

# An Appraisal of Early Marriage on Adolescent Girls' Education

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## Abstract:

The purpose of the study was to examine the early marriage on the adolescent girl's education in Kato a suburb in the Berekum Municipality. The population of the study consists of seventy (70) respondents that comprised of married adolescent girls and their parents in Kato a suburb in the Berekum Municipality to whom the research findings would be generalized. Purposive sample and sampling technique was used to sample respondents for the study. The main instruments used for data collection were questionnaire and an interview guide. The quantitative data entry and analysis was done by using the SPSS software package. The data was edited, coded and analysed into frequencies, percentages with interpretations. The qualitative data was analysed by the use of the interpretative method based on the themes arrived at during the data collection. The study revealed that, adolescent girls get married because of high poverty rate of their parents, peer influence and lack of education. It also concluded that, early marriage prevents adolescent girls from achieving their dreams, poor and distressed socio-economic lives of the married girls are some of the problems associated with early marriage. The study indicated that the use of education campaign should be used to sensitize the public on the need to educate the girl-child; must government open debate among the citizen on the appropriate marriage age for consenting girls, training of more female teachers for our schools. It is recommended that the Government and Municipal assemblies should organize mobilization and sensitizing programs in the entire district particularly in the study area to create awareness in people about the importance of girls' education, highlight the negative effects of early motherhood on the individual and the society as whole. Government in collaboration with the Municipal Assembly should create jobs for the parents in the area in order to reduce poverty. It is also recommended that, Ghana education service (GES) should establish special school for early mothers so that they would be able to acquire a certain level of numeracy and literacy. Scholarship scheme should be provided for the under-privileged girls so that they would be able to receive education to university level. It is duly recommended that non-governmental organizations should try to establish more training centers to equip these girls with skills for a better future.

## Keywords:

Early, Marriage, Effects Adolescent, Education

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## 1. Introduction

Marriage is a legally recognized union between a man and woman in which they are united sexually, cooperate economically, and may have children through birth or adoption (Strong, [1]). According to these people, marriage supposed to be conducted among two people with opposite sex. They are also expected to unit sexually and cooperate economically. They also believed that, a married couple may have children whether through birth or adoption. According to their definition of marriage, two people with the same sex with legally recognized union cannot be considered to be a marriage. They only limited marriage to people with different sex which have legally united as husband and wife. Early marriage is either one or both of the married couples being under the age of 18 years old or in high school [1]. According to them, when you marry under the age of eighteen, it is considered to be early marriage. When you also marry while you are in high school, it is also considered to be an early marriage. Looking at this explanation, when you are even more than eighteen years and you marry while you are still in high school, they considered it as early marriage.

Marriage is a relationship in which two or more people maintain ongoing expensive love including sexual and instrumental relationships and economic exchange. They believed that, marriage did not involve only two people but can be conducted among more than two people. This means that, partners should help each other economically in their relationship [2]. Researchers believe that marriage refers to distinction of sexual relations declared that it is unlike that the original draftsman of the marriage status had anything other than his mind. Webster went on to say that, “the institution of marriage as a union of man and woman, uniquely involving the procreation and rearing of children within a family is old as the book of Genesis”. They believed that, marriage is conducted between two people with different sexes. They also believed that, giving birth and nurturing them is a duty for a married couple since many years ago which cannot be isolated from good married couples [2]. When a man and a woman marry, they become husband and wife. Marriage also has got some responsibilities which include earning living, budgeting money, paying bills, preparing meals and taking care of the home. In another sense, marriage is holy in the Roman Catholic and Eastern Orthodox churches. This also shows that, marriage take place within two people with opposite sexes and they only join together as husband and wife in legal means [2].

It can be observed that at all their understanding of marriage, they all believed that marriage take place within the two people. Many of the definition also agree that, marriage can be considered to be a marriage when it is legally conducted in the society. Therefore, marriage is the coming together of two people with opposite sexes as husband and wife after it has being legally conducted in the society. Marriage is a union between a man and a woman who have agreed to live together as husband and wife after the performance of customary rite. Thus, marriage can be said to be the union through which different families come together to foster companionship and ensure continuity of the families. It is considered as a very important institution in all societies in Ghana. In Africa, the major factor which strongly motivates men and women to marry is procreation [3]. This is necessary to ensure the society’s survival.

It is through marriage that the society grows in numbers. When people die without having children, human existence on the earth may gradually come to an end. Marriage and childbearing are, therefore considered divine instructions since both the holy Bible and Quran instruct mankind to be fruitful and multiply in order to fill the earth. Marriage empowers a man and a woman to have sexual access to each other. In other words, marriage is the proper way through which a husband and a wife meet each other's sexual needs. Once people are married, they can satisfy their sexual desires without being accused of fornication by the society [3].

### ***1.1. Causes of Early Marriage on Adolescent Girls***

According to Ghana Statistical Service, on the report of Nanumba District Assembly employment rate, out of 12000 populations in Bimbila, 58 percent are engaged in farming venture which is mostly subsistent farming or peasant farming [4]. They are mostly engaged in farming in order to feed their families per say but not acquire income [5]. For this reason, majority of the people are poor and as such do not able to support their female children. And there is no other economic activity at the place for which one can engages his or herself rather than farming to acquire wealth to support their girl- child in term of education. Because of that, they always see their girl- child as burden to them. To release their tension, they always give their girl-child hands in marriage so that the man will support her financially in all her life time. They believe that, giving their female adolescents hands in marriage will reduce their burden and increases their standard of living. Individuals may be influence by the socially prescribed norms for such transition such as marriage and child bearing. Hispanics and Southern Asian place a high value on marriage and family [6]. A study focused on twenty-two groups of young women age under eighteen of low socioeconomic status and low educational achievement, mostly of whom come from families whose origin was in the middle Eastern Islamic countries found that they cast themselves in the roles of mothers. Those fifty percent described themselves, even within such short period, as being in the process of creating family [7].

In Burkina Faso, multiple socio- cultural and religious factors contribute to the persistence of the practice of early marriage but there are the differences in the role of various factors depending on the area or ethnic community considered [5]. In some areas, the root causes of child marriage include gender roles and social expectations, prevailing conceptions about the Islamic law and fear of pregnancy before marriage. In other areas, the cost of schooling plays a larger role. Based on data from 60 low and middle-income countries suggest that, about 45 percent of girls in those countries still marry today before the age of eighteen, and often several years earlier in Sub-Saharan Africa, 45.4 percent of girls born between 1984 and 1989 married early [8]. In conclusion, it can be seen that the causes of early marriage are mostly societal, economical, religiously, educational and self-driven. These include lack of education, poverty, broken homes, and peer pressure.

### ***1.2. Effects of Early Marriage on Adolescent Girls***

When the "normal" life cycle (finishing high school, get a job, go to college, find a partner, get married, then have children) for adolescents gets disrupted, other parts of the cycle such as education may be postponed or neglected [6]. Levels of education seems to affect both marital and adjustment and divorce. Education provides us additional resources such as income, insight, or status that contribute to our ability to carry out marital roles. It is important to consider the effects of early marriage on

educational attainment because education is a predictor of income and occupation. For both black and white women, age at first marriage increases with higher levels of educational attainment [2]. For a woman, it appears that leaving the home for marriage as opposed to independent living, is a stronger bar to completing college than to entering college or graduating from high school [9]. Many researchers concluded that, the earlier the marriage and the earlier the women bear children, the lower her formal educational achievement. Researchers found out that, becoming a wife or mother increases early departure from secondary school. They also concluded that, this effect is constant for individual women across race, and over time [10]. A study on educational attainment of a women age thirty in Canada, found that of women who gave birth before they were twenty - five years of age. Less than ten percent of them went to university, and less than five percent received a degree; seventy percent of all the women who married prior to age twenty completed only elementary or high school. Fifty percent did not receive a secondary school diploma. If they had a child as an adolescent, only seventy- seven had completed high school and only four percent had been enrolled a university [7].

Early marriage creates a number of conditions that expose married girl to poverty and violence.

Men's control over the key resources, social isolation, and the low socio-economic status and dependency of women predispose married girls to violence and poverty [11]. Some examples of gender violence that can be exacerbated by early marriage include domestic violence, rape, and emotional abuse. Many girls who are forced to marry early suffer from prolonged domestic violence. Furthermore, early marriage is often linked to wife abandonment. This plunges young girls into extreme poverty and increases the risk of their entering the commercial sex trade, either by force or because of other options. Early marriage leads to early child bearing, with significantly higher maternal mortality and morbidity rate as well as high infant mortality rate [12]. This means that, young mothers can easily loss their lives when they are giving birth. This is because they are not mature enough to give birth. They cannot also take good care of their babies which can increases infant mortality rate.

Child marriage has negative effects on girls' education. Girls with low level of schooling are more likely to marry early, and child marriage virtually puts an end to a girls' education [11]. A child bride's lack of education and peers limits her support systems and without skills, mobility and connections, she is constrained in her ability to overcome poverty and for herself, her children or her family. Young girls married to old men with more sexual experience are also at great risk of HIV infection [9]. Marriage can increase married girls' exposure to the virus, especially as older husband may engage in unprotected sexual relations with other partners [11]. In conclusion, it can be substantiated that with the numerous negative impacts of early marriage on the adolescent girl such as inability to further their education and poverty to adolescent girls, early marriage goes a long way to have great negative impact on married adolescent children, their families, their societies and the nation at large.

### ***1.3. Attempts Made to Address Early Marriage among Adolescent Girls***

In 2003, the World Health Organization (WHO) commissioned (ICRW) to undertake a systematic review that would use the established WHO methodology to identify, review and appraise research evident relevant to the prevention of child [11]. In collaboration with WHO, ICRW conducted an extensive search of international,

regional and WHO databases to identify programs interventions and policy strategies that had documented measurement of change in the child marriage - related behaviours and/or attitudes. They identified additional programmes by conducting a general online search, examining websites of organization known as for their involvement with child marriage prevention and emailing relevant staff, and reviewing a wide range of program scans and other documents in the published and grey literature. In total, they identified more than 150 potentially relevant efforts to prevent child marriage. However, only 23 of these documented an attempt to measure change in child marriage - related behaviours, knowledge, and attitudes among relevant stakeholders. These programs were implemented between 1973 and 2009, with several of programs continuing through the present, and evaluations were published between 1991 and 2010 [11].

Efforts to address child marriage in many parts of the world date back to the 1920s. For example, the first legislative attempt end child marriage in India was through the passing of the “Sarda Act” in 1929 [13]. More recently, legal reform such as Bangladesh, India, and Indonesia established or raised the legal minimum age of marriage to eighteen for girls. During the same period, human rights activist and United Nations lunched efforts address harmful traditional practice affecting women. However, programmatic interventions to eradicate this practice have only gained momentum since the 1990s, coinciding with the attention to adolescent reproductive health at the Cairo International Conference on Population and Development in 1994 and the assertion of the women’s and girls’ human rights at the UN International Conference on Women in Beijing in 1995 [14]. In conclusion, it can be expatiated from above that early marriage is a global canker and as a result of that the Government, NGOs, and other international bodies such as the World Health Organization has made numerous strategic attempts to curb this barbaric act.

#### ***1.4. Policies on Early Marriage Adolescent Girls***

Several organizations have examined the causes and consequences of child marriage in some details, and many have highlighted promising programmatic approaches to prevent child marriage [13]. However, comprehensive reviews to take stock of existing programs have been more limited. The International Center for Research on Women (ICRW) undertook one such effort in 2007, and identified 66 child marriages - related programmes in 30 countries. International Center for Research on Women conducted a follow- up review that focused solely on India and identified 58 programs and policy efforts targeting child marriage in the country.

These reviews have uncovered important insights on the scope and range of interventions to address this problem. Many programmes recognize the multitude of factors driving the persistence of child marriage. This intervention has tried comprehensively or integrated approaches that engage communities, families and policymakers, while attempting to impart to girls’ skills, opportunities, and empowerment. However, prevention efforts were not always focused in the countries with the highest rates of child marriage. And many efforts lacked scale and were not integrated into large government initiatives or private sector drivers of economic and social change to be sustainable in the long run.

Early marriage of late has proven to be a threat to female adolescents. Early marriage, otherwise known as child marriage is the marriage of young person (typically a girl) before the onset of adulthood. Children marriage clearly contributes

to poverty among the couples and yet the practice remains highly prevalent despite efforts by many developing country governments to discourage and even outlaw the practice, among others through reforms of family law. However, the incidence of child marriage is dropping, but only very slowly [10]. In many countries, laws have been adopted to prevent marriage below 18 years of age, but they are often not well enforced and more needs to be done.

Education is an important input as far as development is concern. It is the bedrock of every nation (whether developed or developing). It holds a key to the advancement of any society. Therefore, it will be very necessary for every society to promote education in their area. At times, society with few educated people finds it difficult to develop as compare to society with more educated people. This undoubtedly makes education the right of every human being under the United Nation Convention on the right of the child. The right to education is also guaranteed by the 1992 constitution of Ghana chapter 5 article 21 (1). This means that, every child in this country has the right to have access to education. They are free to attend school from basic to tertiary without any influence.

The issue of early marriage is becoming the order of the day in Kato a suburb in the Berekum Municipality which is located in the Bono Region. Obviously, the issue of early marriage in Kato seems to hinder social, emotional and economic development of the adolescent girls in the area. Young girls who are attending school often stop schooling and go into marriage contractions at the tender ages and this often pose a threat to the educational, emotional and economic development of the girl- child in Kato a suburb in Berekum Municipality. When marriages are contracted at early stage in the lives of young women, especially during period when they should be in school, it becomes a serious problem as it makes the society's future bleak.

Of late, there has been a public outcry about the problem of early marriage of the girl- child vis-a-vi the educational, emotional and economic development in Kato a suburb in the Berekum Municipality and this drew the attention of many teachers, officers, chiefs, opinion leaders and philanthropies as well as N.G.Os. However, the situation is still assuming an alarming rate and must be looked at to find solution to address it.

Marriage is a very important institution which all societies in Ghana cherish most but a situation where youth especially, girl- child gets into it, it can bring negative effect to the married girl and the society as large. However, Kato a suburb in the Berekum Municipality is having a large girls' populace about fifteen (15) to sixteen (16) years who are married. This problem of early marriage seems to have negative effects on adolescent girls in Kato a suburb in the Berekum Municipality. Females are those who bear children and care for them but if they are ill - prepared socially, emotionally, psychologically and economically, then it means that they will not be able to perform their duties as a wife in the house. Majority of them are not gainfully employed in government or private sector. This is because there appear to be no standard set by both the young and the old females of this suburb about the need for higher education which will be requirement for employment. Because they are not gainfully employed before giving birth, it brings frustration into their children marriage life.

The young mothers do not bring up their children well by giving them good food, clothing, better shelter and also their children lack parental love that every child is

supposed to have to make life enjoyable and this problem goes further to affect the child's education and social life as well. It then becomes a vicious circle. This is therefore prompted the researchers to investigate the causes of early adolescent marriage in Kato a suburb in the Berekum municipality. The purpose of the study was to critically examine the causes, consequences and ways addressing early marriage on the adolescent girls in Kato a suburb in the Berekum. The study was guided by these research questions – (1) What are the causes of early marriage among female adolescents in Kato a suburb in the Berekum Municipality? (2) How does early marriage affect adolescent girls in Kato a suburb in the Berekum Municipality? (3) What attempts have been made to address the problem of early marriage among adolescent girls in Kato a suburb in the Berekum Municipality?

## 2. Materials and Methods

With a mixed method approach, the study adopted a case study research design. A case study is an empirical enquiry that allows researcher to investigate and understand the dynamics of a researcher for multiple techniques to be used in seeking the opinion, experience and expectations of the respondents on the problem under study. In the case study, the data collected cannot necessarily be generalized to the wider population but the researcher can get detailed data concerning the study. This is because, the researcher considered only adolescent married girls and their parents in Kato a suburb in the Berekum Municipality when he was gathering the necessary data for his research work. The population of the study consists of seventy (70) respondents that comprised of married adolescent girls and their parents in Kato a suburb in the Berekum Municipality to whom the research findings would be generalized. Purposive sample and sampling technique was used to sample the seventy (70) respondents, comprising forty (40) adolescent girls and thirty (30) parents for the study.

The main instruments used for data collection were questionnaire and an interview guide. The researchers used this tool because of its objectivity since the questions are presented on paper and there is no opportunity for interviewer's bias (Saunders et al., 2007). The questionnaire was constructed for married adolescent girls and their parent's base on the effects of early marriage on adolescent girls in Kato a suburb in the Berekum Municipality. The type of questionnaire that was employed was an open ended and close ended.

The researchers with the help of an interview guide interviewed married adolescent girls and their parents. An interview guide is a list of topics, themes, or areas to be covered in the interview. The researchers used interview in his research because it gives the depth of detail from the interviewer. The survey interview which is more anonymous and limits respondents to a range of predetermined answer choices was employed.

Data was collected base on interview and questionnaire. The 5-item questionnaire and 8-item interview guide and were based on the research objectives. The interview guide was structured and used by the researchers to collect information from the respondents by recoding their responses on a mobile which was later transcribed. The questionnaire was used to collect information from the respondent on the cause of early adolescent marriage in Kato a suburb in the Berekum Municipality. The researcher designed open and close ended questionnaires based on the research objectives which were presented in tables, frequencies and percentages.

Construct Validity was used to ensure that the measure was essentially measuring what it was intended to measure, and no other variable. To ensure validity of the research instrument the researchers made sure to ask correct questions pertaining to the study. To ensure reliability of the research instrument the researchers made sure to ask the right question on the topic under study. The quantitative data entry and analysis was done by using the SPSS software package. The data was edited, coded and analysed into frequencies, percentages with interpretations. The qualitative data was analysed by the use of the interpretative method based on the themes arrived at during the data collection. The themes were related to the research questions and interpreted on the number of issues raised by respondents. These were based on questions on the semi-structured interviews.

### 3. Results and Discussions

The researchers adopted both qualitative and quantitative methods of data analysis in the interpretation of the data collected. Interview data obtained were analyzed under themes whereas questionnaire data were also analyzed using descriptive statistics such as frequency tables and percentages. The findings (data) collected from the interview have been thematically presented and the questionnaire data were also analyzed using descriptive statistics such as frequency tables.

#### 3.1. Causes of Early Adolescent Marriage

This section present results and discussion on Causes of early marriage in Kato a suburb in the Berekum Municipality.

**Table 1.** Marriage adolescents views on the cause of early marriage among girls in Kato a suburb in the Berekum Municipality.

Statements	SD N(%)	D N(%)	SA N(%)	A N (%)
Early marriage is the major cause of early marriage	10 (14.29)	15(21.43)	20(28.57)	25(35.71)
Poverty is a contributing factor to early marriage	12(17.14)	19(27.14)	23(32.86)	16(22.86)
Lack of education is the reason for high rate of early marriage	11(15.71)	15(21.43)	30(42.86)	4(7.71)
Religious factors push adolescent girls into early marriage	12(17.14)	16(22.86)	22(31.43)	20(28.57)
Broken home influence adolescent girls into early marriage	10(14.29)	15(21.43)	4(7.71)	41(58.57)

From Table 1, it seen that 10(14.29%) of the respondents strongly disagree while r' 21.43%) of the respondents disagree that early marriage is the major cause of early marriage and 20 (28.57%) of the respondents strongly agree while 25(35.71%) of the respondents agree 'O agree that early marriage is the major cause of adolescent early marriage. It is seen that minority of the respondents agreed to the statement, which side with earlier study that from 60 low and middle-income countries suggest that, about 45 percent of girls in those countries still marry today before the age of eighteen, and often several years earlier in Sub- Saharan Africa, 45.4 percent of girls born between 1984 and 1989 married early [8]. It was also realized that from the table that 12(17.14%) of the respondents strongly disagree while 19(27.14%) of the respondents disagree the statement that poverty is a contributing factor to early marriage and 23(32.86%) of the students strongly agree while 16(22.86%) of the respondents agree

to the statement, it was realized that majority of the respondents agreed that poverty is the major contributing factor to the adolescent marriages in the community.

Also it was seen from the table that 11(15.71%) of the respondents strongly disagree while 15(21.43%) of the respondents disagree to the statement that lack of education is the reason for high rate of early marriage and 30(42.86%) of the respondents strongly agree to the statement while 4(7.71%) of the respondents also agree to the statement, in conclusion, it was realized that most of the respondents agree that because the individuals in Kato a suburb in the Berekum municipal lack education and therefore has led to the high rate of early marriage in the community.

Additionally, it was realized that 12(17.14%) of the respondents strongly disagree while 6 (22.86%) of the respondents disagree to the statement that religious factors push adolescent girls into early marriage and 22(31.43%) of the respondents strongly agree to the and 20(28.57%) of the respondents agree to the statement. Inclusion it was seen that majority of the respondents agreed that religious factors push adolescent women to early marriage and they see it to be one of the contributing factor to early marriage.

Lastly, it was seen from the table that 10(14.29%) of respondents strongly disagree while 15(21.43%) of the respondents disagree to the statement that broken home influence adolescent girls into early marriage and 4(7.71%) of the respondents strongly agree while 41(58.57%) of the respondents agree also agree to the statement. In conclusion, it was seen that most of the respondents agreed that broken homes is one of the factors that contributes to early marriage in the community.

The finding on this theme was guided by the interview guide question; what are the causes of early marriage in Kato a suburb in the Berekum Municipality. Purposive selected married adolescent girls and their parent gave several responses. High rate of poverty on the parents. One of the married girls said that:

*“my parents were unemployed. This is because my parents did not have any good educational certificate and skills that can help them acquire a good job. Because of that, they find it difficult to generate enough money to support me in school. The only work that they do is the subsistence farming and petty trading so that they can get some money to feed us. Since my parents don't have money to send me to school and I also do not have the strength to do any work that will help me get money, my parents always see me as economic liabilities and giving my hands in marriage was the only option that can help my parents to eliminate such liabilities from them”*

This means that, it is poverty that compelled her parents to give her hands in marriage but not their own will. This confirmed the report the report of Nanumba District Assembly concerning early marriage which says that most of the parents give their adolescent girls hands in marriage because of financial problem.

One of the parents also said that,

*“paying my daughter school fees was a problem because I have no work to do. So giving my daughter hands in marriage can help me get support from my daughter's husband and her in-laws. I also thought that, when I give my daughter hands in marriage, she can ask for assist from her in-law”*

*However, most of the adolescent girls normally engage themselves in the practice of early marriage due to high rate of poverty on their parents. The study also identified peer influence as another major factor that contributes to early marriage.*

One of the married girls said that,

*“Got married through my friend. I went to a friend for support and my friend introduced me to some boy. First time, I went out with anger but later my friend convinced me that, when I accept the boys’ proposal, he will give me money and other things that I may need and I later accepted it. Which later ended me having my first child”*

This implies that engage in the practice of early marriage through peer influence. The research findings also revealed that, most of the adolescent girls got married because of lack of Education. One married adolescent girl said that,

*“Because I did not go to school or have any educational background, I see marriage as the only way to bring prestige to myself and my family and because of this I got married at a tender age. She said because of the free time she had, she also wanted to perform parental roles that is why she got married early. When I see a woman carrying her baby on her back, I feel so excited that is also another reason why I got married”.*

The participants identified poverty, peer pressure and lack of education as the major cause of early marriage in Kato a suburb in the Berekum Municipality. This confirm the literature that majority of people are poor and are not able to support their female children because there are no other economic activity at the place for which one can engage his or herself rather than farming to acquire wealth to support their girl- child in term of education [5]. Also, participants stated lack of education resulting from high cost of schooling as a drive to early marriage among adolescent girl in Kato a suburb in the Berekum Municipality and this authenticate the statement “Girls with low level of schooling are more likely to marry early, and child marriage virtually puts an end to a girls’ education” [11]. Peer pressure that is influence from peers also contributed to early marriage of adolescent girls in Kato a suburb in the Berekum Municipality

### ***3.2. Effects of early marriage in Kato a suburb in the Berekum Municipality***

This sub-section present results and discussion on married adolescent Girls views on the effects of early marriage. The findings revealed that, there are certain effects that adolescent girls normally face when they engage in the practice of early marriages. These findings were arrived from married adolescent girls with the help of the interview guide question: Does early marriage have negative effect on you?

The following are the effects of early marriage that the research findings revealed.

Discontinuation of the adolescent girl education. It has come out from the study that, an appreciable number of girls who have been removed from school for marriage have not been able to continue their education.

One married girl said that,

*“My husband was always reluctant to let me continue my education. My husband always complains on the limited resources. My husband told me*

*that we are saving for our children education and not my education. My husband also told me that, further education will spoil me that is why he is resisting me from continuing my education”*

This position strives on the baseless traditional believe that, highly educated women do not respect their husbands. According to this respondent, she was ready to continue her education but her husband did not allow her to further her education.

Another the married girl also said that,

*“My own attitude contributed to my discontinuation of my education. This is because, soon after the marriage I saw myself as a full-grown adult and so I became very reluctant to go back to school. I also released that, combining adult roles with student life and its associated responsibilities will be very difficult for me that is why I did not bother to continue my education after I got married. I was feeling shy to sit again with my own colleagues in the same classroom after I got married”*

A previous suggested that, for women, it appears that leaving the home for marriage as opposed to independent living is a stronger bar to completing college than to entering college or graduating from high school [9].

Another effect of the issue of early marriage on the advancement of the young girls is that, their aspiration, dreams and all the good things that they thought proper education could bring to them will all be difficult to realize. One of the married girls said that,

*“It was my dream to become a doctor but because of early marriage, I couldn’t achieve my aspiration. I was ever ready to further my education after I had my first child but my husband did not allow me. My husband told me that when I try to further my education, he will divorce me and go for another woman. And this scared me from continue my education”.*

This effect substantiates a previous study’s statement that “when the “normal” life cycle (finishing high school, get a job, go to college, find a partner, get married, then have children) for adolescents gets disrupted, other parts of the cycle such as education may be postponed or neglected” [6]. Levels of education seems to affect both marital and adjustment and divorce. Education provides us additional resources such as income, insight, or status that contribute to our ability to carry out marital roles. If the girl aspired to be scientist at the junior high school, now to combine with child bearing and the numerous house chores with the study of science at the junior and senior high school will be difficult task and most of them give up in the situation like this.

Poor and distressed socio-economic lives. It has also come out from the study that, poverty and distressful situation characterize the lives of these out of school girls who are in marriage. They are mostly poor because they have not been able to complete school to be able to secure good and well-paid jobs. They are not also able to learn trades that will provide them with employment to make a living.

One of married girls said that,

*“At times I find it difficult to buy dresses for myself and my child because I have no work to do that can help me get money. My husband told me that he can only provide the food that we will eat. So, at time I go to my*

*parents for money before I can buy dresses for myself Because of that I always feel bad for entered into marriage early.*

It can be said without any doubt that, good and quality education enhance the economic life of a person. Sadly, these poor and defenseless girls are always deprived of the benefits of education because of early marriages. Socially, the desire of these girls from the beginning to become leaders and people of high social standing is dashed. Their social life is seriously affected. Some of them have their marriages leading on rocks and due to inexperience or their inability to cope with matrimonial life. Such people are pushed into society virtually to perpetuate vices such as prostitution. It was established that, most of the marriages that were broken in Kato involves these young girls who went into at a time when they should have been in school. Acting on the past experiences, they become reluctant to re-marry and so begin to walk on the streets of city or gather under trees and shades practicing all manner of evil deeds including prostitution.

### **3.3. Addressing the Problems of Early Marriage Among Adolescent Girls**

From the discussion of the various subjects, it can be stated that the effects of early marriages on the advancement of young girls is far reaching. The girls are hard hit and clearly have its ramifications for society itself. The reason is that, the basic unit of every society is the family and the family is made up of human beings including women or girls. So the quality of human beings at the family level will greatly influence the events in the society illiterates. Because of that, they hardly know the important of female education. They are also not aware of the problems associated with early marriages. So educating our parents will help them to know the important of female education and the effects associated with early marriage. Which can help reduce the practice of early marriage” This means that when intensive public education is made, it can help reduce the practice of early marriage in the Berekum Municipality. This is because it will help the parents to know the important of girls’ education and problems associated with early marriages. Providing loans to the parents for business will also help them to take proper care for us. According to one of the married girls,

*“our parents are unemployed. Because of that, they find it difficult to take their girl-child to school. They even don’t have startup capital to start their own business. So I believed that, giving them chance to receive loan can help them start their own business. When they get money to start their business, they can save some of their profit for their girl- child education. They can also get some to feed their families”.*

They believe that having access to loans can help reduce the practice of early marriage in Kato a suburb in the Berekum Municipality since they can get money to take their girl-child to school without asking any assistance from other people.

## **4. Conclusions and Recommendations**

The study revealed that, adolescent girls get married because of high poverty rate of their parents, peer influence and lack of education. This implies that, early marriage stops married girls from continue their education after getting married. It also concluded that, early marriage prevents adolescent girls from achieving their dreams, poor and distressed socio-economic lives of the married girls are some of the problems associated with early marriage. The study indicated some of the attempts

made to address the issue of early marriage. Some of the attempts includes; the use of education campaign to sensitize the public on the need to educate the girl-child, government open debate among the citizen on the appropriate marriage age for consenting girls, training of more female teachers for our schools and some of the civil society organizations or nongovernmental organizations have over the years provided enormous support to a greater number of girls in schools with the views of keeping them in school. The study also revealed that creation of job opportunities to the parents, providing them with loans and public education about the important of female education and problems associated with early marriage can reduce the practice of early marriage.

It is recommended that the Government and Municipal assemblies should organize mobilization and sensitizing programs in the entire district particularly in the study area to create awareness in people about the importance of girls' education, highlight the negative effects of early motherhood on the individual and the society as whole. Government in collaboration with the Municipal Assembly should create jobs for the parents in the area in order to reduce poverty. It is also recommended that, Ghana education service (GES) should establish special school for early mothers so that they would be able to acquire a certain level of numeracy and literacy. Scholarship scheme should be provided for the under-privileged girls so that they would be able to receive education to university level. It is duly recommended that

Non -governmental organizations should try to establish more training centers to equip these girls with skills for a better future. The organized and established women's groups such as Forum of Africa Women Educationist (FAWE) and Ghana Association of University Women (GAUW) should organize periodic seminars and workshop for the youth particularly those in the rural areas on the importance of female education towards a better quality of life. It is also recommended that premature marriage girls who are willing to continue their education should be given a chance to be reabsorbed into the educational system and support morally and financially to stay and learn. Counseling services in the schools should be strengthened so as to help change the attitudes of school children turning their colleagues who are teenage mothers to playing toys.

## **Conflicts of Interest**

The author declares that there is no conflict of interest regarding the publication of this article.

## **Author Contributions**

Conceptualization: DK, SAN, DK, AK, CFA and BKA.; Methodology: DK, SAN, DK, AK, CFA and BKA.; Software: DK, SAN, DK, AK, CFA and BKA.; Validation: DK, SAN, DK, AK, CFA and BKA.; Formal analysis: DK, SAN, DK, AK, CFA and BKA.; Investigation: DK, SAN, DK, AK, CFA and BKA.; Resources: DK, SAN, DK, AK, CFA and BKA.; Data Curation: DK, SAN, DK, AK, CFA and BKA.; Writing – original draft preparation: DK, SAN, DK, AK, CFA and BKA.; Writing: DK, SAN, DK, AK, CFA and BKA.; Visualization: DK, SAN, DK, AK, CFA and BKA.; Supervision: DK, SAN, DK, AK, CFA and BKA.; Project administration: DK, SAN, DK, AK, CFA and BKA.; Funding acquisition: DK, SAN, DK, AK, CFA and BKA.

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