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EDITORIAL

This academic publication of the defunct Department of Educational Foundations has come a long way. It was almost going moribund but for the deliberately steps taken by the current Editorial Board with the cooperation of all academic staff of the former Department of Arts and Social Sciences Education. Innovative article generation and peer review programmes were initiated and doggedly implemented to enable the return of Nigerian Journal of Educational Foundations to the envious academic status it had always enjoyed. Improving the quality of the journal and bringing an international angle and status to it has engaged the attention of the Editorial Board. Phased in stages of achieving national and international focus has produced special edition based on selected themes. These themes pay attention to issues and needs currently engaging the attention of specialists in educational foundation in Nigeria and the rest of the world.

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

EDITORIAL	ii
GENERAL INFORMATION AND NOTES TO CONTRIBUTORS	iv
A Philosophical Critique of Nigeria's Education Policy <i>Akinsanya P. O.</i>	1
Survey Of Learning Styles Of Undergraduates In South – West Nigerian Universities <i>Ajagbe F. N.</i>	12
Parental Influence on Choice of Course and Academic Achievement of Undergraduate Students Of Kwara State University Malete, Nigeria <i>Saadu U. T.</i>	20
Causes of Late Marriage as Perceived By Students of University of Ilorin Nigeria <i>Bolu-Steve F. N. & Omotosho J. A.</i>	31
Formative Assessment As Motivational Strategies For Learning: Perceived Impact And Challenges By Senior Secondary School Teachers In Ilorin <i>Owolabi, H. O., Adaramaja, S. L., Ogunjimi, M. O. & Olutola, T. A.</i>	39
A century of Public Primary Education in Nigerria (1914-2004): A Review <i>Ola-Alani, Eniola</i>	50
Challenges faced by Undergraduate Students with Special Needs in Tertiary Institution <i>Lasode, A. O. & Adewusi A.</i>	60

CAUSES OF LATE MARRIAGE AS PERCEIVED BY STUDENTS OF UNIVERSITY OF ILLORIN, NIGERIA

BOLU-STEVE F. N. & OMOTOSHO J. A.

Abstract

The study looked at the causes of late marriage among student of University of Ilorin. The research design employed was descriptive survey. This study was carried out in the University of Ilorin, Nigeria. The population for the study was all students of University of Ilorin while the target population was postgraduate students of University of Ilorin. Five faculties were selected out of the 15 faculties in the University of Ilorin using the dip-hart method. This method involved researchers writing the names of the faculties on small pieces of papers, folding and dropping it in a bowl and picking any five folded pieces one at a time. The selected Faculties were Education, Agriculture, Sciences, Law and, Business and Social Sciences. Purposive sampling technique was used in selecting 100 respondents from each faculty, which brings the total to 500 postgraduate students of University of Ilorin contacted for the study. This was done because the postgraduate students are not as much as the undergraduates in all the faculties. Descriptive and inferential statistics were used to analysed the collected data. The findings showed that there was significant difference in respondents' perception on the basis of religion. However, no significant difference was found on the basis of family type. Some recommendations were made which include the need for counselors to intensify efforts in organizing counselling programmes for adult postgraduate students who are of marriageable age. The government was also encouraged to appeal through the appropriate organ for religious tolerance and co-habitation among citizens.

Key words: Religion; Family type; Student; Perception; Late marriage.

Background of Study

Marriage is a social union or legal contract between a man and a woman. It is a contract in which two or more persons of opposite sex enter into a lifelong relationship. It is often backed up by legal course of the law and/or religious injunctions. Shalita (2005) defined marriage as a legal union of man and woman as husband and wife. Marriage is also seen as a union between man and woman such that children born to them are recognized as legitimate offspring. Kuefler (2007) defined marriage as a culturally approved relationship of one man and woman (monogamy) or of one man and two or more women (polygamy) in which there is cultural endorsement of sexual

intercourse between the marital partners of opposite sex. Saxton (1993) pointed out that marriage was instituted for the purpose of procreation, sexual satisfaction, companionship and also to serve as a check to promiscuity. Matthew (2008) stated that marriage is regarded as a mysterious union between a man and a woman. The importance of life partner is a major life decision and cannot be overemphasized. Most Nigerians often cast aspersions to the sense of responsibility of an individual who has reached the nubile (marriageable) age but has refused to marry. This view of the society seems to enjoy the support of the biblical injunction found in Genesis 2: 18 that it is not good that a man should be alone; I will make a helper fit for him. Onye (2005) pointed out that Islam strongly detest celibacy, even for ascetic reason (Quran 24 : 32). Adebayo (1994) opined that early marriage is valued greatly in Nigeria and lateness in marriage may be suspected as a problem

The institution of marriage is regarded with high esteem, but today it is seen as a means of sexual gratification alone. It is clear that societal values and taboos are losing grip on individuals. Among the practices that seemed to threaten the existence of marriage is single parenthood which may be a consequence of deferred marriage. In the olden days, while the society was unsophisticated and backward, it was difficult for people (especially women) to survive without the economic partnership produced by marriage. Today, however, both men and women have an equal opportunity to be economically independent of each other. As such, the uptrend of single parenthood is a common phenomenon all over the world.

The legalization of gay marriage is also seen as a threat to the institution of marriage. Onye (2005) asserted that mixed religious marriages has a times met with parental opposition and because of this many have deferred marriage contractions. It has also been discovered that many students marry late because they do not have the opportunity to finish their education on time due to closure of schools as a result of one strike or the other. This has the tendency to predispose late marriage.

Ahmad (2012) studied late marriages and discovered that many shelve marriage contract because of the expected responsibilities attached to it. Akujia (1997) carried out a research on factors responsible for late marriage among civil servants in Umuahia/Kwano Local Government Area of Abia state, Nigeria and reported that civil have different on the factors of late marriage among persons of marriageable age. Legbara (1991) empirically examined motivating factors for the choice of a life partner among undergraduate students of the University of Ilorin, Ilorin Nigeria. But none of these researchers considered the causes of late marriage among graduates students in Nigeria. Therefore, this paper examined the causes of late marriage as perceived by postgraduate students of University of Ilorin. **Research**

Questions

- 1 What do postgraduate students of University of Ilorin perceive as the causes of late marriage?
- 2 Are postgraduate students' perceptions of causes of late marriage a function of religion they practice?
- 3 Are postgraduate students' perceptions of causes of late marriage a function of family type they come from?

Research Hypotheses

Two null hypotheses were postulated to further give focus for the study. The two hypotheses were:

- H01: There is no significant difference in the University of Ilorin postgraduate students' perception on the causes of late marriage on the basis of religion.
- H02: There is no significant difference in University of Ilorin postgraduate students' perception on the causes of late marriage on the basis of family type.

Methodology

This study was carried out in the University of Ilorin, Kwara State, Nigeria. The population for the study was all students of University of Ilorin, while the target population was postgraduate students of University of Ilorin. Five faculties were selected out of the 15 faculties in the University of Ilorin using the dip-chart method. This method involved researchers writing the names of the faculties on small pieces of papers, folding and dropping it in a bowl and picking the five folded pieces one at a time. The selected Faculties were Education, Agriculture, Sciences, Law and, Business and Social Sciences. Purposive sampling technique was used in selecting 100 respondents from each faculty, which brings the total to 500 postgraduate students of University of Ilorin contacted for the study. This was done because the postgraduate students are not as much as the undergraduates in all the faculties.

A questionnaire with a four-point, Likert-type scale titled "Causes of Late Marriage" (CLAM) was used to elicit information. The validity of the questionnaire was established by requesting three lecturers in the Department of Counsellor Education to vet it for content validity. Content validity is the extent to which a test measures what it purports to measure (Stangor, 2004). It was later subjected to the test-re-test method to further establish its reliability, and a reliability coefficient of 0.68 was obtained. The questionnaire consisted of two parts, Sections A and B. Section A dealt with the demographics of the

respondents. Section B had 13 items through which respondents were required to indicate their perceptions by ticking the option that was most applicable to them on a Four-Point, Likert-Type Scale. For section B, 4 was the highest score for the "Strongly Agree" option while 1 was the lowest for the "Strongly Disagree" option. For any respondent, therefore, the lowest possible score was 13 (i.e. $1 \times 13 = 13$) while the highest possible score was 52 (i.e. $4 \times 13 = 52$). The range is 39 (i.e. $52 - 13 = 39$). Therefore the mid-point is 19.5 (i.e. $39/2$). Hence the cut-off point for deciding whether a mean value is low or high is either 13+19.5 or 52 - 19.5, which in either case comes to 32.5. As such, any score of 32.5 or higher is high while a mean score of less than 32.5 is low.

Frequency counts, percentages and mean was used to answer the main research question, while the t-test statistical tools was to test the two null hypotheses. Adana (1996) affirms that t-test statistical tool is a parametric test that is often used to compare the means of two groups. This statistical tool was used to test the first hypothesis.

Results

Research Question One: What do postgraduates students of University of Ilorin perceive as the causes of late marriage?

Table 1: Rank order of respondents on the causes of late marriage

Item	Late marriage can arise:	Frequency	Percentage (%)	Mean	Rank
5	out of unbridle desire for materialism	485	97.0	4.16	1 st
13	out of religious conviction	472	94.4	4.13	2 nd
1	as a result of lack of respect for the opposite sex	451	90.2	4.04	3 rd
3	out of imposition of life partner by parents	394	78.8	3.92	4 th
9	out of unbridled desire for materialism.	376	75.2	3.84	5 th
7	out of sexual infidelity	373	74.6	3.80	6 th
10	out of lack of trust	368	73.6	3.72	7 th
4	out of irrational thinking	362	72.4	3.63	8 th
12	as result of spiritual problem	359	71.8	2.57	9 th
2	out of fear of child bearing	337	67.4	2.44	10 th
6	out of lack of parental consent	314	62.8	2.42	11 th
11	work pressure	291	58.2	2.37	12 th
8	out of the need to avoid marriage with married persons	274	54.8	1.33	13 th

Table 1 shows that item 5 ("late marriage can arise out of unbridled desire for materialism") attracted the highest response with 485 (97%). This was followed by item 13 ("out of religious conviction") which attracted 472 (94.4%) of the respondents. The item with the smallest frequency was item 8

("out of the need to avoid marriage with married persons") which was ranked 13th because only 274 respondents (54.8%) agreed with the statement. Also, it was observed from Table 1 that out of the thirteen (13) reasons given for late marriage, nine (9) of them were perceived by 80.8% or more of the respondents as causes of late marriage

Hypothesis One: *There is no significant difference in the postgraduate students' perception of factors responsible for late marriage on the basis of religion*

Table 2: t-test analysis on difference in the students' perception of factors responsible for late marriage on the basis of religion

Religion	N	Mean	SD	df	Cal. t-value	Crit. t-value
Christianity	395	71.5	8.92	498	6.86*	1.96
Islam	105	64.1	12.7			

*Significant, $p < 0.05$

Table 2 shows that the calculated t-value is 6.86 while the critical t-value is 1.96 with 498 degree of freedom. Since the calculated t-value of 6.86 is greater than the critical t-value of 1.96, it was concluded that the hypothesis which states that there is no significant difference in postgraduate students' perception of factors responsible for late marriage on the basis of religion was rejected.

Hypothesis Two: *There is no significant difference in postgraduate students' perception of factors responsible for late marriage on the basis of family type*

Table 3: t-test analysis on difference in the students' perception of factors responsible for late marriage on the basis of family type

Family Type	N	Mean	SD	df	Cal. t-value	Crit. t-value
Monogamous Family	227	69.4	8.66	498	1.48	1.96
Polygamous Family	223	63.1	11.9			

$p > 0.05$

Table 2 shows that the calculated t-value is 1.48 while the critical t-value is 1.96 with 498 degree of freedom. Since the calculated t-value of 1.48 is less than the critical t-value of 1.96, it was concluded that the hypothesis which states that there is no significant difference in postgraduate students' perception of factors responsible for late marriage on the basis of family type was not rejected.

Discussion

Marriage was ordained for companionship and because of that, most respondents agreed that late marriage can arise out of the continuous search for a suitable partner.

The first finding one showed a significant difference in the postgraduate students' perception of factors responsible for late marriage on the basis of religion. This observation agreed with the report of Akujua (1997) that civil servants differ in their perception of factors responsible for late marriage on the basis of religion. Although, marriage is held in high esteem among Nigerians irrespective of religion and viewed as a divine obligation, although, there are basic differences between the two religions with respect to the process of contracting marriage. Islamic religion permits a man to marry more than one wife, Christians are allowed to marry only one wife. This may be responsible for the differences in their perception of factors responsible for late marriage. The differences found, may be as a result of the religious injunction of each group. Legbara (1991) reported that people prefer to defer marriage if they are not of the same religious conviction. Generally, people will prefer to wait until they get someone of the same religion that they practice before contracting marriage.

The result of the second finding pointed out that there is no significant difference in the respondents' perception of the factors responsible for late marriage on the basis of family type. Education as a tool for human transformation is expected to influence an individual perception with regards to various sociological issues irrespective of the family type. Hence, respondents had similar perception on the factors responsible for late marriage. Birch and miller (2006) stated that education emphasizes the power of change and it transforms an individual from a state of ignorance and underdevelopment to a completely new person who is knowledgeable, cultured, well develop and self-mannered. It has been discovered that one's perceptual viewpoint improves with education. Chambers 20th Century dictionary defined education as the strengthening of the powers of the body and mind. Wikins (2001) opined that family type determines the nature of social interaction within the home. If the home is too strict the child grows with a sense of insufficiency deprivation and over dependent, these create

nsion which may lead to anxiety, distrust, disaffection, frustration and aggressiveness. With these, the child personality becomes dangerously fragile and uncoordinated. Such an individual may never be interested in marriage. If the home is friendly, there will be justice, love, and self-discipline in the family. Then such children develop into mature and balance persons who could be interested in justice, fair play and loving relationships such as marriage. Dull and Skokan (2003) affirmed that the home type (polygamous or monogamous) environment shapes the personality characteristics of the child. In this study, however the educational status of the respondents seems to have obliterated the influence of family type on their perceptions.

Counselling Implication

With the growing needs of our society, students find themselves interacting with mates from different ethnic religious background. The likelihood of such interactions leading to conjugal relationship is daily becoming higher in our rapid process of urbanization. Counsellors should organize counselling programmes that would promote and facilitate the choice of a right and suitable partner. The counselor should organize seminars that would promote inter-ethnic religious values. Counselling centers should be established in universities and qualified counsellors should be employed.

Conclusion and Recommendations

Based on the findings of this study, the following conclusions were drawn:

- There is significant difference in postgraduate students' perception of factors responsible for late marriage on the basis of religion.
 - There is no significant difference in postgraduate students' perception of factors responsible for late marriage on the basis of family type.
- Government should not make light the issue of religion as it has been found from this study to be a potent factor encouraging late marriage. This can be achieved by appealing the appropriate government organ for religious tolerance and co-habitation. Ethnic/trade-customary barriers to early marriage should be eliminated by educating groups and individuals on the advantages of early marriage.

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