**: Knowledge of EM and its associated problems was assessed using a 15-item scale categorized as poor (<8) and good (≥8) knowledge.
Results

- Mean age of respondents was 16.1 ± 2.3 years and 63.0% were male.
- 67.5% = Yoruba, 26.4% = Hausa and 6.0% = other ethnic groups.
- 60.7% had secondary education.
- 73.6% had good knowledge of early marriage and associated problems.
- Common problems of EM mentioned: early sexual initiation (89.0%), early child bearing (88.8%)
Results Cont’d

- Poor child care (75.8%), obstructed labour (67.8%) and poor access to contraception (65.0%).
- 70.4% reported EM as common practice in their community.
- The prevalence of EM among female respondents was 11.6%.
- Of those in EM; 58.8% Hausa, Yoruba 29.4% and other ethnic groups 11.8%
- 88.2% were Muslims
Results Cont’d

- The mean age at marriage was 15.7±1.7 years.

Marital status by educational attainment

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Primary school &amp; below</th>
<th>Secondary school &amp; above</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>P value</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Single</td>
<td>125</td>
<td>244</td>
<td>369</td>
<td>0.002</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>33.9%</td>
<td>66.1%</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Married</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>23</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>65.2%</td>
<td>34.8%</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>140</td>
<td>252</td>
<td>392</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>
### Results Cont’d

#### Age by knowledge of EM/Associated Problems

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Poor knowledge</th>
<th>Good knowledge</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>P value</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10-14 years</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>91</td>
<td>&lt; 0.0001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>40.7%</td>
<td>59.3%</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15-19 years</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>237</td>
<td>304</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>22.0%</td>
<td>78.0%</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>104</td>
<td>291</td>
<td>395</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Results Cont’d

Key informant interviews revealed:

- General awareness of the practice of early marriage in the study area.
- Key informants’ views were marked by tradition and religious ideologies.
Conclusion/Recommendation

- A substantial proportion of girls in Sasa community marry before the age of 18 years.
- Knowledge of problems of early marriage (EM) was influenced by age.
- Ethnicity and religion were associated with EM.
- Religious & cultural sensitisation of adolescents, their parents and community can help reduce this practice.
- There is need for more advocacy to reduce occurrence of the practice.
I give glory to Almighty God for his unending love and grace.

To my beloved mum and every member of my family, I love you all.

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References


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