Educational Intervention and Early Marriages Reductions in North 'A' District- Unguja

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Abstract

High prevalence of early marriage is the most common problem worldwide, which also is reported among Zanzibar girls. This problem constitutes a gross violation of human rights, leaving physical, psychological and emotional scars for life. The aim of this study was to assess the educational interventions and early marriage reduction in North "A" District Unguja. The emphasis was to identify the contributions of educational regulations, publicity and new syllabus on reducing early marriage rate. In this study, 90 participants were selected among Teachers and District officers. The study used quantitative approach. Primary data were collected using questionnaires and analysis was done using descriptive analysis and regression. Simple random Sampling was deployed. The study has revealed that, educational interventions are a major strategy in protecting early marriage in North 'A' District. Publicity reduces early marriage in the community through information and knowledge provided by using media like Television, radio and publication and also new syllabus had impact in reducing early marriage when students receive knowledge about cross cutting issues and then this knowledge shared in the society, more over there is a greater contribution of educational regulations in reducing early marriage due to different opportunity obtained in this regulations for the pupils.

Key words: Marriage, Early marriage, Interventions, Educational Interventions.

1. Introduction

National and international communities are increasingly recognizing early marriage (before the age of 18) as a serious problem in developing countries. Globally, 15 million girls are married by age 18 each year, by the year 2030; 9570 million girls will have been married as children (Raj et al., 2010). Tanzania has one of the highest child marriage prevalence rates in the world. Almost two out of five girls in Tanzania are married before their 18th birthday. In 2010, about 37% of the women aged 20-24 were married before the age of 18.In Zanzibar 3.5% of all girls are married before the age of 15 and 18% are married before the age of 18 (UNICEF Report, 2017).Due to inaccurate birth and marriage records; it is difficult to record exact figures of child marriage in Tanzania. Yet child marriage is particularly prevalent in rural areas where children get married as early as 11 years old. New Education Policy (2014) provides education to girls irrespective of circumstances and School re-entry guideline for young mothers (at final stages) among the intervention taken in Tanzania in order to protect early marriage.

A set of strategies focusing on girls' empowerment, community mobilization, enhanced schooling; economic incentives and policy have been introduced related to early marriage prevention (Chae *et.al.,* 2017). The strongest intervention is fostering information, skills, and networks for girls in combination with community mobilization. The majority of programs work directly with girls, offering them opportunities to obtain skills and education (Greene, 2014). Most efforts engage with families and community members and attempt to change underlying social norms that perpetuate the practice of early marriage (Global partnership, 2017).

Targeted interventions are needed to end the practice, not only to deal with economic constraints contributing to early marriage, but also to tackle social norms and cultural traditions that contribute to the persistence of the practice (Walker, 2012). Women who attended secondary school were less likely to be married by the age of 18 than those who did not. In the United Republic of Tanzania, for example, women with secondary education were 92 % likely to be married by the age of 18 than women who had attended primary school only (Government of Republic of Tanzania report, 2018).

Furthermore, Tanzania national activists are working with international organizations in the country and the UN system to combat early marriage. These efforts have been capitalized by various campaigns with different stakeholders championed by the Children's Dignity Forum (National survey 2016). In 2014, the "Child Marriage-Free Zone" National Campaign to End Early Marriage was launched in Mara region, calling for a review of discriminatory laws and action from the health, education and legal sectors to prevent child marriage (Tanzania Economic update report, 2019). Other regions in Tanzania are now launching similar campaigns in collaboration with UNFPA.

Gender and Children desks have been established in 417 district police stations in Tanzania, alongside a Child Helpline piloted in six regions to assist victims of violence, including early marriage. Child friendly courts and child protection committees have also been established at district and ward level (National survey 2016).
The Revolutionary Government of Zanzibar has adopted a national strategy (Millennium Development Goal) against harmful traditional practices and has long stated its commitment to ending early marriage. This effort has been supported by TAMWA, ZAFELA, UNDP, FAWE and other governmental agencies and departments. The focus of these activists is on empowering and protecting women and children; strengthened commitment to address violence against women and children at the local and national level. Furthermore, a national inter-ministerial committee on violence against women and children and national awareness-raising campaign and Committees established at the Sub-national level are among the strategies which were also introduced in Zanzibar.

2.   Statement of the Problem

Regardless of its roots, early marriage constitutes a gross violation of human rights, leaving physical, psychological and emotional scars for life (Walker, 2012). Education is often seen as key to preventing child marriage. In 42 of the countries analyzed, women 20–24 years of age who had attended primary school were less likely to be married by age 18 than those who had not. The preventative effect of education was observed most strongly in Senegal, where 20% of women who had attended primary school had been married by the age of 18, compared to 36% of those who had not attended school. The reverse was true in only seven countries. In the Philippines, for example, 37% of women who had attended primary school were married by 18, compared to 33% women who had not attended school (UNICEF, 2005).

Women who attended secondary school were less likely to be married by the age of 18 than those who did not. In the United Republic of Tanzania, for example, women with secondary education were 92 % less likely to be married by the age of 18 than women who had attended primary school only. For women who received tertiary levels of education, child marriage rates were often negligible. In only four countries (Cameroon, the Central African Republic, Ethiopia and Guinea) more than 20 % of women aged 20–24 who attended higher education were married by age 18. Most notably, in the Central African Republic, 44 % of women who attended post-secondary education were married by age 18. In each of these countries, more than 50 % of women aged 20–24 were married by age 18 (UNICEF, 2005).

 According to Ministry of Labor, Empowerment, Elders, Youth, Women and Children Report, (2017) in Zanzibar about 25% of girls married before the age of 15 are illiterate (unable to read sentence) and 29% of girls married before the age of 18 are illiterate. Data from Zanzibar's Ministry of Education and Vocational Training indicate that, in 2016 about 61 students were married and 74 students got pregnant before finishing their studies. Also, in 2017, a total of 22 students were married and 39 got pregnant before ending their studies.

Early marriage often places girls at risk of a number of adverse health and social consequences. These include the risk of pregnancy and childbirth before full maturation; inadequate schooling; restricted social networks and mobility; and limited control over resources. There are also reported to be significantly high rates of divorce in Zanzibar. A 2013 study reported that, 32% of respondents were divorced. Based on that, reducing early marriage is essential for improving the sexual and reproductive health as well as the social and economic well-being of adolescent girls. Education is often seen as key to preventing early marriage. There is increasing evidence that educational interventions can increase educational attainment for a large majority of adolescent females (Luseno *et al.,* 2017). However, these educational interventions are less researched according to researcher knowledge and few studies have been examined on its impact to the early marriage of communities. In this study, the researcher will address this gap in the literature by assessing educational intervention and early marriages reduction in North 'A' District of Unguja.

3.   Theories literature Review

This study was guided by Information –motivation –behavioral skills (IMB) model, the model that researcher believes is suitable for the study due to the clear explanation regarding on behaviors change. According to Kalichman et.al., (2002), the IMB model explains the behavior development as a function of information, motivation and behavioral skills. Information and motivation work through behavioral skills to influence the behaviors.

Furthermore, information and motivation are independent constructs, such as when persons who are well informed but may not be motivated to practice the behaviors, and when individuals are motivated to practice behaviors but may not be well informed. Information and motivation, however, may relate to the practice of behavioral skills relevant to behavior change. In the IMB model, behavioral skills represent a final common pathway for predicting complex acceptable behaviors. Information and motivation may also have direct effects on behavior when performance does not require complicated or novel behavioral skills.

The IMB was designed to be easily translated into intervention programs and has been used to address

obesity-related behaviors, adherence to complex medication regimens, HIV preventive behaviors, safety gear utilization behaviors, etc. (Fisher, Fisher & Harman, 2003). This study will use this theory, to test how the introduction of educational interventions on early marriage has impact on communities' behavioral change.

4. Empirical Literature Review

According to Micheal inadequate sex education, peer pressure, conformity, influence of mass media, lack of transparence, shame, traditional milestone, unemployment and globalization are the major factors contributed to early marriage as revealed in the study factor contributes to early marriage among teenagers in rural areas and recommended that, government through the Ministry of health and social welfare and the ministry of Community development gender and children affairs may conduct programs in both rural and urban areas concerning early marriage. Micheal,(2014).

Similarly, the study of Chae found that Empowerment was the most successful approach for reducing child marriage. Administering resources directly toward the girls themselves is more effective than approaches directed at families and communities. The study recommends that although progress has been made toward building an evidence base on what works to prevent child marriage, greater effort is needed to systematically ascertain which interventions are successful or unsuccessful in delaying child marriage and for which subgroups of girls these interventions work. Chae,(2017).

The study of Ahamed, conducted on Child marriage found that Empower girls with information, skills and Economic support and incentives to girls and their families, Enhance girls' access to a quality education and Encourage supportive laws and policies are the best strategies to prevent early marriage and recommended that in order for the next generation to make ending child marriage a priority, policymakers must pay attention to these strategies. Ahamed,(2015).

According to USAID report, Enactment, implementation, and enforcement of early marriage laws and policies can discourage child marriage. Because existing laws are often poorly enforced or superseded by customary and religious laws, it becomes particularly important to work with community leaders and members of the law enforcement and the justice sectors. Interventions to promote legal literacy and support paralegal services can be important prevention efforts. Legal and other support services must exist for those who want to escape child marriages and for those who are facing the prospect of early marriage. The report Suggested that Greater awareness of harmful gendered social norms has also come through successful social change communication initiatives at community level. For example, local radio stations broadcast information about the dangers of early marriage and the law. USAID,(2012).

Also, UNICEF in 2005 carried out a study early marriage a harmful traditional practice, found that the more education a girl receives the less likely she is to marry as a child. Study recommended that improving access to education for both girls and boys and eliminating gender gaps in education are important strategies in ending the practice of child marriage. Legislative, programmatic and advocacy efforts to make education free and compulsory, as well as to expand education for all programming beyond the primary level, are indicated by the strong significance of educational attainment in terms of reducing the number of girls who are married. Increasing the level of compulsory education may be one tactic to prolong the period of time when a girl is unavailable for marriage. UNICEF, (2005)

5. Methodology

The study was conducted in Zanzibar at North 'A' District which is located at North Region Unguja. In this study descriptive research design was used and a sample size of 90 calculated at the confidence level of 90%. The population of the study comprised of the 60 teachers and 30 District officers. For data collection, a standard questionnaire was used, which was designed by researcher. Data was analyzed by using descriptive statistics and regression and the data relevant to the study was finally presented in Table form. Reliability of the instruments is established by use of test-retest method.

The researcher chose three teachers to fill the questionnaires, then after one week, she re-administered a similar instrument. In internal consistency reliability estimation, the reliability of the instrument is judged by estimating how well the items that reflect the same construct yield similar results. There is interest in the results consistency for different items related to the same construct within the measure. Cronbach Alpha (ά) is one technique to measure internal consistency reliability. The Cronbach's value of educational regulations 0.767, publicity 0.631 and new syllabus is 0.630.

6. Results and Discussion

6.1 Regression Analysis Results

The study was to assess the educational interventions and early marriages reduction in North "A" District Unguja. Regression technique was used purposely to assess educational interventions and early marriages reduction in North 'A' District – Unguja as seen in Table 1.

The study's results can be summarized in main findings. First, the publicity is the best strategies in reducing early marriages; there was an indication that, Publicity reduces early marriage in the community through information and knowledge provided by using media like Television, radio and publication.

Similarly, there is greater contribution of educational regulations on early marriages reduction, the large number of teachers and district officers agree that, educational regulations is good strategy in reducing early marriages due to different opportunities obtained in these regulations for the pupils.

Also new syllabus had impact in reducing early marriages when students receive knowledge about cross cutting issues and then this knowledge shared in the society. Due to the finding the research revealed that in order to reduce early marriage in the society it is important to provide knowledge about cross cutting issue.

Therefore this study observed that, those educational regulations, publicity and new syllabus are made a unique and statistically significant contribution to the prediction of early marriages. Table 1 is illustrative of this fact.

Therefore study reveals that, publicity made greater contribution on reducing early marriage in North 'A' than educational regulations and new syllabus. This study results show that finding were consistent with the notion of Kalichman et.al., (2002), in the IMB model, Information and motivation work through behavioral skills to influence the behaviors. Furthermore, information and motivation are independent constructs, such as when persons who are well informed but may not be motivated to practice the behaviors, and when individuals are motivated to practice behaviors but may not be well informed. Therefore Information and motivation may also have direct effects on behavior change.

Conclusion

Based on the study conducted and the result from the findings brought, it has been concluded that, educational interventions is major strategy in reducing early marriages in North 'A' District- Unguja.

In most cases, children learn first what they hear or see in their surrounding environments, thus continuing with educational interventions is the best weapon toward fighting this plight that cost most children to be denied of their educational opportunity and end up with a burden of problems including discrimination, stigmatization, and even poverty.

Publicity plays an important role for any serious issue that affects the society and development in general. Media in its great role in informing and educating, the message reach and received faster by the society. In case of early marriage, Government, International Organization and Non-Government Organizations that have been close with society in supporting fighting this plight, their support is much bigger and there are some changes where people can now speak up instead of staying silent comparing to 10 years ago. Early marriages not only affect the family, it also affects the development programs and national goals.

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Table 1: Linear Regression
Coefficients^a

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	T	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
1 (Constant)	2.220	.264		8.210	.000
Educational regulations	-.108	.103	-.112	-1.061	
Publicity	.160	.105	.183	1.520	
New syllabus	.128	.103	.138	1.163	

a. Dependent Variable: Early marriage

In this study, researcher compared the contribution of each independent variable to the dependent variable; therefore the beta values were used to find which beta value is the largest. In this study the largest beta coefficient is .183, which is for publicity. This implied that, this variable makes the strongest unique contribution to explaining the dependent variable (early marriage), when the variance explained by all other variables in the model is controlled for. The Beta value for educational programs is lower (–.112), this indicating that it made less of a unique contribution.

Secondly, if the Sig. value is less than .05, the variable is making a significant unique contribution to the prediction of the dependent variable. If the Sig. is greater than .05, it can conclude that the variable is not making a significant unique contribution to the prediction of dependent variable. This study observed that, those educational regulations, publicity and new syllabus are made a unique and statistically significant contribution to the prediction of early marriage.