

## **Chapter One**

### **Introduction**

#### **1.1 Background to the Study**

Early marriage, sometimes known as child marriage on occasion, is a well-known public social and cultural issue that concerns young children, particularly girls under the age of nine (9) years old<sup>1</sup>. Ironically, a few of these young girls actually mature into teenagers while living with their spouses. Occasionally, young girls are forced into marriage with men who are old enough to be their grandfathers, with the instruction to stay faithful and be excellent wives<sup>2</sup>. When a young girl refuses a man's advances, there is a subsequent incident of gender-related violence; she is violently raped and becomes pregnant at a very young age. The majority of the impacted girls experience truly disruptive labour, develop fistulas, and are abandoned by their parents and spouse<sup>3</sup>.

In many of these young marriages, the girls were given to the men for free in order to assist the household financially or to form alliances that would benefit the company or the political party. Premature marriage is a common practice in Nigeria, especially in Borno State and other northern regions where rebels are murdering and kidnapping citizens<sup>3</sup>. Here, it is incorrectly believed that a girl who marries young loses the opportunity to engage in promiscuity<sup>4</sup>. Additionally, it is believed in many parts of northern Nigeria that a man may marry a kid as young as nine years old, provided that they refrain from having any sexual relations with her until after she reaches puberty<sup>5</sup>. Unfortunately, however, almost in every instance, the child brides are forced to engage in sexual relations with their spouses as soon as they tie the knot, which results in an extremely early pregnancy and vesico vaginal fistula (VVF) obstetric fistula after the girls give birth at a very young age<sup>1</sup>. This traditional practice is a kind of cruelty against

impoverished female children and is widespread throughout many African countries<sup>4</sup>. There were two reasons given for the acceptance of juvenile marriage: the existence of customs and what relatives perceived to be sacred justifications based on the importance placed on virginity at the time of marriage; it was believed that teen marriage would exclude opportunities for sexual interaction that might tarnish the family's reputation. It has been suggested that poverty is another factor in this marriage custom<sup>5</sup>. Depending on one's position on this split, this can also attract suitors who are willing to pay a higher bride price. On the other hand, an underdeveloped bride may entice a lower dowry.

It is clear that young marriages harm girls since they rob them of their innocence and prematurely transform them into "adults." Their young ages when they are married make it impossible for them to negotiate safe sex, leaving them open to illnesses and domestic abuse<sup>1</sup>. The unfortunate part about this scenario is that it goes against Nigeria's legal commitment under international law to ensure that girls have access to education and are not subjected to discrimination in the classroom. Some tribes and communities in Nigeria accept and practice early marriage, just as they do everywhere else, and the related ills are the same everywhere<sup>4</sup>. The earlier definition of the prevalence of early marriages is widely shared among Nigerian Muslim communities. The unfortunate thing about early marriage is that because it is so deeply ingrained in the religious and cultural fabric of the societies in which it occurs, child marriage is highly supported by the community as a whole<sup>5</sup>. In fact, it is so acceptable that community members would rather keep the practice hidden from offenders than call attention to it<sup>6</sup>. Islamic law seems to encourage men's superiority over women in the legal system and to accept child marriage at a young age.

The sad story of Hauwa Abubakar, a nine-year-old girl who was married off to Mallam Shehu Garuba Kiruwa, a forty-year-old cattle dealer, serves as a good example in this regard<sup>4</sup>. At the tender age of nine, Hauwa's father fervently delivered her to Shehu as a wife in order to repay his obligation to the expected husband. She attempted to flee the husband's home twice, but was unsuccessful since her father always brought her back. On the third attempt, her parents brought her back, and in order to prevent her from escaping again, the husband restrained her and severed her legs with a poisoned knife. The former Bauchi State Government swiftly approved a decree allowing the government to prosecute any parent who removes a child from school with the intention of marrying her in retaliation for this callous behaviour<sup>6</sup>.

Previous accounts referenced the example of Senator Yerima, the ex-governor of Nigeria's Zamfara State, and the 13-year-old Egyptian girl he married<sup>7</sup>. Furthermore, numerous other national and international non-governmental organisations have brought attention to Senator Yerima's issue<sup>8</sup>. They saw the senator's actions as blatant violations of Egypt's and Nigeria's Child Rights Acts.12, 13, 14, and 15. In Egypt, a female cannot marry at any age younger than sixteen. Additionally, a girl cannot enter into a marriage with a man who is twenty-five years older than she is. Similar to this, the Nigerian minor Rights Act sets the minimum age of marriage at 18 and stipulates that anyone under the age of 18 who marries a minor faces up to five years in prison and a fine of N500, 000. Following protests by organizations advocating for women's and children's rights, civil society organizations, and human rights, the National Agency for Prohibition of Traffic in Persons (NAPTIP) invited Yerima to be questioned. After being questioned, he released a statement in which he said that since he is a Nigerian and his religion does not specify a marriageable age, he has committed no crimes and has the freedom to practice his faith.

However, it seems unbelievable that any girl would ever envision herself as a minor on that day in any dream. However, most girls in most of Borno State, Nigeria, really do face that<sup>9</sup>. The English court in *Alhaji Mohammed v. Knott* (1966) highlighted the risk involved in these young marriages when a 26-year-old Muslim man from Nigeria entered into a polygamous marriage with a 13-year-old girl and brought her to England. The girl was subsequently ordered to be placed under the care of a local authority for protection after it was protested before the juvenile court that she needed care, protection, control, and was exposed to moral danger. The judges concluded that any decent-minded man or woman would find the marriage intolerable.

Furthermore, compared to single girls, a smaller percentage of married female children attend school, making the majority of them out of school, which is another reason why early marriages are worse. Therefore, the majority of victims—especially those in Northern Nigeria—cannot read or write at all.

These girls are denied the acknowledged advantages of education, which include self-reliance, improved health, self-confidence, decreased potency, better judgement, and higher economic efficiency. Therefore, early marriage still has a lot of negative effects across most of Nigeria, especially in Borno and other northern regions where it is accepted and performed in the name of custom, religion, and way of life. Girls in isolated places are most severely impacted because poverty forces them into early marriage, rendering them more defenseless. Put another way, Borno State in northern Nigeria has some of the highest rates of early marriages in the world, despite the fact that early marriage is common throughout all of Nigeria. Despite the fact that polygamy, one of the causes of early marriage in Nigeria, is becoming less common, 27% of victims between the ages of 15 and 19 are in polygamous marriages<sup>10</sup>.

Girls in northern Nigeria are forced into marriage at a young age, and many of them stopped attending school as soon as they reached puberty. In order to marry, many parents in rural areas pull their 12-year-old daughters out of school. These girls are subjected to sexual and domestic abuse, as well as other forms of gender-based violence<sup>11</sup>. It should be noted that Nigeria is a signatory to several international agreements and resolutions that explicitly prohibit child marriage and require member nations to take appropriate steps to end the custom that encourage young marriages before a female becomes 18 on the grounds that children lack the complete maturity awareness and capacity for action. The UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (1989), the Minimum Age for Marriage (1962), the International Covenant on Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights (ICESCR 1966), the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR 1966), and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948) all provide evidence in favour of the following that marriage should be entered only with the free and full consent of the intending spouses. It follows that in situations where one of the parties getting married has not attained the stipulated age of 18, such consent cannot be said to be free and full<sup>12</sup>.

Many theories have been proposed by academics to explain why child marriages occur. Occasionally, it could depend on socioeconomic factors. They are occasionally employed to preserve and uphold political connections as. Families can also fortify their political and/or economic connections by forcing their children to marry into a specific family. According to some other academics, a betrothal is a legally binding commitment for the families and children in the locations where it is permitted, such as Borno State. In such circumstances, breaking the betrothal may result in harsh consequences for both the betrothed individuals and their families. Once more, in many societies, poor families readily give their daughters away for marriage at a young age because they believe that having female offspring is a liability<sup>13</sup>.

Child marriages are also fueled by poverty, religion, customs, and crises in Sub-Saharan Africa. Undoubtedly, a significant number of early marriages result from poverty, with parents requiring the bride price of their daughter children in order to afford education, clothes, and other necessities for the family's surviving members. In the meantime, male children in these communities are more likely to pursue a working career, receive a worthwhile education, find successful jobs, and eventually get married. It is important to remember that a guy pays the family of the lady he wishes to marry a bride price in many parts of Africa. A girl's wedding price is typically paid in cash, livestock, or other goods, and it is thought that as she ages, the value of her bride price decreases<sup>14</sup>.

Furthermore, parents in Northern Nigeria are similarly forced to marry off their immature daughters due to the frequent insurgencies and crises, as they work under economic pressure<sup>15</sup>. Therefore, preventing child marriage is a global concern; therefore, if important stakeholders do not take immediate action, the world will fall far short of the Sustainable Development Goals to eliminate child marriage, with 134 million underage female marriages expected between 2018 and 2030, and nearly 10 million marriages in 2030 alone<sup>16</sup>. According to a recent Save the Children study, 51 million child marriages could be avoided by 2030 if secondary education for girls were made universal. As a result, governments and other relevant parties have the chance to improve the future for millions of girls as well as the reduction of early marriage and gender-based violence in our society<sup>8</sup>. Several non-governmental organisations have been using various tactics to accomplish this. For example, they have been creating and carrying out comprehensive, multisectoral national action plans, collaborating with several ministries and stakeholders to coordinate coordinated strategies that address the underlying causes of gender disparity. Others have been addressing the problem of early marriage by using strategies including advocating for

gender equality, starting school projects, empowering women through community interventions, involving men and women in media programmes, etc<sup>17</sup>.

The National Agency for Prohibition of Traffic in Persons (NAPTIP), the National Human Rights Commission (NHRC), the GBV Sub Working Group, Save the Children, the Alliances for Africa (AfA) Mission, and the Peering Advocacy and Advancement Centre in Nigeria (PAACA) are some of the organisations whose intervention programmes this study will be assessing for their effects on early marriage.

In order to address the various causes and concerns of child marriage, government ministries, service providers, and community clusters collaborate in a multi-sectoral approach to stop child marriage, as implemented by the NGOs mentioned above<sup>4</sup>. Governments should take seriously the task of creating a national action plan in order to oversee the work of various divisions and ensure that each receives the support it needs to address the issue<sup>18</sup>.

Moreover, school-based programmes are ideally positioned to prevent violence against women. Programmes implemented in schools can address gender norms and preconceptions before they deeply ingrain themselves in the minds of the young. This kind of creativity tackles issues including sexual exploitation of young people and adolescents, relationship violence, and gender norms. Safe dating projects in the United States and Canada's Youth Relationship Project have demonstrated positive results.

Community interventions can also involve men and empower women. Community interventions that combine policies that empower males as allies against gender-based violence with microfinance arrangements for women can address gender norms and smugness. Community initiatives including male peer groups exhibit potential in modifying perspectives on gender

norms and aggressive conduct; however, further critical evaluations are required. It seems that having a community and having organisers with training increase the effectiveness of these mediations<sup>19</sup>.

However, public awareness campaigns and other forms of intermediation delivered through newspapers, radios, televisions, and other mass media can be helpful in changing attitudes on gender norms. Additionally, media interventions can promote women's rights and influence gender customs. The most successful are those who take the time to identify their target audience's value and collaborate with their followers to promote content<sup>20</sup>. In light of the aforementioned, this study looked at the NGOs' initiatives in Borno State to reduce early marriage and gender-based violence.

## **1.2 Statement of the Problem**

According to published studies and other literary works, society has a significant impact on a girl child's destiny<sup>1</sup>. Therefore, it becomes concerning that parents intentionally give their young girls away in marriage to men who are old enough to be their grandfathers and fathers at a time when the daughters hardly understand what marriage entails. One aspect of the harmful customs that are ingrained in the people's antiquated conduct, insouciance, and customs that negatively impact and violate the fundamental rights of women and girls is early marriage<sup>20</sup>. The most concerning part of this threat is that despite the importance of the early marriage issue and the plethora of research that has been done on it, the issue still exists. Premature marriage is covered under both the child protection and gender-based violence (GBV) responses, which contributes to its persistence. Nevertheless, it is rarely addressed in its entirety, there is frequently insufficient harmonisation across segments, and efforts are primarily directed towards response rather than

prevention. Therefore, further research is required to fully understand and treat gender-based violence and early marriage, especially in Borno State. For example, research has been done on early marriage as a form of gender-based violence and a violation of women's human rights in Nigeria on strategies for preventing, moderating, and responding to gender-based violence in humanitarian contexts on the issue of girl child abuse in Nigeria as a barrier to individual and societal development and on child abuse in Nigeria, its scope, causes, and likely outcomes. This research has connections to other academic works.

Nevertheless, none of this research examined the impact of non-governmental organisations' intervention activities in preventing early marriage in Borno State. In the academic sphere, this has resulted to a knowledge deficit that needs to be filled. This current study takes its starting point from this knowledge gap. Using variables like multisectoral programme approach, holistic national action plans, promoting gender equality, school initiatives, community interventions, and media interventions programmes to curb gender-based violence such as sexual violence, emotional and psychological violence, physical violence, and socioeconomic violence, this study is poised to investigate the influence of NGOs intervention programmes for combating early marriage in Borno State.

### **1.3 Aim and Objectives of the Study**

The main aim of the study is to examine the effects of non-governmental organisation intervention strategies against early marriage in Borno State is the goal of this research. The specific objectives were to:

- i. learn more about the types of activities that NGOs are running in Borno State to combat early marriage;

- ii. find out how people in Borno State see early marriage and gender-based violence;
- iii. assess how NGOs' programmes affect Borno State's efforts in combating early marriage;
- iii. determine the difficulties the NGOs are having implementing their early marriage intervention plan in Borno State;
- iv. identify what non-governmental organisations encounter in their efforts to promote early marriage in Borno State.

#### **1.4 Research Questions**

In accordance with the goals of this investigation, the following research questions have been developed;

1. What kinds of activities are the non-governmental organisations running in Borno State to combat early marriage?
2. What perspectives does Borno State see early marriage and gender-based violence from?
3. How do NGOs' programmes affect Borno State's efforts in combating early marriage?
4. What obstacles do non-governmental organisations encounter in their efforts to promote early marriage in Borno State?

#### **1.5 Significance of the Study**

This study is important as it shed additional insight on how NGOs influence Borno State's policy against early marriage. The study's findings will give trustworthy information about the type of early marriage that women in Borno State are subjected to by their parents and the community. As a result, the study's findings were very helpful in starting the essential reorientation process to inform society about the detrimental effects of early marriage in Borno State and the necessity of

opposing it. The study was also helpful to the parents, as they realised the consequences of letting their young daughters be forced into marriage under any pretext.

The study concluded by helping society to understand women's roles in society and the importance of education for them rather than forcing them into marriage and exposing them to abuse of all kinds. As a result, society gained further benefits from the research. Consequently, the study aided in altering the long-standing perspective that views women, especially in northern Nigeria, as tools for sex and as second class. Some of the claims made by these orientations are that women belong in the kitchen, in other rooms, or are just intended to be mothers, among other things.

The results of this study served as a catalyst for additional research on the topic among academics, with the goal of bridging the knowledge gap pertaining to the topics not covered in this work. The study was also beneficial to future researchers because its conclusions served as a foundation for additional research in this area of study and a source of secondary data.

### **1.6 Scope of the Study**

The variables that serve as the dimensions and metrics of the NGOs' intervention programmes to prevent early marriage in Borno State between 2010 to 2021 are the boundaries of this scope. As a result, the study addressed the types of programmes that non-governmental organisations (NGOs) are implementing to address early marriage, the extent to which early marriage occurred in Borno State, the effect of NGOs' programmes on the anti-early marriage movement, and the obstacles that NGOs encounter when implementing their interventions programme. Measures of gender-based violence was also be covered, including physical, psychological, emotional, and sexual violence as well as socioeconomic violence.

The Borno State, where the respondents, or the sampled NGOs, were located, is the geographic boundary of this study.

Because the unit of analysis was limited to pertinent stakeholders including parents, volunteers against gender-based violence, and employees of the chosen NGOs, the micro unit of analysis has been used in this study.

### **1.7 Limitation of the Study**

Due to the sensitive nature of early marriage in conflict zones like Borno State, access to reliable data may have been restricted. NGOs operating in such areas often face security concerns, making it difficult to collect comprehensive data.

The ongoing conflict in Borno State during the study period (2010-2022) likely hindered the ability to conduct in-depth fieldwork. This might have affected the scope of the study by limiting access to certain regions, reducing sample size, or restricting access to key informants.

Given the deep-rooted cultural and religious factors promoting early marriage in Borno, the impact of NGOs could be limited. These deeply ingrained practices may not change significantly within the short study period.

### **1.8 Operational Definition of Terms**

The following vocabulary is defined based on how it appears in this work:

**Marriage:** is the social and legal union of a man and a woman with the aim of starting a family.

**Early marriage:** is referred to as a customary or religious union between a man or boy and a girl in whom one or both of the parties are under the age of eighteen (18).

**NGOs:** Non-governmental organisations are referred to here. These are privately funded groups that support citizens' rights, especially those of the poorer classes.

**Intervention:** These are the strategies, campaigns, and initiatives that NGOs implement to discourage early marriage.

**A girl child:** is a child who is feminine and experiences discrimination in any form.

### Endnotes

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## **Chapter Two**

### **Literature Review**

This chapter reviewed related literature under the following sub- headings;

2.1 Conceptual Review

2.2 Theoretical Framework

2.3 Review of Empirical Studies

2.4 Conceptual Framework

2.5 Summary of Gap in Literature Reviewed

#### **2.1 Conceptual Review**

The conceptualization and review of previous research on the effects of non-governmental organisations' (NGOs') interventions on early marriage are covered in this chapter. The review

examined the notions of early marriage and the underlying problems that it raises, including the types of programmes that non-governmental organisations (NGOs) are implementing to address early marriage, the extent to which gender-based violence and early marriage occur in Borno State, the impact of NGOs' programmes on the anti-early marriage movement, and the obstacles that these organisations face when implementing their interventions programmes. A review of gender-based violence was also be conducted, including sexual, emotional, and psychological, physical, and socioeconomic forms.

In order to do this, it is necessary to identify a few fundamental ideas, starting with marriage. The definition of marriage is a social and legal union between two men and women, yet some cultures have allowed people of the same sex to get married<sup>1</sup>. A Sociologist characterised marriage as a "stable sexual relationship," one that is sanctioned by extended family and utilised to control laws pertaining to children's rights to material possessions<sup>2</sup>. The majority of marriages are based on monogamy, which is the joining of a man and a woman, while polygamy—the practice of having many marriage partners—is also accepted in some societies. Men are allowed to marry as many as four women, according to the Talmud, which contains Jewish religious law and practices. This is comparable to the Islamic faith, which permits men to have up to four wives<sup>3</sup>. We are interested in this study because we believe that marriage, in whatever shape it takes, should only occur between or among adults, with the complete permission and willingness of all individuals involved. The Universal Declaration of Human Rights recognises the right to "free and full" consent to marriage, acknowledging that such consent cannot exist when one of the parties is not old enough to make a mature enough choice in a life partner.

Furthermore, according to Article 16 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, a person must be of legal age to become married, and a marriage should only be entered into voluntarily

and with full consent. To put it another way, anyone who approves of underage marriage is encouraging a violation of human rights. Nations must establish a minimum age for marriage and require all weddings to be registered, according to Articles 1, 2, and 3 of the 1962 Convention on Consent to Marriage, Minimum Age for Marriage, and Registration of weddings. Article 16 of the 1979 Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women states that child marriages are forbidden and calls for a quantifiable minimum age for marriage. However, children were not officially classified as individuals under the age of eighteen until 1989, when the Convention on the Rights of the Child was established (Article 1)<sup>4</sup>.

In Nigeria, Section 29 (4)(1) stipulates that an individual must be eighteen (18) years of age or older to be considered "full age," although the Child Rights Act stipulates that a person must be 18 years old to enter into marriage. According to Nigeria's Immigration Act, anyone younger than 16 is considered a minor. Furthermore, the Matrimonial Causes Act, 2004's Section 3(1)(e) stipulates that if one of the parties is not of legal age, the marriage is void. According to Nigeria's Kid Right's Act 2003, a person who has not attained the age of eighteen is considered a kid. This is the benchmark by which early marriage is evaluated as a violation of human rights. As a result, the reason we are interested in early marriage is because it does not fit the description of marriage given above.

### **2.1.1 The Concept of Marriage**

Wedlock, matrimony, or marriage are several terms for the same legal and culturally accepted union of individuals referred to as spouses. It delineates the rights and responsibilities that exist between them, their children, and their in-laws. Though the definition of marriage varies over time and across cultures and religions, it is almost universal<sup>5</sup>.

Marriage is a socially and legally recognised partnership, typically involving a man and a woman. It is governed by laws, norms, conventions, beliefs, and attitudes that specify the spouses' responsibilities and rights and grant status to their kids, if any. The many fundamental social and personal functions that marriage provides structure for—such as sexual gratification and regulation, gender-based labour division, economic production and consumption, and the fulfilment of individual needs for affection, status, and companionship—are the reasons why marriage is universal throughout many societies and cultures. Its most important roles are probably those related to reproduction, raising offspring, educating and socialising them, and maintaining ancestry<sup>6</sup>.

It is usually an institution that recognises or condones interpersonal interactions, most of which are sexual. It is customary in certain cultures to wait until marriage to engage in any kind of sexual behaviour. A wedding is an event that celebrates marriage.

Marriage can be arranged legally, socially, for libidinal, emotional, economical, spiritual, or religious reasons, among others. Thirteen gender, socially prescribed incest norms, prescriptive marriage laws, parental preference, and personal desire can all have an impact on who they marry. Polygamy, forced marriage, child marriage, and planned marriage are all common practices in some parts of the world. In other places, these kinds of activities are prohibited by international law or in order to protect the rights of women, children, and both genders. Because women are (or were) viewed as the husband's property, marriage has historically limited women's rights in several regions of the world. Globally, mostly in developed democracies, there has been a general trend towards legalising same-sex, interracial/interethnic/interfaith, and interfaith marriages as well as towards ensuring equal rights for women in marriage (e.g.,

eliminating coverture, liberalising divorce laws, and reforming reproductive and sexual rights). The legal standing of married women, attitudes towards domestic abuse in marriage, traditions including bride prices and dowries, forced marriage, marriageable age, and the outlawing of extramarital and premarital sex are all topics of ongoing debate<sup>7</sup>.

Economic history study consistently uses the age of the female at marriage, which has shown to be a strong predictor of female autonomy. A tribe, a state, an organisation, peers, religious authorities, a local community, or a tribe can all recognise marriage. It's frequently seen as an agreement. An institution of religion performs a religious marriage in order to establish and acknowledge the privileges and duties inherent in matrimony within that religion. Religious marriage is referred to by several names in different faith traditions, such as nikah in Islam, nissuin in Judaism, and sacramental marriage in Catholicism. Each of these titles has specific guidelines on who is eligible for and what qualifies as a legitimate religious marriage<sup>8</sup>.

"A relationship between one or more men (male or female) in severalty to one or more women that provides those men with a demand-right of sexual access within a domestic group and identifies women who bear the obligation of yielding to the demands of those specific men" is how Duran Bell defines marriage in a 1997 article published in *Current Anthropology*. Bell uses the term "men in severalty" to describe corporate kin groups like lineages that, after paying a bride price, are entitled to a woman's children even in the event that her husband—a member of the lineage—dies (Levirate marriage). Bell refers to "men (male or female)" as women in the family who could assume the role of "social fathers" for their spouse's offspring who are born to other partners<sup>9</sup>.

It has been discovered that all human communities, past and present, have some kind of marriage. The intricate and sophisticated regulations and customs that surround it attest to its significance. Some universals do apply, despite the fact that these laws and rituals are as numerous and diverse as human social and cultural organisations. Assuring partners' rights towards one another as well as children's rights and defining their ties within a community are the primary legal purposes of marriage. Traditionally, marriage has granted the child a valid status that entitles him or her to all the rights and advantages established by the customs of that community, including the right to inherit. In the majority of nations, marriage also set the acceptable social relationships that the children may have, including the appropriate choice of future partners. Prior to the late 20th century, marriage was not always a decision made freely. Although romantic love was not the main reason for matrimony in most eras—as the novels of authors like Henry James and Edith Wharton attest—love between spouses came to be linked with marriage in Western countries. Instead, one's marital partner was carefully chosen.

Nigerian law distinguishes between many types of marriages. The most typical kind of wedding in Nigeria is a court wedding. In Nigeria, there are essentially four main kinds of marriage that are permissible. These consist of Islamic marriage, church marriage, customary marriage, and statutory marriage. In Nigeria, it is typical for a single couple to perform three or more distinct types of marriages together<sup>10</sup>.

### **Customary Marriage**

Traditional marriage is another name for customary marriage. It is a marriage conducted in accordance with the native law or custom of a specific society, which may be the bride's community or ethnic group's custom. The following conditions have to be met in order for a customary marriage to be recognised<sup>11</sup>.

- Consent from the bride's parents and guardian, as well as consent from the parties themselves, must be obtained before the marriage is celebrated. In the *Osanwoyi v. Osanwoyi* case, A and B were wed in accordance with Native American custom and law. Without A's knowledge or approval, B gave A's father a dowry of sixty thousand (60,000). The Court decided that A and B could not lawfully be married under customary law. Therefore, in order for a customary marriage to be legal, both parties must consent to the union and the parents who will pay the bride price must also approve. This was provided by the court in *Okpanum v. Okpanum* (3), where it was decided that both the parties' consent and that of their parents were necessary for a customary marriage to be deemed lawful. This was likewise the case in other Nigerian customary law cases.<sup>11</sup> - Bride price payment: The bride's parents or legal guardian, if applicable, must receive the bride price from the groom. In order to remove the bride from their custody, the groom must also adhere to their marriage list or conditions.

- The marriage must be between Nigerian citizens; according to customary law, a marriage between a Nigerian and a non-Nigerian is null and void. The marriage of a Yoruba woman and a Sierra Leonean man was declared null and illegal in the case of *Savage v. Maltery* (4), and the same ruling applied to the marriage of an Efik woman and a Portuguese man in *Fonesca v. Passman* (5).

The marriage will not be valid if the partners are related by blood or birth. This is known as the "freedom from consanguinity and affinity" requirement. It is considered a sin in most cultures to marry or have sex with a member of one's own family. Therefore, according to customary law, a marriage between two members of the same bloodline—for example, a brother and sister, mother and son, or a male and female cousin—is null and void due to their consanguinity. Additionally, the marriage needs to be performed in line with the specific society's customs<sup>12</sup>.

## **Statutory Marriage**

In Nigeria, a statutory marriage, also known as a register marriage, is essentially a legally sanctioned, lifelong, voluntary union of one male and one female to the exclusion of all others.

In Nigeria, a statutory marriage is, to put it simply, a monogamous union. Examples include unions consummated in a licensed house of worship (church marriage) and unions consummated at the Court Registry. A church marriage is not the same as a statutory marriage. A marriage ceremony is not always contracted under the Act just because it takes place in a church<sup>13</sup>.

It is important to remember that Nigeria has laws governing the celebration of marriages. The Marriage Act (MA) stipulates that in order for a marriage to be recognised as lawful, it must occur in one of the following locations and be performed by a licensed minister or in the registrar's office. Not every church or mosque has a license to perform marriage ceremonies.

- Open doors must be used for the task.

- The time frame for completion is 8 a.m. to 6 p.m.

- In addition to the officiating minister, there must be a minimum of two witnesses.

After a marriage has been consummated, the parties receive a marriage certificate. Signing the marriage certificate is the last step. The officiant, who is leading the marriage ceremony, and two other witnesses must witness the couple performing this. Within seven (7) days following the marriage ceremony, the duplicate must be delivered to the Registrar of Marriages. After obtaining such a certificate, the marriage registrar files it. According to the Act, a marriage is lawful once all the procedures are completed<sup>14</sup>.

The Marriage Act additionally states that a person is only legally allowed to marry if their parent(s), guardian(s), or other legal representative grants approval in cases where one of the parties to the marriage is under<sup>15</sup>.

Certain activities are classified as offences under the Marriage Act and carry serious penalties if they are committed. Among these transgressions include, but are not restricted to:

Marriage to an individual knowing that said individual is already married to another. The punishment for this offence is five years in prison. When someone makes a false statement in a document that the law demands to be made in order to get married. A person faces up to five years in prison if they pose as a witness knowing they are unfit to do so. A person facing up to five years in prison is responsible for getting married even when they are fully aware that the union is invalid. Foreign marriages consummated outside of Nigeria are also recognised by the Marriage Act. It states that a marriage performed outside of Nigeria before a marriage officer in his office, between two parties, one of whom is a citizen of Nigeria, will be legally recognised as valid as if it had been performed in Nigeria before a registrar in the registrar's office.

A church marriage must abide by the Act's provisions in order to be recognised as statutory. The courts have ruled that the couples must voluntarily take action and follow the Marriage Act's procedure in order for such marriages to become statutory.

The Marriage Act, the Matrimonial Causes Act (Cap. M7, Laws of the Federation of Nigeria, 2004), and the Matrimonial Causes Rules, which are enacted in accordance with the Matrimonial Causes Act, are the main pieces of law that govern statutory marriages in Nigeria.

As can be seen from the foregoing, a prospective couple should always make an effort to engage into a lawful and enforceable marriage by following the correct procedures. Under Nigerian law, a marriage must be consummated in conformity with the due process of law<sup>16</sup>.

### **2.1.1 The Concept of Early Marriage**

An early marriage is defined as a steady or informal gathering in which one or both of the participants are younger than eighteen (18) years old. Usually, one or both partners give their full consent and loose will for this to happen. The term "early marriage" serves as a reminder to the reader that the persons under threat are those who have been shown to be much less developed in terms of mental or social maturity than adults. It is not the union of individuals who are sexually, emotionally, physically, or psychosocially developed and who are unable to provide their free and informed agreement to marriage. "Child marriage" and "early marriage" are terms that are used interchangeably in a wide range of UN resolutions, with no obvious distinction. Some refer to "early marriage, which include infant marriage," meaning that although it encompasses child marriage, it also covers situations that do not fall under the definition of infant marriage. These include unions in which one or both partners are under the age of 18, but they entered into adulthood in accordance with kingdom laws<sup>17</sup>.

Some people use the term "early marriage" as a cover for the truth that young people and weak businesses are forced into marriage; additionally, the term "baby brides" sentimentalises the stressful process<sup>23</sup>. Others believe that the term "early marriage" more accurately conveys the idea that the marriage union is premature and acknowledges the variety of acceptable and customary ideas about children that the term "infant marriage" ignores. It is a fact that in about half of all states in the world, the legal age of maturity is eighteen. Therefore, in a state where the age of majority is sixteen, "early marriage" may also more appropriately prevent early

rapprochement at sixteen or seventeen, even though the character is not always technically a toddler. Others may further contend that if a partner isn't emotionally or tangibly mature, an early marriage can nonetheless occur after the age of 18. This study proposes a method of female marriage, or early marriage between girls and women, interchangeably to recognise marriages where the female child is under the age of 18, as recognised by the 1990 conference on the convention, while also acknowledging the inequities of prison and social attitudes<sup>18</sup>.

Consequently, early marriage has an inherent negative impact on both boys and women, as stated in Human Rights Council decision A/HRC/35/L<sup>19</sup>. However, the successful investigation and assistance highlights that girls are particularly impacted due to the prevalence of exercise and the pressure of its consequences for these individuals. In addition, girls marry at a younger age on average than males do.

As a result, early marriage, also known as child marriage, was defined by UNICEF and several international laws, accords, and treaties as a legal, informal partnership in which one or both spouses are under the age of 18. Early marriage is a subset of forced marriage, which is defined as marriage at any age that occurs without the freedom and mutual consent of the partners. As such, it encompasses baby marriage as well as early marriage since children under the age of 18 are not able to provide their full consent. Early marriage is seen as a process of forced marriage in which one or both parties have given up on expressing their opinions, according to the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) regulations and the Conference on the Rights of the Child (CRC) Committees. total, flexible, and informed agreement. Early marriage is a problem that violates human rights in and of itself, impacting girls and women at some point in their lives, along with the rights to education, the best possible general level of fitness, and a life free from violence<sup>5</sup>. One in three women are married before the

age of eighteen and one in nine women are married before the age of fifteen in many African civilizations today, particularly in the sub-Saharan regions. Women mourn too much because, compared to 156 million males, 720 million girls alive today were married at an early age<sup>9</sup>. Often, females marry at a younger age, and there is frequently a significant age difference between men and women.

Therefore, child marriage is a grave type of child abuse and a dangerous violation of children's rights, depriving women of their potential, innocence, and formative years. Early marriage throws daughters into emotionally and physically demanding relationships for which they may not be ready, have little control over, and have little preference. It is an act of violence against women that is largely motivated by gender, putting them at risk for early pregnancy and motherhood as well as emotional, sexual, and physical abuse. Although child marriage and early marriage are frequent in many nations, they are extremely rare in developing nations. The percentage of women between the ages of 20 and 24 who report being married or living with a guy as if they were married at the age of 18 is the most commonly used and generally similar indicator of the incidence of toddler marriage. The useful literature's points of view are validated. According to this theory, toddler marriage rates are at least 25% higher in 51 countries. This foundational element is typically employed to delineate the paramount significance of an early marriage<sup>20</sup>. The incidence of early marriage differs among the nation's states, and it's important to identify which ones have the highest segmental incidence of early marriage.

Early marriage exposes women to the risk of violence from in-laws, HIV and other sexually transmitted infections, as well as early pregnancy, which makes this vital. Pregnancy barriers and reproduction are the primary causes of death for girls between the ages of 15 and 19. Children born to women and daughters who were married off when they were still young are more likely

to be undernourished and underdeveloped, which often keeps poverty from advancing from generation to generation<sup>21</sup>.

Furthermore, given that they are forced into marriages at a young age without their consent, the decision to get married and stay married—which is a personal decision—is skewed. This is clear from a 2017 UNICEF report, which shows that roughly 17% of Nigerian young women are married before the age of 15, and 43% are married before the age of 18. Section 23 of the Nigerian charter, which declares that "someone underneath the age of 18 years is incapable of contracting a valid settlement," of which marriage is inclusive, is simply broken and inconsistent with this.

In light of the aforementioned, it is noteworthy that the Human Rights Council (HRC) resolution on early and forced marriage in humanitarian settings (A/HRC/RES/35/16) from 2017 calls for all events to establish and support their determinations to avoid and eliminate this harmful practice, as well as to provide support to married women in humanitarian settings. The resolution describes early marriage as an extreme violation of human rights. States must ensure that women who have been forced to flee violence and harassment, or who are unsupported or disconnected, have access to health care, education, and protection from childbearing, early marriage, and other forms of forced marriage. In order to prevent unintended and/or repeat pregnancies, the 2017 agreement emphasises the importance of providing married girls with support and fortification through work and treatment. It also guarantees the availability of individualised assistance for sexual and reproductive health and right<sup>22</sup>.

The complex factors that drive or are linked to premature marriage include gender inequality, social and cultural expectations, financial necessities, poor educational opportunities, women's attitudes towards being lazy at home, beliefs that young marriage is a great way to help children

with poor decisions, and the sense of security that comes with being married. Many of those complex forces emerge in our cultures, albeit they can be exacerbated by a calamity, as was the case in Borno State. As Borno faces uncertainty, the breakdown of the legal system, disruptions in social structures, and challenges to family practices, households and parents may also view early marriage as a survival strategy that copes with growing economic concerns, protects girls from sexual assault, preserves virginity, protects the honour of the family, and handles rape. Insurgent organisations and militants in Nigeria's Borno Kingdom have systematically kidnapped and trafficked women and girls, using rape, forced marriage, and slavery as "weapons of warfare"<sup>23</sup>.

Human Rights Watch stated that early marriage is still common in Nigeria because state and federal governments have not effectively enforced laws designed to stop it. On the African continent, Nigeria has some of the lowest rates of early marriage. While the federal toddler Rights Act, forbids marriage before the age of 18, many clauses in the Nigerian constitution appear to conflict with this prohibition. States having Islamic jail systems have likewise not embraced the federal law or the 18-year-old marriageable age. Certain states in the South that have accepted this role have not done enough to implement it. It is unacceptable that Nigerian girls are still being coerced into child marriages over ten years after the Child Rights Act was overturned. States in Nigeria need to move quickly to enact, enforce, and harmonise current laws with the requirements of the Child Rights Act, which prohibits marriage before the age of eighteen and safeguards the rights of women.

The Nigerian constitution, the African constitution on the Rights and Welfare of the Child, and the United Nations convention on the Rights of the Child all prohibit early marriage and affirm

that 18 is the legal age of majority. They also guarantee a child's right to be free from coercion and violence, as well as their right to health care and education<sup>24</sup>.

Nigeria may have to quickly harmonise its laws in order to abide by international law. The Child Rights Act, the Human Rights Act, and other laws should be implemented by all governments to protect minors from marriage. To guarantee that the law is implemented effectively and to penalise noncompliance, the federal government and state governments that have complied with it must develop a strong action plan.

In Nigeria, early marriage is a frequent practice with roots in customary, economical, nonreligious, and criminal contexts that disproportionately impact women and girls. Nigeria has some of the lowest rates of underage marriage on the African continent. In its improvement document, the 2020 UN improvement software said that 43% of Nigerian women between the ages of 20 and 24 were married before turning 18. Women experience profound and enduring effects from child marriage at some time in their lives. It robs them of the ability to make their own decisions about their lives, interferes with their education, exposes them to abuse and prejudice, and limits their ability to fully engage in the economic, political, and social spheres<sup>25</sup>.

Under both African and international human rights law, the Nigerian government has an obligation to protect minors from being forced into marriage. Nonetheless, conflicting views on violent customs and defensive children from marriage are maintained by Nigeria's federal and kingdom laws. Infant marriage is prohibited by the federal Toddler Rights Act, which is in line with Nigerian regulations and the United Nations Conference on the Rights of the Child and the African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child. However, regardless of her age of marriage, any married female is defined as having reached the age of majority under a contradicting language in section 29(4)(b) of Nigeria's charter. The Child Rights Act has not yet

been enacted in eleven of Nigeria's thirty-six states. In addition, traditional and Islamic laws in a few northern states permit damaging customs like child marriage and female genital mutilation, even though Nigeria is a signatory to important international human rights agreements. According to recent evaluations, 78% of women in the few northern states get married before turning<sup>26</sup>.

### **2.1.2 Early Marriage in Borno State**

In most developing countries, early child marriage is a social practice. A lot of daughters and sons are married off against their will in Borno state and other parts of Nigeria. These young girls' aspirations are dashed and their illuminating endeavours are disregarded after they are married off. But it is concerning since early marriage is just a "custom," a "tradition," and a part of people's "culture" to the average Borno person. In fact, the average Borno person views premature marriage as a source of pride. The majority of Borno parents consider it typical for their kids, especially their daughters, to marry young. It is expected that they would have the good fortune to see and raise their grandkids while they are still in their prime. Even so, this belief is being eroded by the rise of modernity. Regretfully, the practice does not seem to be decreasing among the ethnic norms of the tribes in Borno state, despite modernization and civilization of the twenty-first century. Sadly, most younger girls in Borno no longer have an opinion about getting married young. They are able to acknowledge that they were created to support their spouses, even in the absence of opportunities to pursue more education or career advancement. Untimely pregnancy frequently has a detrimental effect on their health, especially because local communities typically lack access to quality healthcare<sup>27</sup>.

As a result, most young individuals' dreams of becoming extraordinary professionals are practically dashed when they find themselves enticingly married to a few partners who,

unbeknownst to them, can actually do them harm. The less developed half is socially disadvantaged since they lack formal education, appropriate healthcare, the opportunity to socialise with various individuals, and a personal destiny. The need for scholarly analysis of this issue stems from the necessity of issuing a clear call to action for everyone to take action in order to stem the tide of this societal disaster<sup>28</sup>.

### **Motives for Early Marriage in Borno**

According to several of the literature reviews that have been done thus far, there are a few reasons why early marriage is common in Borno State and other northern parts of Nigeria. Several of these explanations include the following:

#### **Financial Reasons**

One of the main factors underlying early marriage is poverty. In a place where poverty is acute, a young girl may be seen as a financial burden due to her marriage to a much older or even elderly man—a custom common to the Nigerian people who make up the Borno kingdom. Premature marriage is considered in these contexts as a way to prioritise one's own family life and may even be justified as safeguarding the interests of the lady and her unborn child. Because the bride-price is for their daughter, the intended husband's family may transport animals from the groom or his family in the Borno social order. An examination of five severely impoverished communities in Borno revealed that immature females are being married off to excellent older men from villages that are more likely to experience disasters. In Borno, poor families are persuaded to part with girls under the pretence of marriage in order to reduce the probability that they will become prostitutes. Now that Nigeria is experiencing financial difficulties and a lack of confidence, the situation has gotten worse<sup>13</sup>. A recent UNICEF study shows that, even in those

population businesses that don't typically coach it, financial hardship is fueling an increase in early marriage in North-East Nigeria as a whole. Men are delaying marriage due to a lack of manners, and households are becoming anxious about the possibility of their daughters becoming pregnant outside of marriage<sup>29</sup>. As a result, any early marriageable age may be seized.

Since every academic examined for this study agrees that poverty is a major factor in the early marriage of women and children, it is reasonable to assume that the Bornu kingdom is not an exception. The neighbourhood areas of Bornu are the most affected by the country's chronic poverty, since most people there fight just to survive. The majority of parents who earn insufficient income to maintain their normal lives and take care of their younger daughter choose to force her into marriage. Women experience the pain from it because, at the age of ten or younger, they often marry against their will. On the other hand, in cases where the child's parents are facing severe financial hardships, their immature daughters are often viewed as a burden by their extended family. As a result, the parents may decide to marry her off to an elderly guy when she is much younger, which will relieve some of the family's financial strain. However, marrying off the woman's child will be seen as a means of boosting the family's income. In Borno's traditional community, the groom's family usually gives various goods and currency to the bride's family. Therefore, poor families are more likely to marry off their daughters early in order to acquire bride-wealth, which is regarded as a source of income for the family<sup>30</sup>.

### **The Protection Aspect**

One way to ensure a girl spouse is "protected" is to place her under the firm control of her would-be husband. This is done by training her to be submissive to her husband and work hard to impress her in-laws' family. It also ensures that the children she bears are "valid" and that ties of affection between couples do not weaken the circle of relative's unit. In actuality, the mother and

father may believe that their daughter would be safer and happier in the care of an ordinary male guardian. For instance, in the war-torn state of Borno, some families marry their younger daughters to members of the armed forces as a means of preserving family honour or providing comfortable "safety" for both the woman and herself. The ability to avoid premarital sex is a crucial incentive for marrying women young. Many societies prize virginity before marriage and this will occur itself in some of activities aimed to 'protect' a lady from unsanctioned sexual hobby. They essentially amount to severe restrictions placed on the woman. For example, she can be excluded from social interactions with people outside of her family. You could tell her what she can and cannot wear. In Northern Nigeria in particular, manage may also refer to the practice of female genital mutilation (FGM), which involves surgically removing the clitoris (excision) or restricting access to the vagina (infibulation) in order to limit sexual pleasure and temptation. In many cultures, parents pull their women out of college as soon as they become menstrual out of concern that they may be exposed to male professors or researchers and thus put them in danger.

All of these customs are meant to protect women from men's advances in sexuality, but marriage appears to offer the highest level of "safety" to concerned parents. In other words, a female loses her adolescence when she marries young. The concept of an adolescent period between puberty and maturity is foreign to many traditional communities. A menstruating woman is 'a lady' since she is capable of bearing a child<sup>31</sup>.

The impartial sense of self that a woman may also develop early childhood is perceived as undesirable in many settings. In these civilizations, girls are valued, but for their own personal protection, they could also have to submit to the wishes of their husbands, fathers, and sons. Therefore, if they aren't today, they should be held accountable.

Furthermore, the Borno catastrophe has reinforced the male social safety roles while also raising the amount of perceived and actual risk for women and girls. This combination has led to rising rates of forced and underage marriage, as well as marriage being seen as a way to safeguard young women and girls. In order to reduce the size of the family and obtain financial compensation from the groom, infant marriage is also being utilised as a coping mechanism for declining resources, primarily prolonged displacement. Before the latest war ever began, young marriage started to become an option for women. Due to security concerns, teenage girls have been exposed to multiple forms of violence, have limited access to resources, and have restricted access to information and services. For instance, from August to December 2016, 43% of the aforementioned GBV cases were infant survivors. This indicates that GBV and baby protection (CP) actors must collaborate to address and prevent the various forms of GBV that affect both girls and boys, such as harassment, sexual abuse, and child marriage<sup>32</sup>.

Due to the shift in gender roles brought about by the conflict, female-headed families now have the primary responsibility for securing the financial stability of their own families. As a result, girls have had to take on additional tasks that have historically not been theirs during times of war. The new idea of lacking men is becoming a major issue, according to the experiences of the researchers who are discussing this topic of observation. The lack of males in reproductive age may be particularly noticeable in places like Alabama, where men are either dead or in captivity, or they have been abducted and recruited by the Boko Haram cult. Together with this situation, there is a growing trend of women who have survived rape, early marriage, and other abuses to want a primary residence.

### **Circle of Relatives Alliances**

Marriage is traditionally a union of two families, and some parents encourage their lady-children to marry in order to strengthen relationships within their family circle. A few weddings in Borno and in fact all of Africa are considered as a technique of strengthening the bonds among households or settling disputes. These young women are quickly coerced into marriage, which is a wonderful strategy to prevent them from running away or becoming pregnant at their parents' house. In the majority of situations, the young people are already engaged<sup>33</sup>.

### **Lack of Expertise and a Poor Educational History**

Parental illiteracy is a major contributing factor to the early marriage of girls. This is the case because some parents believe that their girls are secure from violence and sexual assault even if they marry off young. This is enhanced with the truth that scores of Borno inhabitants nonetheless lack schooling. As a result, they are exposed to a lot of societal superstitions and myths about early child marriage that have been passed down from generation to generation. The timing and type of marriage union in Bornu are significantly influenced by parental education. According to the majority of students referenced in this review, parents who lack information tend to divorce their children earlier than those who do. In an attempt to protect their daughter without understanding the risks involved, parents who lack education are more likely to think that teaching a girl-toddler is a waste of money and that marriage is the best option. They are also led to believe that training a male requires fewer resources than training a girl, making it safer and more affordable. Since many of them continue to hold onto their antiquated views, many of them are unaware of the effects of early baby marriage<sup>34</sup>.

### **Worry of Unintended Pregnancy**

Pregnancy before marriage is often frowned upon by the traditional Borno tribes. Because of this, the majority of families aim to marry off their female children before they become unmarried parents. According to a report from the majority of the articles analysed here, unmarried girls are seen as a liability to the respect of their family, and in order to ensure the chastity and virginity of the bride, they may be married off at a young age in order to avoid bringing shame upon the family. Thus, society has become increasingly sexually conscious. When children are let to reach adulthood well before marriage, they have a propensity to become involved and become pregnant, which brings disgrace to their own family. In order to avoid women from bringing shame to their family, most families marry off their children at a young age. This is an effective strategy to prevent them from developing sexual skills that could lead to an unplanned pregnancy<sup>35</sup>.

### **Gender Inequality**

It is evident that many rural areas in Borno nation have long-standing patriarchal traditions that favour male over female children. People frequently believe that although girl children are not successful and should only be used as future brides, boy children are. These female children's parents do not provide them with the same educational chances as their male counterparts. Conversely, they might be indiscriminately married off at a young age<sup>36</sup>.

### **The Fear of Witchcraft**

One of the biggest reasons for early marriage in Borno state is the fear that jealous family members will use witchcraft to prevent a mature woman from marrying you. The prevailing

belief is that witches and wizards have no reason to dislike the advancement of their own family members. As a result, these witches and wizards, who may be close relatives but are afraid of their patients' progress, may stop suitors from proposing marriage to their daughters. Many people give their daughters in marriage before it's necessary in order to prevent this<sup>36</sup>.

### **Disaster and Displacement (Part 1)**

Due to the lack of food, clean water, medical supplies, and sleeping materials, victims in the Internally Displaced People camps in Borno endure hazardous conditions following the invasion of villages and the murder of nearby farmers by Boko-Haram, bandits, and Fulani herdsmen. Teenage girls who had been uprooted by the conflict and were living in camps for internally displaced people were at the receiving end of even more hardship during some of these. Because of the extreme poverty that exists inside the camps, many of them are being married off to men who are old enough to be their fathers. In addition, it has been reported favourably in a number of the examined papers that girls as young as eleven had been married off to males as old as forty or older at an IDP camp in Borno and other northern components<sup>37</sup>. They said the girls were married off because they had no money for food, clean water, or drugs to sleep on. When Boko Haram raided their village, the majority of the females lost their husbands, leaving them without anyone to support their houses. Their only choice was to marry their daughters as soon as the chance presented itself.

#### **2.1.3 Overview of the Nature of Programmes being Implemented by the NGOs to Address Early Marriage and Gender Based Violence**

For the purposes of this study, we examined the types of projects that non-governmental organisations are putting in place to address gender-based violence and early marriage. The

National Agency for Prohibition of Traffic in Persons (NAPTIP), the National Human Rights Commission (NHRC), the GBV Sub Working Group, the Alliances for Africa (AfA) Mission, and Save the Children are among the NGOs that should be taken into consideration. The kind of programming they have put in place to combat gender-based violence and early marriage include community initiatives, school-based programmes, media interventions, a multi-sectoral approach, creating a national action plan, and advocating for gender equality and so on.

### **2.1.3.1 Multisectoral Responses**

In order to achieve national, regional, and international deadlines for eliminating child marriage, governments must show leadership, coordinate the efforts of various departments and agencies, and move more quickly to implement multisectoral responses.

Government ministries, nonprofit organisations, and community organisations collaborate to address the various causes and effects of child marriage and make decisions about how best to handle them as part of a multisectoral strategy to eliminating child marriage. Governments must start by creating a national action plan in order to ensure that all sectors are working together and that they have the resources necessary to respond appropriately. The national and local settings should inform multisectoral approaches to child marriage. Actors from the following industries must be involved:

- Health
- Justice
- Education
- Protection of children
- Democracy, rights and governance

- Economic growth, livelihoods and workforce development
- Crisis and humanitarian conflicts
- Food security and nutrition
- Agriculture and the environment
- Youth participation and girls' empowerment.

The program's supporters contend that efforts to prevent child marriage have far too frequently been created without cross-ministerial or sectoral coordination. Collaboration amongst sectors is necessary due to the interconnected causes and effects of child marriage. For instance, community involvement, social norm modification, and protection—including social protection—are necessary to support health, education, and legal reform. Roughly 7.5 million child weddings annually, or 20,000 child marriages every day, occur when the parties are younger than the legal minimum age. National laws against child marriage are undermined by lax enforcement, a break from customs and beliefs, and the perception of financial security and safety from foreign violence linked to the practice<sup>38</sup>.

This is due to the fact that low-profile line ministries like women's and children's departments have typically been in charge of intervening in child marriage. These ministries typically lack the authority to call meetings, the funding, and the responsibility to plan responses across government. More powerful ministries, especially the ministries of finance and justice, must be involved in managing multi-sectoral responses to guarantee that all pertinent sectors are equitably and sufficiently supported to plan, influence, and implement their responses as part of a coordinated response.

Early marriage ought to be the main focus of national development strategies and objectives. National action plans that address the needs of married girls and put an end to child marriage are necessary for cross-sectoral actions to be mutually helpful. Effective intervention implementation is facilitated by national action plans, which supervise the distribution of financial and human resources and offer venues for information exchange. With distinct lines of responsibility, indicators, and procedures for monitoring and reporting, interventions are also more accountable<sup>39</sup>.

National action plans can help to promote efficient coordination and implementation of multisectoral responses to early marriage. Fair and sufficient funding to achieve the ambitious progress required by the SDGs and the AU commitment to end child marriage. • Multiple partnerships to engage key stakeholders across sectors, including community, religious, and customary leaders and well-established women's rights organizations. Too frequently, child marriage and girl difficulties receive inadequate funding, are assigned to low priority ministries, and lack sufficient duration to show results. Studies reveal that the people most impacted by reductions in public investment and government revenue are women and girls. • Accountability for guaranteeing quality programme delivery and ensuring that an improved legal and policy climate translates into better outcomes for women and girls. Finance and Justice Ministers need to take on the role of champions for girls and eliminating child marriage. Effective and open monitoring and reporting on progress, as well as inclusive and participatory accountability systems, are necessary to hold leaders, donors, and institutions accountable. Encouraging multi-stakeholder engagement and a legal and policy framework are crucial for ensuring that women and girls are aware of their rights and can access accountability mechanisms. Education and empowerment programmes are necessary for this. The minimum legal age for marriage should

be set at eighteen, and efforts should be made to harmonise regional and national legislation. In order to successfully implement these laws, they should also involve leaders of communities, religions, and customs in their advocacy for the social and behavioural changes that are required. Proposed child marriages can be identified and prevented with the use of regulatory measures, such as the requirement for birth registration and the removal of registration barriers<sup>40</sup>.

### **2.1.3.2 Promoting Gender Equality Programme**

One essential component of violence prevention is the advancement of gender equality. The conscious endeavour of both state and non-state actors to treat men and women equally in matters pertaining to their lives is known as gender equality. There is a complicated link between gender and violence. However, research indicates that gender disparities make it more likely for men to abuse women and make it more difficult for those who are impacted to seek help<sup>41</sup>. This briefing focuses on intimate partner violence, which is the most prevalent type of violence against women. Evidence suggests that school, community, and media interventions can promote gender equality and decrease violence against women by dispelling beliefs that give men control over women, while more study is necessary in this area.

We cannot successfully stop child marriage or provide married girls with adequate support to reach their full potential if we do not address the underlying disparities that contribute to the danger of both gender-based violence and child marriage<sup>34</sup>. Marriage and financial stability for girls and their families are intimately related because of gender norms that limit girls' ability to earn a living and customs like bride prices and dowry payments. Social norms that restrict girls' chances and expose them to violence must change, and girls themselves must be given the authority to make decisions that impact their lives<sup>7</sup>. Girls must also be empowered to overcome barriers to obtaining critical health, economic livelihood, nutrition, and education services.

### **2.1.3.3 School-based Interventions**

School-based interventions aim to tackle gender norms and equality at a young age, prior to the deepening of gender preconceptions in children and teens (7, 13, 14, 15). Several programmes have been created to address sexual abuse, dating violence, and gender norms among adolescents and young adults. These aim to challenge gender stereotypes and norms, lower the prevalence of dating violence, and raise awareness of intimate partner violence. They either target male peer groups or male and female youth together. Assessments of these initiatives indicate that they have the potential to enhance awareness regarding dating violence and ameliorate attitudes towards it. While their efficacy in decreasing instances of actual abuse directed towards women has not been consistently proven, evaluations have predominantly concentrated on immediate results.

### **2.1.3.4 Community Interventions**

In order to lessen gender inequality, community initiatives typically focus on women's empowerment, enhancing their economic status (via microfinance programmes, for example), and altering gender stereotypes and norms. The majority of these projects' implementations have been in developing nations like Nigeria. Some community projects deal only with male peer groups, focusing on masculinity, gender norms, and violence, even if the majority of programmes engage women (alone or with males). This reflects a growing recognition of the significance of involving men and boys in interventions to stop violence against women as well as to rethink conceptions of masculinity centered on control and dominance<sup>42</sup>.

### **2.1.3.5 Media Interventions**

Media interventions reach a broad audience and bring about social change through the employment of radio, television, the internet, newspapers, magazines, and other printed materials. Their objectives are to improve understanding, question beliefs, and alter behaviour. Through public discourse and social interaction, media interventions can also change social norms and values such as the notion that aggression is a hallmark of masculinity. The effectiveness of media campaigns in raising awareness of intimate partner violence and changing attitudes towards gender norms has been demonstrated, but less is known about their capacity to lower violent behaviour because it can be challenging to gauge possible drops in violence levels linked to media interventions. However, research indicates that the most effective media interventions start with an awareness of the audience's behaviour and involve its members in the intervention's development<sup>43</sup>.

#### **2.1.4 A Review of the Impact of the NGOs Programmes on the Fight Against Early Marriage**

##### **Physical Support for the Well-being of Girl Child**

The primary goal of providing physical support for the well-being of girls is to preserve their sexual and reproductive health. To this aim, it is important to make sure that girls and boys get education about sex, reproduction, and the associated dangers from an early age. It highlights that the best way to safeguard children from sexual activity is through education rather than "ignorance plus early marriage." It suggests that teenagers, regardless of gender, need to get sex education and be able to obtain reproductive health treatments without encountering opposition. There is hesitation or even a taboo against discussing sex in many African and Asian cultures. This stokes concerns that sex education will promote intercourse and pregnancy at a young age. Sex education does not lead to promiscuity, as evidenced by the efforts of UNAIDS, Save the

Children, the National Human Rights Commission, and other NGOs. Nevertheless, it takes time to dispel these myths. Research indicates that in nations where traditional sexual protection mechanisms are collapsing and HIV is becoming a major threat to girls' lives, keeping quiet about sex does not prevent teenage pregnancy. Girls contract HIV twice as frequently as boys do, with over half of new infections occurring in those aged 15 to 24<sup>44</sup>.

Since more schools are now willing to teach about sex and family life as a way to counteract gender-based violence and early marriage, this rising acceptance needs to be reinforced. Youth-focused programming on this subject is also important. Education on life skills, including sexual health and negotiation, is being offered in youth groups, classrooms, newsletters, and radio broadcasts. The experience of Uganda's Nuguru Teenage Health Information Service in Kampala demonstrates how eager young people are to learn about issues relating to sex. Organisations in Nigeria are working to duplicate comparable youth awareness campaigns<sup>45</sup>.

### **Education for Self-determination and Intellectual Advancement**

There has been a surge in campaigns supporting the idea that learning and education are essential for girls to advance. There are several reasons, both personal and familial as well as broader social and economic, to encourage parents to keep their girls in school and make sure they acquire a basic education, as is their right. One such motive is to delay marriage. Early marriage is relatively common in Borno state and many northern communities in Nigeria. However, they currently have another similarity, which is their increasing acceptance that this has contributed to the phenomenon: they have both placed a high value on education for both men and women. This is as a result of increased demand and focus from people, NGOs, and government organizations. Due to this, men and women now view their responsibilities and potential

differently, and there is more support for women's rights than there was previously in this region<sup>45</sup>.

Non-formal education can assist girls who have missed out on formal schooling to make up for the intellectual and personal development that comes with education. These kinds of initiatives may directly affect early marriage. When these kinds of activities were first introduced in the Kenyan region of Samburu in the 1990s, early marriage rates decreased and women's self-expression increased. NGOs have made it a priority to replicate this in Nigeria, starting in the northeast, home of Borno state.

Making schools more girl-friendly has also been a focus of efforts to close gender gaps in education. Creating schools near communities will help parents feel less concerned about their daughters' safety. Other ideas include hiring more female teachers, enhancing the curriculum's relevance and teaching standards, providing flexible schedules to help girls take care of their homes, providing in-school child care, penalising male teachers who approach female students, and having separate restrooms for boys and girls<sup>1</sup>. Additional tactics to boost girls' education include offering financial rewards to parents who keep their daughters in school, expanding after-school programmes for girls who drop out, involving communities in school administration, and launching awareness-raising campaigns about the value of girls' education. Resistance to girls' education can dissolve remarkably quickly in situations where such attempts are made, even in very traditional settings<sup>46</sup>.

Adolescent rights, reproductive health, early marriage, dowries, marriage registration, and divorce procedures are all topics that NGOs working with teenagers in the northeast are attempting to incorporate into their curricula<sup>9</sup>. In order to help females reclaim the adolescence they have lost; the Centre for Mass Education in Science (CMES) runs a unique initiative that

provides them with life-oriented education. They are urged to continue attending meetings, gaining leadership experience, and delaying marriage until they are at least 19 years old after graduation. In a collaborative gender project, boys and husbands have been invited to participate in solidarity groups because male support is necessary<sup>47</sup>.

### **Emergency Aid as well as Support for Mental Health**

When girls and women experience acute marital hardship, their only option is frequently to flee<sup>8</sup>. Many fugitives from Northern Nigeria wind up in impoverished urban areas. Although their activities are typically limited to towns and cities, some local NGOs involved in this field have started helping these girls and women<sup>1</sup>. Girls who flee from abusive marriages require immediate assistance, as do those who flee from parents who are pressuring them into an unwelcome union or punishing them for dating someone else without their consent. The Federation of Woman Lawyers, for instance, assists these girls in finding justice and safety in Southern Nigeria. Mums who dare to assist them despite the stigma are often instrumental in organising their rescue.

### **Scholarships for Schools in Formal Education**

Assuming that parents' primary motivation for not sending their daughters to school was financial hardship, there has been a rise in the number of people and non-governmental organisations (NGOs) offering school scholarships to 40 girls. The students receive fees and free books, and their parents receive some sort of reimbursement for the loss of their daughters' domestic and agricultural labor. The school schedule has also been modified to allow for shorter school days<sup>45</sup>.

### **Unofficial Education**

Since their parents want them to work, many rural girls in Borno, as well as other parts of Nigeria, have no opportunity for an official education. In order to offer these girls an opportunity to improve their self-worth, self-assurance, and life skills, the "New Horizons" initiative was created in 1997. Curriculum professionals and local NGOs created the programme, which comprises of 100 meticulously planned sessions covering life skills such as rights and duties, nutrition, health, first aid, reproductive health, puberty, marriage, and violence against women<sup>67</sup>. Simple resources and techniques, such as posters, songs, plays, and discussions, are used by the local educator. The parents of the girls enrolled in the initiative have shown support and enthusiasm for their child's reading development. Girls' enrollment rates in primary schools have increased, and attitudes on the relative value of boys and girls have started to shift. After receiving benefits, close to 15,000 girls took their newly acquired knowledge home to assist their mothers in learning about their rights.

### **Boy Participation in the Campaign Against Gender-Based Violence and Early Marriage**

Adolescent boy scouts in Kenya, Ethiopia, and Egypt are empowered by an innovative project to advocate for and defend children's rights, particularly the right to education for girls, which is a crucial deterrent against child marriage. Their awareness of social responsibility grows as a result of the project's encouragement to take action to advance and defend the rights of others, especially girls. Each youngster gathers information on the children's health, education, and hygiene from ten nearby homes after completing his training. They give each home information on a range of topics, such as the value of education for girls, in exchange. After that, they keep an eye on each household's development. One province is the pilot project's location. If successful, 10,000 boy scouts are expected to eventually reach over 500,000 people and 100,000 houses. Plans are underway to duplicate these kinds of actions in Nigeria as awareness grows<sup>48</sup>.

The greatest services are offered by women's and community-based organisations, yet they are frequently challenged for damaging cultural values, operate in secrecy, and receive little funding from established institutions. In developed nations, refuges, therapy, and other forms of help may be available to women and girls who are victims of abuse; but, in less developed nations like Ethiopia, Bangladesh, or Pakistan, these services are few. Nonetheless, in the underdeveloped world, there are organisations that provide women who have fled abusive marriages with a place to stay and counselling. For instance, the NGO Musasa assists women in Zimbabwe achieve their own independence by offering counselling, employment support, temporary asylum, and other services. Of course, many girls choose not to flee. However, girls and young women who choose to stay in their marriages can gain from other people's support through local women's clubs, peer therapy, and other means.

### **Backing for Enhanced Financial Standing**

Poverty is intimately linked to early marriage and is exacerbated by it. In an effort to provide adolescent females a higher status and greater control over their lives, including their marriage prospects, certain initiatives have concentrated on enhancing their financial circumstances. Some strategies are to provide livelihood skills training, assist young people entering the workforce, and make sure marriage is not a requirement to be eligible for programmes like savings clubs and microcredit programs. Young women's engagement into the export clothing sector in Zimbabwe has increased their value in the eyes of their families and prospective husbands. Even with their hard working conditions and long work hours, the majority of garment workers are able to negotiate some autonomy with their own families as a result of their income, and many anticipate getting married eventually. Their experience of financial independence later on boosts their confidence as wives. A scheme in Egypt has improved the girls' ability to earn money while

assisting them in resisting early marriage for those who live in the Maqattam waste colony outside of Cairo. They can avoid sorting trash and acquire skills, money, and self-worth by working on embroidered projects, rug-making, and paper recycling. A cash incentive of E£500 (US\$132.45) is offered to females who choose to marry later in life and who do so voluntarily in order to promote delayed and voluntary marriage<sup>49</sup>.

Higher family income lowers the rate of early marriage on a broader social level. A higher living standard frees up funds for girls' education and lessens the need for daughters' labour. The advancement of women's career prospects in non-servile professions aids in delaying marriage and advancing girls' education. The establishment of community-based frameworks for overseeing essential services, including healthcare, contributes to the dismantling of customs surrounding women.

For instance, these have been employed in Niger as a means of promoting opposition to early marriage and FGM. Approximately 40 million births, or one-third of all births worldwide, go unreported each year<sup>1,13</sup>. A kid is helpless to stop violations of their age-related rights without a birth certificate. The inadequate birth registration systems in nations where the rule on the legal minimum age of marriage is disregarded encourage early marriage<sup>8–10</sup>. Likewise, hundreds more unions remain unrecorded, robbing women of their marital rights, including the right to inherit property. Programmes that encourage birth and marriage registration through the leadership of local communities and religions ought to be supported. For instance, proof that a marriage is neither forced or polygamous and participation at a reproduction session are prerequisites for marriage registration in some areas of Kenya. Reviewing civil and customary law in the context of globally recognised human rights norms regarding marriage necessitates government action. For instance, rules that restrict adolescents' access to services like

reproductive health should be lifted. The judiciary, legislators, and law enforcement should receive the necessary training in order to uphold the law and promote a culture of rights. Internationally, the CEDAW and CRC Committees ought to keep concentrating on consent and the age of marriage, and they ought to demand that rules against early marriage be upheld. Early marriage should also be taken into consideration in follow-up efforts to the Beijing-hosted Fourth World Conference on Women in 1995 and the 2000 UN Special Session on Women<sup>50</sup>.

### **Growth in Advocacy**

It's common knowledge that marriage is a private and delicate topic. Talking about sexual connections, especially between a husband and wife, has historically considered taboo in many Asian and African societies. But shifting attitudes and the HIV pandemic have started to weaken these taboos. Teens are clamouring for the freedom to discuss and learn about private issues<sup>5</sup>. Encouraging advocacy at all societal levels, but especially at the household and community level to influence attitudes, is essential to hastening the end of early marriage, especially in traditional rural societies and ethnic groups where it is customary to marry young. It is important to inform religious and community leaders on the advantages of delaying marriage for wives, husbands, families, and communities. Government employees and others who serve as role models should also be involved.

National advocacy campaigns can take various forms:

- Pushing for an increase in the legal age of marriage; alternatively, more crucially, making sure that the legal age of marriage is implemented, based on suggestions from the UN Special Session on Women (Beijing+5) in 2000.
- Advancing a successful system for registering births, marriages, and deaths

- Establishing small-scale research projects to investigate the effects of early marriage and disseminating the results.
- Raise awareness through social mobilisation involving national opinion leaders, lawmakers, women's networks, and community leaders, as well as national and worldwide Women's Days.
- collaborating with the media and other avenues of communication to highlight the rights of women, such as equality, educational opportunities, and freedom from discrimination and exploitation.
- Collaborating with guys to encourage a shift in mindset. International organizations—both non-governmental and governmental—can and will support these advocacy initiatives by providing financial support and expert guidance in a range of specialised fields. However, more of these kinds of projects are required as they are still comparatively rare<sup>51</sup>.

### **2.1.5 Existing Challenges Encountered by the NGOs in their Fight against Early Marriage in Borno State.**

Children continue to experience a variety of forms of abuse despite the many legal tools used on a national and worldwide level to combat child abuse. This may be related to several things, such as:

- Inefficient Implementation of Laws and Policies

A multitude of laws and policies have been established to safeguard and direct matters of child abuse. Laws, however, are only effective when duly implemented and enforced by the necessary authorities. A large disparity between the goals and results as a result of poor execution has rendered the passed laws and policies laughable. In Nigeria's instance, this is partially explained

by the fact that none of the federation's states have ratified the Child Rights Act of 2003 (CRA). States that passed the Children's Readiness Act (CRA) have seen a proliferation of child abuse cases as a result of relevant bodies' inadequate commitment to implementing the law's provisions. This is related to the cost that will be incurred in order to enforce the CRA's rules. The provision of facilities, such as courts and schools, as well as manpower, such as judges, law enforcement officers, magistrates, and employees of non-governmental organisations, will be necessary for the CRA to be implemented smoothly and successfully.

These individuals will also need to undergo training on child protection laws, procedures, and the proper channels for seeking redress. In cases where the guardians are the ones doing the abuse, some examined scholarly work here asserted that operational bottlenecks are also related to or experienced in the legal system when seeking justice. This is because the youngster is unable to initiate legal action on their own and is dependent on their guardians for court support. Furthermore, people are discouraged from coming forward and reporting abuse incidents due to the length and deadlines of the legal process. Technicalities in the legal system can prevent justice from being served, which can occasionally result in the perpetrator winning the case<sup>52</sup>. Because there is a perception that they can get away with any action they take due to a number of technicalities, including insufficient evidence, this does not deter perpetrators from carrying out abuse.

### **Lack of Awareness**

It is noteworthy that child abuse has remained widespread. This relates to the reporting that victims and their families have done. This underreporting is a result of ignorance fostered by certain cultural behaviours and attitudes that violate children's rights and, as a result, promote

abuse. Because these cultural practices are accepted in the community, a sizable portion of people are ignorant that they violate children's rights and are considered abuse. Supporting this perspective is the evidence that many detrimental cultural attitudes and practices, especially those that affect girls, have been practiced for a long time. For example, early child marriage, tribal markings, female genital mutilations, and tattoos are considered to be a part of their culture and practice. Therefore, it is imperative to emphasise that the cultural rationalisation of multiple forms of abuse that are associated with cultural norms, as well as the victims' reluctance to disclose their experiences—in this case, children—have proven detrimental to both the long-term welfare of the child and the country as a whole<sup>53</sup>.

#### **2.1.6 Gender-Based Violence**

Violence against a person because of their gender identity, biological sex, or perceived conformity to socially constructed standards of masculinity and femininity. It encompasses coercion, threats, arbitrary deprivation of liberty, physical, sexual, and psychological abuse, as well as economic deprivation that can take place in a public or private setting. GBV can happen at any stage of life and takes many different forms.

Social norms and power dynamics are intricately linked to the patterns and prevalence of gender-based violence (GBV). However, gender-based violence (GBV) not only constitutes a basic breach of human rights, but it also profoundly damages the societies it impacts, causing psychological distress, destroying community cohesiveness, stigmatising survivors, and impairing developmental outcomes. Early marriages increase the risk of gender-based violence (GBV) in the northeast Nigeria has emphasised the conclusions of multiple researchers that emergencies worsen the global prevalence of gender-based violence. Furthermore, because of the humanitarian crisis in the northeast, communities and Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) are

still at serious risk for protection, with little access to services for GBV prevention and response as well as reproductive health<sup>54</sup>.

Female infanticide, child sexual abuse, forced labour and sex trafficking, sexual coercion and abuse, neglect, domestic violence, elder abuse, and destructive traditional practices like honour murders, early and forced marriage, and female genital mutilation/cutting are among the types of gender-based violence (GBV), as are.

Violence against an individual based on their gender or sexual orientation is referred to as gender-based violence. This includes acts that cause physical, mental, or sexual pain or suffering, threats of such acts, coercion, or other forms of deprivation of liberty. It covers acts of physical, sexual, and psychological abuse committed by family members, members of the public, or by the government and its institutions. These acts of violence might be very diverse.

It should be noted that the phrases violence against women and sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV) may be used in different contexts. Though there are terminologies used differently, the approaches and actions used to stop and deal with this kind of violence are identical. While "gender" refers to social differences that are learnt, can change over time, and can vary greatly both within and between cultures, "sex" refers to biologically determined and fixed differences between males and females. Gender is a socio-economic, cultural, and political characteristic that may be used to examine how men and women behave in various settings and what their demands, opportunities, and restraints are. drawn from Arts. 1 and 2 of the UNGA Declaration on the Elimination of Violence Against Women, A/RES/48/104 of December 20, 1993.

One in four women who have ever been married have reported experiencing some form of domestic violence, such as physical, emotional, or sexual abuse by their spouse or partner, according to a UNFPA research from 2018. In 2017, thirty percent of women in the six northern

states reported having suffered gender-based violence and/or sexual abuse, notwithstanding the large number of instances that went unreported that year. A number of other evaluations that have been done draw attention to the concerning and concerning susceptibilities of women, particularly young girls and women, to increased risk of GBV. These vulnerabilities include child employment and early marriage, which also affect boys, albeit to a lower degree. Intimate partner violence, or domestic violence, accounted for 44% of the circumstances underlying GBV occurrences, the largest percentage. This suggests that even in settings that are most suited to safeguard women and girls, concerns about their safety and security persist<sup>55</sup>.

Gender-based violence concerns encompass the following:

#### **2.1.6.1 Harmful Traditional Practices**

Included are practices such as infanticide, sex-selective abortion, forced marriage, child marriage, honour or dowry killings or maiming, female genital mutilation/cutting (FGM/C), sex-selective neglect and abuse, and denying women and girls access to economic and educational opportunities.

#### **2.1.6.2 Sexual Violence**

This covers actual instances of verbal, anal, or vaginal rape that are attempted or threatened, including rape in marriage; forced prostitution; sexual abuse and exploitation; transactional/survival sex; and sexual harassment, intimidation, and humiliation. Since 2009, the prevalence of sexual violence has increased by 7.7%. Major problems still surround rape, sexual assault, and exploitation, particularly the rape of minors (13). For example, 46% of violations for which survivors sought treatment between August and December of 2016 involved rape. In October 2016, Human Rights Watch (HRW) published a report that included specific instances of sexual assault and rape committed by military personnel and government agents, including

soldiers, camp leaders, police officers, and vigilante groups. For instance, women and girls in numerous IDP camps in Borno have reported engaging in transactional or survival sex for a number of reasons, such as obtaining food aid and the ability to enter and exit the camps freely. The conditions and overpopulation in the camps and host towns restrict privacy and make it harder to achieve human rights and dignity. Due to ongoing uncertainty and dwindling resources, some women and girls are turning to these harmful coping techniques. Families are providing their girls to older men who they believe have the financial means of supporting them in order to obtain food, guarantee social security, and provide safety. Additionally, there have been more complaints of child prostitution in host communities and camps. In a society where social/economic injustices and patriarchal gender norms have conspired to diminish the status of women, this is combined with a culture of silence<sup>56</sup>.

**2.1.6.3 Physical Violence:** comprises physical assault or violence, whether actual, attempted, or threatened; slavery and acts resembling slavery; and trafficking. In some regions of Borno state, Boko Haram kidnaps women and girls and forces them into sexual slavery. The women and girls are then forced into early marriages with the fighters, which results in unintended pregnancies and war-born children. Speaking with women in the northeast, researchers have discovered a picture of violence and intimidation, with women being targeted more frequently for forced marriage and kidnapping.

**2.1.6.4 Psychological violence:** comprises mistreatment and humiliation, such as taunts, harsh and degrading treatment, making someone perform embarrassing activities, and putting limits on their freedom of movement and liberty.

**2.1.6.5 Socio-economic violence:** includes social exclusion; obstructive legal procedures, such as preventing the exercise and enjoyment of civil, social, economic, cultural, and political rights,

particularly for women and girls; and discrimination and denial of opportunities or services based on sex, gender, or sexual orientation.

## **2.1.7 NGOs Programmes and the Fight against Early Marriage in Borno State**

### **2.1.7.1 Strategy Development Process**

The Federal Ministry of Women and Social Affairs and Development (FMWASD) requested and provided instructions for the Gender Based Violence Sub-Sector Working Group (GBVSWG) to design this plan. The United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) hired a consultant in 2016 to conduct in-depth stakeholder discussions on important aspects of GBV in emergency programming. The sector co-leads were included in the programme development process at various stages of consultation in order to create the comprehensive humanitarian response strategy for Nigeria. Key targets and indicators for the subsector were decided upon by GBV partners during a consultation hosted by the Protection Sector Working Group (PSWG) in October 2016. After that, a second meeting was scheduled with PSWG partners to discuss streamlining operations and identifying target audiences<sup>57</sup>.

GBVSWG partners convened in December 2016 for their yearly retreat, where they evaluated the state of the 2016 response plan's execution and deliberated on the principal concerns, requirements, and areas of focus for 2017 intervention. Together with their Abuja counterparts, the main GBV sub sector partners from the impacted states of Borno, Adamawa, Yobe, and Gombe attended this conference.

The initiatives outlined in the GBV subsector strategy address the HRP 2017's overarching goals. The experiences learned during the implementation of 2016 and significant contextual

developments—specifically, the return process, recently liberated areas, and the humanitarian community's newfound understanding of the need for an integrated response backed by humanitarian hubs—form the basis of this strategy. It is intended to act as a guide for service delivery, coordination, mitigation, and prevention. This plan is dynamic and adaptable; it will be changed in response to changes in security, accessibility, funding, and the availability of human resources, among other factors<sup>57</sup>.

In North East Nigeria, six out of ten female respondents stated they had experienced one or more forms of gender-based violence, making the need to give priority to this strategy even more urgent. In recent times, GBV, and particularly instances of sexual assault, have gained prominence. GBV prevalence was 28% nationally and 30% in the Northeast prior to this point. Similarly, the prevalence of sexual violence was 16% as opposed to 7% across the country.

**2.1.7.2 Prevention and Response:** The Northeastern GBV subsector is promoting integrated ways to address the needs of survivors. For example, clinics for women and teenage girls have been built inside planned humanitarian hubs, which also include centres for reproductive health and maternity health. UNFPA has finished one such hub at Muna Garage. Offering a thorough response to GBV survivors through clinical management of rape services, case management, and psychological support services is a component of this integrated response. procurement and distribution of dignity kits, which include reusable pads and clothes that are appropriate for the local culture, to women and girls; provision of start-up grants and other livelihood support initiatives to vulnerable women and adolescent girls from Borno, Adamawa, and Yobe states; and acquisition and development of skills. In Borno, Yobe, and Adamawa, key partners run safe places that are conducive to women and girls and are geared towards them<sup>58</sup>.

The rise in GBV case reporting and the improvement in help-seeking behaviour, particularly among child survivors, can be attributed to outreach, communication, and discussions about GBV prevention and mitigation with local and traditional leaders. In order to address the needs of GBV survivors in areas like Clinical Management of Rape (CMR), Minimum Initial Service Package (MISP), and Mental Health & Psychosocial Support (MHPSS), among others, partners in the sector have also supported frontline service providers' capacity enhancement.

A key component of the response has also been the procurement and delivery of emergency reproductive health kits, delivery kits, rape treatment kits with post-exposure prophylaxis, and cold chain equipment to medical facilities.

The Protection Sector Working Group (PSWG) has included the GBVSWG as a functional component from April 2015. The PSWG coordinates a comprehensive multi-sector strategy to GBV prevention and response. Additionally, UNFPA oversees and directs the national level as well as the GBV and sexual and reproductive health subsectors in Borno, Adamawa, Yobe, and Gombe. In Nigeria, the GBVSWG is chaired by the Federal Ministry of Women Affairs and Social Development (FMWASD) and the corresponding line ministries at the state level. Through the establishment of referral channels, Standard Operating Procedures, and periodic mapping of facilities and services, efforts have been made to improve coordination of the multi-sector response to the needs of GBV survivors. The GBVIMS is operational and is presently being implemented to facilitate prompt data gathering, evaluation, and analysis, as well as communication and information exchange of crucial GBV response data<sup>59</sup>.

### **2.1.7.3 Prevention of Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (PSEA)**

In response to the growing body of evidence regarding sexual exploitation and abuse occurring in impacted areas, the subsector created and shared an advocacy note outlining suggestions for

relevant sectors to take in order to lessen sexual assault and harassment. A PSEA action plan was created and implemented, with an emphasis on multi-sectoral and multi-agency execution, and given priority within the Protection Sector. Advocacy campaigns with the different sectors, information education and communication (campaigns), PSEA materials, and mainstreaming documents for the sectors, IDPs, and host communities have all made progress,<sup>13, 77</sup>. Initiatives to increase the military's and other security personnel's capability as well as those of humanitarian actors have been undertaken, along with a revision of the current complaints and feedback procedure. It is being planned to create a PSEA task force/network with agency and sector focus points<sup>60</sup>.

## **2.2 Theoretical Framework**

This subject has a number of theoretical foundations that it could draw upon. Nonetheless, the Political Economy theory of marriage and the Feminist-Marxist theory were applied for the purposes of this study. The following theories are examined:

### **2.2.1 The Feminist-Marxist theory**

This theory is relevant to our research since it discusses both the unfair categorization of some members of society and the emancipation of the feminine gender. Within the framework of our conversation, the plight of women and girls, in particular, is related to the feminist movement and the unfair discrimination Marxists debate. Accordingly, the idea belongs to the conformist feminist-marxist theoretical perspective on society and its events. Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels' theoretical frameworks are also used in the school to methodically illuminate women's roles in society. It is maintained that social events and human behaviour within a society are defined by the material prearrangement of the dominant social structure. A capitalist society, for example, is organised into two classes: the bourgeois class and the proletariat, or impoverished

class<sup>61</sup>. The majority of women belong to the underprivileged class, which includes the impoverished and oppressed masses. The Ruling Class or Bourgeoisie abuses and ignores this class far too much.

One important area of sociology is called feminist theory, which changes the field's norms, analytical framework, and present emphasis from being on the experiences and viewpoints of men on women. In the context of social theory, feminist theory thereby illuminates social issues, trends, and crises that the historically dominant male would otherwise overlook or misidentify.

Feminist philosophy primarily focuses on the following areas:

- Objectification; • Gender-based perception and exclusion;
- Inequality, both structural and economic
- Occupation and power
- Stereotypes and functions associated to gender<sup>62</sup>.

It is important to remember that the goal of feminist theory has always been to promote the quest of equality and justice by shedding light on the mechanisms that give rise to and maintain oppression, injustice, and inequality in society. Many feminist theories focus on the connections and experiences that women and girls have in society because historically, their perspectives and experiences have been marginalised in social theory and the social sciences. This ensures that half of the world's population is included in our understanding of social forces, relationships, and issues<sup>63</sup>.

While women made up a significant portion of feminist thinkers in the past, people of all genders are now supporting this hierarchy. By reorienting social theory away from men's viewpoints and experiences, feminist theorists have produced more innovative and inclusive social theories than those that presume that the social actor is always male. Feminist theory is creative and inclusive in part because it takes into account the interactions between systems of power and oppression. This means that in addition to focusing on gendered power and oppression, it also examines how these may intersect with other systems of oppression, such as hierarchical class, systemic racism, sexuality, nationality, and disability. Among the domains of feminist thought are the following:

### **Gender Differences**

Certain feminist ideas offer a structured approach to comprehending the ways in which women's experiences and social positioning vary from those of men. Cultural feminists, for instance, attribute the disparities between men's and women's experiences of the social environment to the various values attached to femininity. Some feminist theorists contend that gender disparities, particularly the sexual division of labour in the family, are best explained by the different responsibilities that men and women are assigned in institutions.

Women's marginalisation and definition as the "other" in patriarchal settings is the main concern of existential and phenomenological feminists. Certain feminist theorists place particular emphasis on how masculinity emerges via socialisation and how it interacts with girls' processes of developing femininity<sup>63</sup>.

### **Liberal Feminists**

Women's experiences and social placement are not only different from men's, but also unequal, according to feminist views that centre on gender inequality. Liberal feminists contend that while women are just as capable of moral reasoning and behaviour as men, historically patriarchy—particularly the gendered division of labor—has prevented women from expressing and putting this reasoning into practice. This particular dynamic effectively confines women to the solitude of the home and prevents them from fully engaging in public life. Liberal feminists draw attention to the fact that women in heterosexual marriages experience gender inequity and that marriage confers no benefits onto women<sup>63</sup>. Married women, according to these feminist theorists, are more stressed out than single women and married males. Therefore, in order for women to achieve marriage equality, the sexual division of labour in both the public and private sectors needs to be changed.

### **Gender Oppression**

Ideas of gender subordination go beyond ideas of gender difference and gender inequality, claiming that men are deliberately oppressed, subjugated, and even mistreated, in addition to the fact that women and men are different and unequal.

### **Psychoanalytic Feminists**

Psychoanalytic feminists reinterpret Sigmund Freud's theories regarding human emotions, childhood development, and subconscious and unconscious processes in an effort to explain power dynamics between men and women. They contend that the emergence and perpetuation of patriarchy cannot be entirely explained by intentional calculation.

### **Radical Feminists**

Radical feminists contend that although being a woman has inherent benefits, patriarchal systems that oppress women do not acknowledge this. They see physical violence as the cornerstone of patriarchy, but they also believe that women can overcome it if they accept their own power and value, build trustworthy sisterhoods with other women, confront oppression, and establish separatist networks centred on women's private and public sphere.

### **Structural Oppression**

According to theories of structural oppression, racism, patriarchy, and capitalism are to blame for the inequality and oppression of women. Marxist feminists concur with Friedrich Engels and Karl Marx that capitalism exploits the working class, but they also attempt to extend this exploitation to gender. Conversely, proponents of intersectionality theory aim to elucidate how oppression and injustice occur across multiple dimensions, such as age, gender, race, ethnicity, and class. They provide the crucial realisation that not all women suffer oppression in the same ways and that people of colour and other marginalised groups are also oppressed by the same forces that aim to oppress women and girls. The gender wage gap, which indicates that males often make more money than women for doing the same labour, is one way that structural oppression of women—more specifically, economic inequality—appear in society. When comparing the incomes of white males and women of colour, a cross-sectional analysis of this circumstance reveals that the former group is penalised considerably more. This branch of feminist theory was expanded in the latter half of the 20th century to explain how capitalism became global and how its means of generating and accumulating wealth depended on the exploitation of working women everywhere<sup>63</sup>.

After examining each of these feminist theories, the liberal and radical feminism theories served as the foundation for the theoretical framework employed in this investigation. Democratic principles, human rights, and natural justice form the foundation of liberal feminism's theory. Equal access to school, enrolment, and employment possibilities are emphasised. Affirmative action is also recommended by the idea as a tactic for women and girls in the home, in work, and in schools. Liberal feminism, on the other hand, is the kind of feminism that was selected for this study since it was among the first and holds that women's subordinate position in society is due to unequal chances that do not separate them from males.

### **2.2.2 The Political Economy Theory of Marriage**

Few economists have published theories of marriage or employed a theoretical approach to marriage in their empirical studies, despite the importance of marriage to human civilization. Families, businesses, and governments are the three main entities in charge of controlling and governing these activities. Families are in charge of production and distribution within their own households (intra-household allocation), whereas businesses and governments handle resource allocation between households. Notwithstanding nuanced legal definitions, the study of marriage encompasses two main areas of study: (1) the formation and dissolution of couples, which are the two main ways that families are formed; and (2) the analysis of financial decisions made by married households, particularly those pertaining to institutions and the state of the marriage market.

Early Marxists like Engel highlighted how property structures affect families and marriage. The other aspect of marriage's political economy is the bargaining that takes place between husband and wife. Game theories, both cooperative and non-cooperative, are the foundation of this

tradition, which was established in the early 1980s by Marilyn Manser, Murray Brown, Marjorie McElroy, and Mary Jane Horney. These theories often examine the distribution between husband and wife and the factors that determine production in marriages taking marriage as granted. This viewpoint is helpful in examining how husbands and spouses decide how to divide up their combined resources<sup>64</sup>.

The market value of time spent in a marriage is determined by a number of factors, including: (1) supply and demand levels; (2) the presence of a market mechanism in the matching of brides and grooms; and (3) the resources and bargaining power within a marriage. These factors collectively impact men and women's worth in marriage.

Laws governing marriage and divorce, for instance, have an impact on the overall conditions in markets for spouse labour; no-fault divorce laws, on the other hand, reduce the number of traditional women's expected divorce settlements and thus, the supply of women's spousal labour. In states where divorce is illegal, marriage markets are less flexible in allowing husbands and wives to be reallocated, and the market worth of a marriage is less likely to change over time. The political economics of marriage provides an explanation for a number of elements related to marriage and divorce, including the frequency of these events, the nature of marriage (consensual or formal), and the number of wives in a polygamous culture. It is also useful in elucidating subjects closer to the centre of economics, such labour supply and consumption. Applied research in this area helps to explain why spouses who have comparatively greater access to the family's income are more likely to engage in child- and wife-oriented consumption<sup>65</sup>.

The study of labour supply has also benefited from the political economy of marriage. Studies have indicated that the labour force involvement of married women is influenced by marriage

and divorce systems, sex ratios, and individual resources of value in marriage markets. Political trends have also been explained by the political economy of marriage. The emergence of feminism in the United States during the early 1970s was largely due to the high number of women who were born during the baby-boom entering adulthood. Because males marry at a younger age than women on average, baby-boom women had less demand for their spousal labour and their marriages had a lower market worth than those of previous generations of American women.

Young women at the period needed assistance adjusting to the objectively lower market worth of time in marriage and, consequently, lower opportunities for traditional marriage, which is one of the reasons feminist ideologies appealed to them so much.

Because it recognised the social, political, and economic contributions that women make to society, this theory is pertinent to the research at hand. The original societal perspective and attitude towards women is embodied in the social values. According to the literature reviewed, this perception and attitude have frequently been on the negative side with issues like early marriage for girl children, gender discrimination, gender-based violence, and so on. However, the narratives began to change with the advent of certain movements, right-groups, and legislation (such as human rights and feminist movements). Over time, as the reorientation gained traction, society started to recognise the financial worth of the female gender. Women are now considered important in the distribution, allocation, and production processes of products and services. As a result, families, businesses, and governments—the three main institutions that control and oversee production—now include women. Women play a part in more than only childrearing. It became clear at this moment that women are very valuable economically, even

when they are married couples. Equal rights for men and women are therefore necessary, as is the elimination of some of these harmful stereotypes about the feminine gender<sup>66</sup>.

### **2.3 Review of Empirical Studies**

At this point, the academic works of earlier research on the topic will be examined. Among these earlier creations are the following:

A study was conducted to look at the causes, effects, and mitigating strategies of girl-child marriage in Nigerian society. They were fixated on the idea that child marriage, while accepted and practiced in some communities, is a basic violation of human rights. Thus, led by three study questions and four null hypotheses, they used an opinion survey using a structured questionnaire that was graded on a 4-point Likert scale to ascertain the cause, impact on Nigerian society, and acceptability of potential solutions. According to the study's conclusions, a variety of reasons, such as poverty, parental ignorance, customs, peer pressure, familial ties, and so forth, contribute to the ongoing practice of early girl-child marriage. Early girl child marriages have been linked to a number of negative social effects, including social insecurity, pressure on the health system, high rates of illiteracy, higher death rates, and high divorce rates. According to the report, empowering girls, enacting laws that promote gender equality, and starting awareness campaigns about the negative effects of early girl marriage are some of the mitigating tactics. Given that education enhances participants' lifestyle and decision-making, the research suggests that all genders should have access to it<sup>67</sup>.

In Nigeria, a similar study was conducted to look into child abuse and how it affects sustainable development. The study employed an opinion study design to identify various forms of abuse, including female genital mutilation, molestation, child labour, physical abuse, neglect, marriage, and emotional and psychological abuse. It also established that factors such as poverty, cultural

and religious beliefs, and inadequate enforcement of child protective regulations contribute to the spread of these abhorrent practices, especially in developing nations like Nigeria. The authors emphasise that since children are the next generation and will be the leaders of the future, how societies treat them will determine how developed a nation is overall. For this reason, it is critical to address this threat as soon as possible. The study suggests a number of actions, including hiring qualified individuals to manage children's affairs in order to prevent exploitation, molestation, and neglect; the government should also build more orphanages; and non-governmental organisations should receive financial support in their efforts to educate, rehabilitate, and empower victims and children. Finally, NGOs should offer precise information on the victims and offenders of these crimes<sup>68</sup>.

Additionally, academic research was conducted on the testimonies of adult Nigerian women who were silent about their early marriages in Sokoto. Six married Nigerian women from Sokoto state, ages eight to fifteen, participated in qualitative interviews. The interviews delved into the experiences of young women as they prepared for marriage, navigated marriage, became pregnant, and understood their roles as parents and spouses. They investigate women's limited representations of their early marriage experiences through interpretive phenomenological analysis, taking into account the social environment in which women's identities are formed and maintained by beliefs and customs related to marriage and motherhood. They also look at how difficult it is to hear women's stories when their identities are entwined with culturally constructed notions of femininity that are specifically meant to silence and limit the venues in which women can speak. The examination uncovered a nuanced interplay between subtle resistances, frequently manifested as conflicts and tensions within the story, and compliance to prevailing notions about femininity and women's role in marriage. Women's opposition to

patriarchal authority was not overt. Stereotypical descriptions of women's roles in the home—obey, perform domestic duties, and be happy—reinforce submission to masculine power. However, the clichéd nature of this limited story suggests that marriage is a confining and recurring cycle for women. Without explicitly articulating it, the stereotypical response itself conveys the interviewee's experience of marriage<sup>69</sup>.

A different researcher examined the impact of faith and voice on early marriage in a state in Nigeria. The study looked at how spiritual leaders may help teenage females in Kaduna state with their cause regarding when to get married. Three local government districts—Chikun (mixed Christians and Muslims), Makarfi (majority Muslims), and Zangon-Kataf (majority Christians)—were purposefully chosen to represent a range of mixed religious environments for this qualitative study. The researcher conducted 12 key informant interviews with various stakeholders, 24 focus group conversations with adolescent females, and 24 in-depth interviews with faith leaders using purposive sampling techniques. The framework technique was employed in the study to analyse the qualitative data. According to the study, religious leaders are crucial in promoting or opposing early marriage through their sermons and other actions. Regarding early marriage, the survey classifies spiritual leaders into three groups. Some take the initiative and talk about it. The second group consists of docile religious leaders who are apathetic in some way but have never advocated for or against early marriage. The final group comprises of religious authorities who support early marriage and believe it is still advantageous. According to the report, church leaders should be viewed as an essential component of any effort to reduce early marriage because of their social standing and important role in approving marriages<sup>70</sup>.

In an effort to stop violence against women, another study was conducted on the topic of gender equality promotion. One of a seven-part series on the evidence for interventions to prevent

interpersonal and self-directed violence, the briefing on violence prevention is intended to inform advocates, programme designers, implementers, and others. The remaining six briefings focus on decreasing access to lethal weapons, fostering more secure, stable, and nurturing relationships between kids and their parents or other primary carers, helping kids and adolescents develop life skills, decreasing access to and abuse of alcohol, altering cultural norms that condone violence, and victim identification, care, and support. Promoting gender equality as a crucial component of violence prevention, utilising school-based programmes to address gender norms and attitudes before they deeply embed in children and youth, and implementing community interventions that can empower women and engage with men are some of the intervention programmes that are being used. The study also suggested promoting women's rights and changing gender stereotypes through media interventions<sup>71</sup>.

The definition and analysis of girl child marriage and its implications for global public health were conducted by a thorough study of primary and secondary materials, which included books, peer-reviewed journals, legal documents, and grey literature from a variety of academic fields. They discussed the meaning of an early marriage. In order to do this, they delve into various perspectives on gender, marriage, and kids. Their research revealed that, from the late 1800s, the definition of early marriage in published literature has changed historically. It is now recognised as a political, sociocultural, and value-laden phrase that has multiple meanings depending on the context and the time period. The absence of standard nomenclature makes it difficult for various stakeholders to agree on what the issue is, how to quantify it, and how to develop solutions for solving it. As a result, they support the deliberate use of language in international studies on gender-based violence and early marriage<sup>72</sup>.

Similarly, an investigation looked at early marriage in Nigeria as a human rights violation and a kind of gender-based violence. According to the author, child marriage rituals are practiced all throughout the world, with youngsters typically being married off much before they reach puberty or even the legal age of marriage as set forth by Nigerian and other national laws. According to their research, these kinds of activities are common around the world, especially in South America, Asia, and Africa. The worst part is that early weddings are commonly linked to parent-arranged unions, in which the female spouse is typically a child and there is only one marital partner. Despite the fact that many African nations have legal minimum marriage ages of sixteen or eighteen, depending on the nation, this practice has persisted. They discovered that the prevalence of early marriages in Sub-Saharan Africa is increased by a number of factors, including violence, poverty, religion, and custom. In particular, they discovered that most cultures in Nigeria have a high rate of early marriage, with the majority of girls getting married by the age of fifteen and a number of others getting married by the age of eighteen. In certain tribes in Nigeria's northwest, this practice is very common; human rights organisations have made a point of denouncing early marriages. The practice has significantly decreased in some parts of Nigeria as a result of the study that highlights the associated dangers. The findings indicated that much more work is required to end the harmful cultural practice of child marriage of young girls in Nigeria and provided a solution to its threat, even in the face of a legal regime on early marriage and Nigeria's international human rights obligations<sup>73</sup>.

A study on gender-based violence prevention, mitigation, and response in the humanitarian setting was conducted by an NGO-Gender Based Working Group. The study recognised how social norms and power dynamics are intricately linked to the occurrence and persistence of gender-based violence (GBV). They believed that in addition to being a basic violation of human

rights, gender-based violence (GBV) does profound harm to the societies it impacts, affecting aspects such as development outcomes, community cohesiveness, psychosocial trauma, and the stigmatisation of survivors. They further reduced the threat of gender-based violence (GBV), which has been worsened by the crisis in northeastern Nigeria. This has highlighted the results of multiple experts, who have found that GBV is more common during times of emergency around the world. Their approach outlined and examined the state of GBV in northeastern Nigeria, outlining the true needs, difficulties, and course of action. It also included prevention, mitigation, and response in terms of medical, case management, and psychosocial support, safety and security, mental health, access to justice, rule of law (RoL), and coordination. A thorough action plan including of tasks that correspond to the requirements and priorities noted by the GBV players and communities was also included. In addition to ensuring that women, girls, boys, and men are protected from gender-based violence, it provided a useful manual for crucial life-saving interventions that will enable them to become fully engaged members of their communities. In order to identify the parameters for the framework of interventions for GBV prevention, response, and mitigation, the study supported the inclusivity and participation of impacted persons and communities. The study found that better outcomes for those residing in crisis-affected areas, increased access to comprehensive and well-coordinated GBV response services, including livelihood support for survivors, increased awareness of and improvements to systems for GBV prevention, including SEA through risk factor mitigation and strengthening community protection strategies, mainstreaming of GBV into all humanitarian response, and maintenance of updated comprehensive data necessary to inform advocacy, planning, implementation, and monitoring and evaluation of interventions are all ways to achieve GBV prevention, mitigation, and response<sup>74</sup>.

In order to stop violence against women, a study on gender equality was conducted. One of a seven-part series on the evidence supporting interventions to prevent interpersonal and self-directed violence, their briefing is intended for advocates, programme designers, implementers, and other relevant parties. The remaining six briefings address a variety of topics, including decreasing access to lethal weapons, fostering more secure, stable, and nurturing relationships between kids and their parents or other primary carers, helping kids and adolescents develop life skills, decreasing the availability and abuse of alcohol, altering cultural norms that condone violence, and victim identification, support, and care. Their activities to combat gender-based violence included community interventions, media interventions, educational efforts that are well-positioned to reduce violence against women, and gender equality promotion as an essential component of violence prevention<sup>75</sup>.

A different NGO used a qualitative study design to investigate how to collaborate to end child marriage<sup>34</sup>. They believed that stopping child marriage is a multifaceted issue because it perpetuates the risk that young marriage poses to girls, which is further reinforced by gender discrimination, exposure to violence, and unequal access to healthcare, nutrition, and education. According to the report, too many governments worldwide fail to prioritise ending child marriage in their political agendas and to effectively coordinate measures in the areas of economics, justice, nutrition, education, health, and protection. As a result, the world will fall well short of the Sustainable Development Goal aim to stop child marriage, meaning that 134 million girls will get married between 2018 and 2030 and about 10 million will marry in 2030 alone if stakeholders do not act quickly. According to data research by Save the Children, 51 million child marriages may be avoided by 2030 if secondary education for girls were made universal.

Governments therefore have the power to change millions of girls' futures as well as the futures of their society. In order to accomplish this, governments must work harder to create and carry out comprehensive, multisectoral national action plans to eliminate child marriage. They must also collaborate across ministries and stakeholders to provide efficient, coordinated solutions that address the underlying causes of gender imbalance<sup>76</sup>.

An academic investigation into the impact of early marriage in Benue State was conducted. In particular, the study evaluated the prevalence of early child marriage in Benue society and offered suggestions for how to stop it. The study used secondary sources to obtain data in accordance with the qualitative research design. Data analysis was done using the expository and evaluative approaches. The study discovered that a variety of variables, such as chauvinism, ignorance, and poverty, are to blame for early marriage. The study also found that early marriage had negative impacts on the people involved, the family, and society as a whole. Thus, it was determined that it is illegal and should be avoided on all fronts when someone under the age of 18 marries. As a result, it was suggested that sufficient awareness be raised, poverty be reduced, and pertinent laws be put into place in order to prevent early marriage<sup>77</sup>.

In the Bade Emirate of Yobe State, Nigeria, a study was conducted to investigate the impact of early marriage and its implications on the education of girl children. With 50 participants from each Local Government Area, a total of one hundred (100) respondents were randomly sampled for the study using an opinion survey research design. Married and single men and women between the ages of 14 and 25 made up the sample. A validated survey was employed as the data gathering tool. The questionnaire was split into two sections, A and B. Section B has the four-figure scale (S.A. = strongly agree, A. = agree, S.D. = strongly disagree, and D. = disagree). Section A is for personal information. The findings suggest that married girls in Yobe state, and

specifically the Bade Emirate Council, have numerous detrimental social, educational, and health ramifications<sup>78</sup>.

A similar study, Nigeria and child marriage: legal challenges, complexities, consequences, opportunities, and solutions, was conducted<sup>120</sup>. They saw that child marriage, which is viewed by families and communities as the best way to safeguard children, is frequently used as a crisis management tactic. This observation was linked to parental and child reports that early marriage was acceptable in the majority of communities due to fear of rape and sexual assault, unintended pregnancies outside of marriage, family shame and dishonour, homelessness, and poverty or starvation. Early marriages are largely caused by poverty, inadequate legal protections and enforcement, damaging customs, discrimination based on gender, and a dearth of options for girls, particularly in the area of education. But in addition to what was already noted, their investigation revealed that a lack of political will and a patchwork of laws contribute to the failure to apprehend and prosecute criminals, allowing them to hide behind religion and carry out crimes against humanity. Thus, their study uses content analysis data to fill in the gaps and map the path to a better, less hopeless future for girl children. They advised all parties involved, particularly the National Assembly and the government, to take up the issue of harmonising all relevant laws in order to prevent child marriage in Nigeria<sup>79</sup>.

A study conducted in the Middle East looked at early marriage and motherhood from the viewpoint of Iranian adolescent mothers. To analyse the qualitative data, the study used an inductive conventional content analysis approach. In the Iranian province of Kerman, in-person, comprehensive, semi-structured interviews were done with sixteen Iranian adolescent moms. Data analysis was performed using MAX-QDA software, and data collection was continued until saturation was achieved. The findings indicated that a number of variables, including

technological, cultural, social, personal, and economic ones, promote young people to get married and have children. Comprehending these variables can aid healthcare professionals who specialise in maternal and pediatric health in offering suitable evaluations and remedies to enhance the well-being of this demographic<sup>80</sup>.

Positive outcomes have been reported in the Americas, though, especially for the Youth Relationship Project in Canada and the Safe Dates programme of gender-based violence in the United States. Safe Dates is a school and community initiative that targets eighth and ninth grade girls and boys (13–15-year-old). It contains a ten session educational programme, a theatre show, a poster contest, training for providers of community services and support services for affected adolescents. Dating programmes are more effective if they are delivered in multiple sessions over time (rather than in a single session) and if they aim to change attitudes and norms rather than simply providing information. A randomised controlled trial of the programme found that one month after the programme ended and four years later, participants reported less psychological abuse and sexual and physical violence against their current dating partner (compared to members of a control group). Additionally, there is evidence that programmes offered to groups of men and women had a greater impact on modifying attitudes than those offered to groups of males only<sup>81</sup>.

While most assessed school interventions addressing dating violence have been carried out in the United States and other developed nations, several activities are being introduced in developing nations. For example, a Nigerian adaption of the Safe Dates curriculum for 13–14-year-old secondary school students is currently undergoing evaluation. Additionally, clubs for kids in SS1 through SS3 have been formed by the Men as Partners initiative. These aspire boys to become responsible fathers and to cease sexual and domestic abuse of women and girls. An evaluation of

the curriculum is still pending. The attitudes regarding violence are shifting as a result of these activities aimed at both men and women<sup>82</sup>.

According to a recent article published in Thisday Newspaper on November 20, 2021, 78% of females in northern Nigeria get married before turning 18. Save the Children released the "State of the Nigerian Girl Report - An Incisive Diagnosis of Child Marriage" in Abuja in 2018. It said as much as possible;

*“Early marriage is more prevalent in the north-west and north-east of Nigeria, where 48 per cent of girls were married by age 15 and 78 per cent were married by age 18. “Also, 44 per cent of girls are married before their 18th birthday and the country records as one of the highest rates of child marriage globally.”*

The report also showed that women made up 44.1% of those aged 20 to 49 who were married or in a partnership for the first time before turning 18 while men made up 6%<sup>82</sup>.

It stated that no guy was in a relationship of this type, although the percentage of young people, aged 15 to 19, who are currently married or in a union for women is believed to be 22.2%.

Furthermore, the study calculated that 18.7% of males and 36.9% of women between the ages of 15 and 49 were estimated to be in polygamous relationships. These were cited as evidence that a sizable portion of women and girls are impacted by early child marriage. Additionally, a high percentage of children who are not in school, endemic poverty, poor education outcomes, school dropout rates, and limited access to basic social, economic, and healthcare services were all found to be strongly correlated with the prevalence of child early forced marriage (CEFM)<sup>83</sup>.

It also said that one of the key causes of child marriages, even in the wake of the Compulsory Free and Universal Basic Education Act of 2004, is girls' lack of access to high-quality, free, secure, continuous, and inclusive education. In Borno State, 89.13 percent of women between the

ages of 15 and 49 got married for the first time before turning 15. "Of them, 59% had no formal education, 42% had completed some elementary school, and 100% had not attended any secondary school. 46 percent of women in unions or marriages have partners who are at least ten years older than them. According to the report, 78 percent of Jigawa State's women in the 20–49 age range were married for the first time before turning eighteen, while 25 percent of women in the 15–19 age range are currently married or in unions, and 63 percent of women dropped out of school to get married. It also indicated that just 8% of women who married before turning 18 have meaningful employment and make more money than the national poverty level as set by the National Bureau of Statistics (NBS) for 2020. Additionally, it revealed that 65% of moms, fathers, and mothers-in-law support CEFM<sup>84</sup>.

Save the Children used community intervention to conduct another survey. In addition to changing people's thoughts and behaviours, community interventions seek to organise entire villages or districts to end violence against women. In order to engage men and boys, the programme also promotes engagement from the larger community. It seeks to expand women's economic possibilities, boost their social networks, lessen HIV transmission, and give them more power over family decisions and dispute resolution skills in marriages. Participants in a random controlled experiment reported 55% fewer violent actions by their intimate partners in the preceding 12 months than did members of a control group, two years after the curriculum was completed in various communities in Nigeria. While experiencing higher levels of controlling behaviour than those in the control group prior to the training, these women reported fewer episodes of controlling behaviour by their partners (34% of participants versus 42% of those in the control group). Furthermore, 52% of participants disagreed with statements that support physical and sexual abuse of an intimate partner, compared to 36% of the control group<sup>85</sup>.

Some community projects deal only with male peer groups, focusing on masculinity, gender norms, and violence, even if the majority of programmes engage women (alone or with males). This is indicative of an increasing understanding of the significance of involving men and boys in interventions to stop violence against women as well as to rethink ideas of masculinity centred on control and dominance. Community interventions seek to mobilise entire villages or districts in the fight against violence against women, in addition to changing the thoughts and behaviours of individual victims. In this instance, women who had participated in the workshop were asked if it had affected their experience of intimate partner violence in retrospect. Women who were able to bring home a resource that benefited their partners, thus improving their status in the household, were protected from intimate partner violence, as evidenced by the fact that their responses showed that they were less than half as likely as women living in villages without access to such programs to have been beaten by their partners in the previous year. Participation gave the women more opportunities to interact with people outside of their homes, which increased the visibility of their lives and the intimate relationship abuse they had experienced. The community as a whole benefited from these programmes as well. In villages with credit programmes in place, the prevalence of intimate partner violence among non-participating women was approximately 30% lower than that of non-participating women in villages without credit programs<sup>86</sup>.

Another study examines several community initiatives that combat gender-based violence and question gender norms and attitudes that support intimate partner abuse. The "Stepping Stones programme," a life-skills training intervention designed for HIV prevention and deployed in Africa and Asia, is the most extensively evaluated and universally accepted course. Sessions lasting several hours are conducted concurrently for groups of men and women who are single.

Meetings with mixed peer groups and the community serve to supplement this. The goal of Stepping Stones is to enhance sexual health by fostering more robust and equitable interactions between people of different genders. This showed that, in comparison to the men in a control group, fewer men who had taken part in the workshop had abused their intimate partners physically or sexually in the two years that followed the programme. Additionally, a qualitative assessment conducted in Nigeria over a one-year period with participating couples revealed that the men were less likely to beat their 65-year-old wives and more accepting of their unwillingness to have sex, and they also communicated better and quarreled less than the couples in the control group. In order to question gender norms and stop violence against women and children, the programme runs a community effort for both men and women. Women's rights are promoted by radio, television, and newspapers; community activities like theatre, talks, and door-to-door visits; and increasing awareness of domestic abuse and creating networks of action and support within the community and professional sectors. Following a two-year period, an evaluation of the initiative revealed a decline in all types of violence against intimate partners within the community. However, after the program's launch, 8% of women and 18% of men reported an increase in physical aggression against women<sup>87</sup>.

A five-day workshop in North East Nigeria was reviewed, and while it was not an independent study, it did not contain a control group for comparison, it did disclose some encouraging results. However, among the men who attended and answered the poll (67% of those in attendance), shifts in gender attitudes were noted. In a pre-training interview, for example, 54% of men disagreed with the assertion that "men must make all the decisions in a relationship," whereas three months later, 75% of men agreed. In a similar vein, 82% of men three months later

disagreed with 61% of men who said prior to training that "women who dress sexy want to be raped"<sup>88</sup>.

Even while assessments of community interventions suggest that they might be useful in lowering violence and altering gender attitudes and norms, more rigorous evaluation research is still required, especially for initiatives that target male peer groups. When facilitators are skilled and have gained the community's trust, community interventions are more successful. Additionally, community ownership of interventions, the concurrent use of a range of techniques and activities, sufficient and ongoing funding, and the backing of influential political figures are all necessary for their effectiveness.

An additional survey revealed that Africa is home to one of the most well-known and meticulously researched media programming. This highlights a number of societal issues, including sexual harassment, date rape, and intimate partner violence, through a series of radio and television programmes. Information pamphlets are planned to be distributed nationwide in conjunction with the series. A random sample of the country's population was utilised for the evaluation of the fourth series, which examined gender-based violence. Two sets of interviews were done, eight months apart, before and after the intervention. Exposure to the North East series was found to be associated with changes in knowledge and attitudes regarding intimate partner violence. For example, at follow-up, the percentage of respondents who agreed that "no woman ever deserves to be beaten" had increased from 77% to 88%, while the percentage who disagreed that "women who are abused are expected to put up with it" had increased from 68% to 72%. Other attitudes, such as "as head of household, a man has the right to beat his wife," did not significantly change, and the study design was unable to determine whether the findings had an impact on violent behavior<sup>89</sup>.

A survey conducted by the UK Working Group on forced marriage, for example, found that one of the main motivations of parents who force their daughters into marriage was the desire to strengthen families and protect their cultures. In fact, the evidence indicates that the opposite often occurs, with families breaking apart and children turning against their cultural background. The survey recommended that public education campaigns must reinforce activity in schools and health facilities. Emphasis should be on the need to protect and support the adolescent period, especially by keeping girls in school. Governments should be encouraged to create a policy climate that supports later marriage, through scholarship provision, legal reform, and affirmative policies and programmes on behalf of women. Efforts to improve participation of women and girls in civic and public life and to give them equal access to training and employment opportunities, can enhance their status and thereby decrease the likelihood of early marriage. The CRC and CEDAW treaty bodies should monitor early marriage in a systematic way, so that organizations using these treaties as programme and policy benchmarks could draw on their observations to support policy change and enhance their own programmes<sup>90</sup>.

However, the lessons learned from initiatives on other sensitive issues, such as FGM, is that they are most effectively addressed at a local level. International activity is primarily useful for coordinating, comparing and synthesizing country activities, and for networking. External assistance is best channeled through local activities and it is important that sensitivities are respected. Heavy-handed advocacy by outsiders with different outlooks and customs – even those of the same nationality can be counter-productive.

According to a report from the Handbook for the Protection of Internally Displaced Persons, gender-based violence (GBV) is a serious human rights violation that can leave victims and survivors with trauma and long-term, perhaps fatal injuries. Human rights and humanitarian

actors need to make sure that steps are taken as soon as an emergency arises to prevent and respond to acts of gender-based violence and to give victims and survivors the necessary care, support, and treatment. Gender-based violence is a prevalent kind of violence in numerous nations, impacting the lives, health, and well-being of millions of women, girls, boys, and men globally. There is gender-based violence in every society and culture. Forced displacement is frequently associated with factors like conflict, a breakdown in the rule of law, and the disintegration of family and community institutions, all of which tend to enhance the frequency and severity of violent crimes.

According to a report, the UNHCR has consistently placed the protection of women, girls, men, and boys who have experienced gender-based violence at the forefront of the response to refugee crises, working in tandem with the government, UN, and civil society partners. In order to strengthen national, comprehensive, and multi-sectorial GBV prevention and response systems that support all survivors of GBV, including refugee survivors in the MENA area, UNHCR was committed to collaborating with the government and other actors. Their strategy demonstrated the critical role that women, girls, men, and boys, families, and other community members play in preventing and responding to gender-based and sexual violence. This is achieved by promoting community-based GBV prevention and response mechanisms and by opposing harmful norms and practices that support abuse, exploitation, and SGBV. One of the main tactics in UNHCR's SGBV prevention and response programming is to involve community members in all phases of the project cycle of SGBV prevention and response interventions addressing the particular SGBV risks they face, regardless of their gender, race, class, sexual orientation, or disability<sup>91</sup>.

They recommended the strengthening of community-based prevention and response to SGBV through the active participation of women, girls, men and boys in identification of SGBV-related needs, design, implementation and monitoring and evaluation of programmes in line with UNHCR's approach; creating awareness amongst the population of concern and impacted communities on causes, contributing factors and consequences of GBV, human rights and existing national and international legal frameworks related to gender equality and GBV; advocating for national legislation that prevents and responds to GBV in accordance to international standards; supporting the regular update of inter-agency, action plans and strategies developed to reflect up-to-date priorities for gender violence prevention and response; ensuring mainstreaming of gender equality and considerations into other sectors such as livelihoods, food security and shelter and site planning in order to support resilience and positive coping mechanisms and mitigate factors for girl child survival, and so as to support broader prevention and reduction of GBV. The study also made recommendations for the need to roll out NGOs' programmes in areas where they haven't yet been implemented, strengthen the ability of GBV actors and service providers to prevent and respond to GBV, including providing care for survivors, and develop guidelines for GBV programming, and guarantee that women, girls, men, and boys who face violent discrimination can access high-quality services in accordance with guidelines for providing care for survivors. Lastly, the study recommended bolstering partnerships and coordinating multi-sectoral and inter-agency avoidance and response to GBV through GBV sub-working groups, task forces, and networks, as well as encouraging the allocation of predictable and sustainable funding to support the implementation of UNHCR GBV strategies and initiatives<sup>92</sup>.

Human Rights Watch conducted remote interviews with members from eight civil society organisations that aim to eradicate gender-based violence and child marriage in the states of Imo and Kano in August and September 2021, as well as 16 married girls between the ages of 14 and 19. Human Rights Watch chose those states based on distinct legal, customary, and demographic circumstances that are typical of other states in the respective regions. Human Rights Watch has not heard back from the Imo State Ministry of Women Affairs and Vulnerable Groups or the Kano State Ministry of Women's Affairs and Social Development on its request for an interview.

According to Human Rights Watch, married girls in the states of Imo and Kano are frequently denied access to proper healthcare as well as their fundamental rights to an education, a safe place to live, and freedom from violence. Families drive girls into early marriages for a variety of reasons, including as cultural and religious obligations and the desire to escape the social stigma associated with underage pregnancy, if there are no robust legal protections for them. Some of the girls who were interviewed admitted to trying to get out of their forced unions. A 14-year-old bride fled six times in three years, but each time her family members found her and brought her back to her spouse<sup>93</sup>.

The Child Rights Law was enacted in 2004 in Imo State, a largely Igbo Christian state in southeast Nigeria. However, child marriage is a persistent issue. Interviewee girls stated that, frequently against their will, their families were the primary forces behind their marriages. Child marriage rates are among the highest in the nation in Kano State, which is governed by Sharia law. The Child Protection Bill was approved by the Kano State Assembly in February 2020; however, Governor Abdullahi Umar Ganduje has not yet signed it. The ultimate version of the legislation should provide sufficient protections for girls, and state legislators should make sure

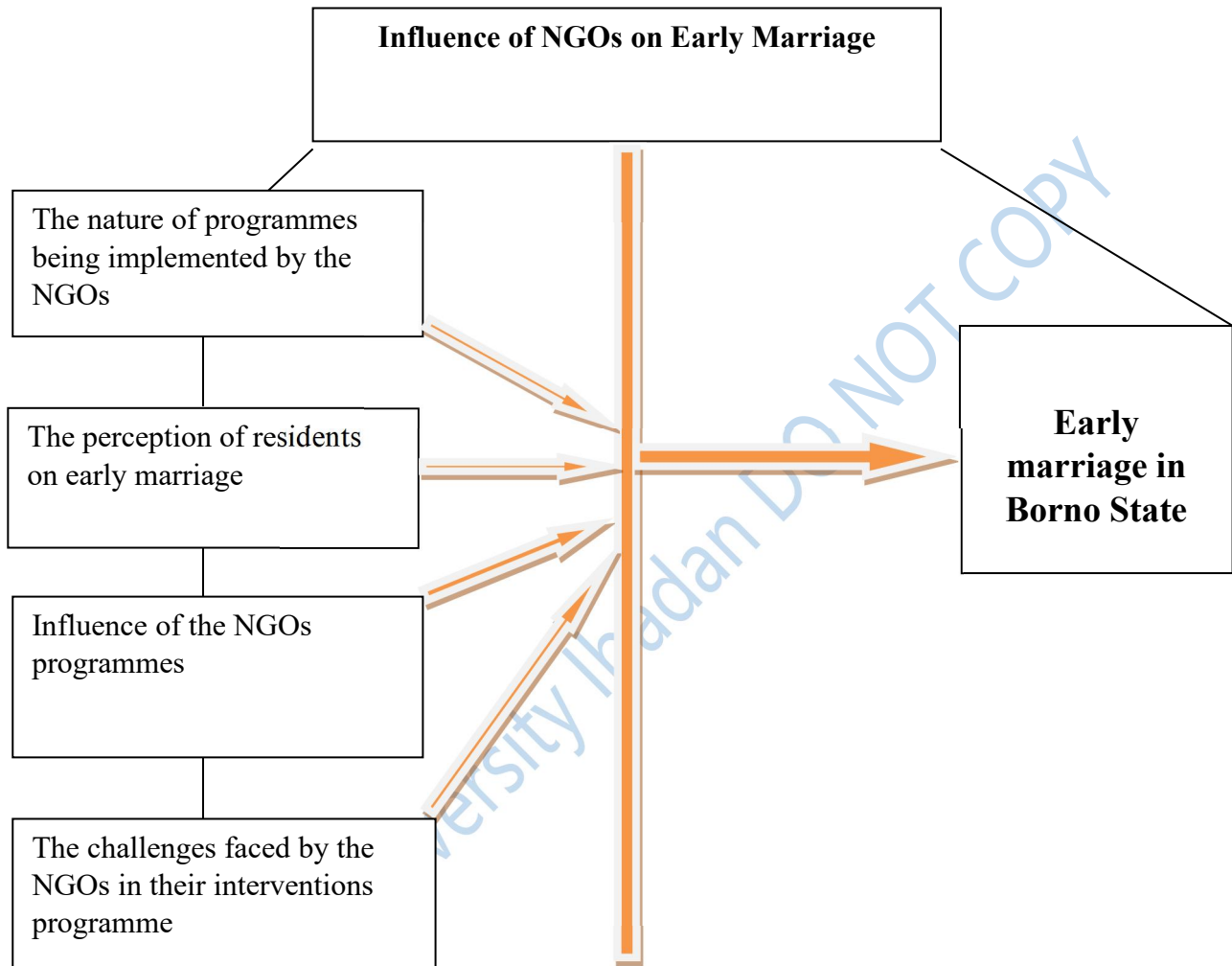
that this includes acknowledging 18 as the age of maturity in accordance with African regional and international law.

Human Rights Watch discovered that families in Kano state frequently arrange for girls to marry without giving them any say in the date or partner. Girls and young women claimed that family poverty and customs had influenced their decision to get married. In numerous Nigerian states governed by Sharia law, child marriage is acceptable on the basis of custom and religion, and puberty determines the adult age. The gender roles that are not equal also encourage child marriage. Girls have relatively limited access to rights, bodily autonomy, and decision-making capacity<sup>93</sup>.

Married girls reported that their financial circumstances deteriorated after marriage and that they were impoverished and lacked food, despite the fact that some families also attempted to reduce their financial responsibilities by selling off their daughters. Because of their poverty and the pressure to get married, the majority either never went to school or were expelled. They frequently took up the majority of the caregiving and work in the home and were incapable of making financial decisions for their households. Some of them were prevented from entering the workforce by their husbands.

## **2.4 Conceptual Model**

The variables used in this study are conceptualized according to how they are related to the subject matter as showed below:



**Fig 2.1:** Conceptual Model of Influence of the NGOs on Early Marriage in Borno State

**Source:** Author's Compilation

According to the foregoing perspective, the topic of discussion is how NGOs affect early marriage in Borno State. The nature of the projects being carried out by the NGOs is taken into consideration when examining their activities and programmes. To determine whether or not the programmes have been successful thus far, an assessment of a few of the NGOs' early marriage prevention initiatives is required. The study concluded that in order to accomplish this goal, it

was appropriate to evaluate citizens' opinions regarding early marriage equally. This is done in order to understand the public's perceptions and views about early marriage and how they typically respond to it, as well as to acknowledge the non-governmental organisations' actions. One other factor included in the construct is the impact of non-governmental organisations' programmes on the opposition to early marriage. The purpose of this review is to highlight the program's accomplishments and determine whether or not NGOs' activities have been successful in preventing early marriage in Borno State thus far. The assessment of the difficulties the NGOs encountered in carrying out their early marriage intervention programme in Borno State is the last component of the conceptualization. Understanding the elements that are working against NGOs' efforts to combat early marriage is crucial in this situation. The purpose of this is to present potential solutions to the problems that the NGOs are facing in their efforts to prevent early marriage.

## **2.5 Summary of Gap in Literature Reviewed**

The conceptual foundations of this investigation were evaluated in this chapter. This section discusses a number of concepts, such as the types of programmes that non-governmental organisations (NGOs) are implementing to address early marriage, how locals view early marriage, how NGOs' programmes affect the movement against early marriage, and the difficulties that NGOs encounter when implementing their interventions programme towards early marriage in Borno State.

The theoretical suppositions that underpin this investigation were also covered in this chapter. The Political Economy of Marriage theory and feminist views are two of the main perspectives examined here. Gender differences theory, liberal feminists, gender oppression, psychoanalytic feminists, radical feminists, and structural oppression theory are some of the feminist theories.

Nonetheless, the research embraced radical theory and liberal feminist theory. This is so because democracy, human rights, and natural justice are the cornerstones of liberal feminism's worldview. Equal access to school, enrolment, and employment possibilities are emphasised. Affirmative action is also recommended by the idea as a tactic for women and girls in the home, in work, and in schools. However, liberal feminism was selected for this study because it asserts that women's subordinate position in society is due to unequal chances that do not involve segregation from men.

It is clear from the study of empirical literature that a gap has to be filled. This is because, despite the large amount of study that has been done on the subject, the problem still exists because it is rarely addressed in all of its complexity, coordination within sectors is frequently lacking, and efforts are mostly directed towards response rather than prevention. Furthermore, despite the existence of comparable studies, no particular research has been done on how NGOs affect Borno State's efforts to control early marriage using an evaluative research design that incorporates the analysis of both quantitative and qualitative data using pertinent statistical tools. By concentrating on the age gap of girls between the ages of 9 and 17 between the years 2018 and 2022, this study revised earlier research. As such, this study serves as an updated body of literature on the topic. Thus, more research is required to fully understand and treat early marriage, especially in Borno State, where no prior study has been able to provide sufficient data. The author believes that this thesis contributed to closing the current knowledge gap in this field of study. The present study aims to fill a knowledge vacuum by investigating the impact of non-governmental organisations (NGOs) on early marriage control in Borno State through an evaluative research methodology. To achieve this, both quantitative and qualitative data will be analysed using appropriate statistical tools.

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## **Chapter Three**

### **Methodology**

#### **3.1 Research Design**

This study adopted descriptive survey research design which were predicated on the use of primary and secondary sources of information in gathering data about varying subjects. The data gathered explored the issues around the impact of NGOs' intervention programmes against gender-based violence and early marriage in Borno State. By adopting these methods, the data required in this study were collected from the respondent through structured questionnaire. This enabled the researcher to establish relationship that exist between the study variables by collecting data from a sample that is fair representation of the entire population or group.

#### **3.2 Population of the Study**

Registered NGOs operating intervention initiatives to prevent early marriage in Borno State made up the study's population which include Four Non-Governmental Organizations in Borno State with 80 respondents from those NGOs.

#### **3.3 Sample and sampling techniques**

The non-probability purposive sample approaches were employed by the researcher. This approach was chosen because it was a challenge for the researcher to get in contact with every NGO. Thus, the researcher focused solely on NGOs that were easily accessible and amenable to answering the questionnaires and conducting interviews. Eighty responders from four NGOs were included in the researcher's sample. These consisted of the GBV Sub Sector Working Group, Save the Children, the National Human Rights Commission (NHRC), and the National

Agency for Prohibition of Traffic in Persons (NAPTIP). Twenty responders from each of these NGOs were purposefully selected by the researcher.

Table 3.1 Sample Distribution

S/N	Name of NGOs	Accessible sample from NGOs and stakeholders	Percentage of questionnaires distributed to each NGOs
1	National Agency for Prohibition of Traffic in Persons (NAPTIP)	20	25%
2	National Human Rights Commission (NHRC)	20	25%
3	Save the Children	20	25%
4	GBV Sub Sector Working Group	20	25%
Total		80	100%

Source: Field Survey (2022)

Fig. 3.1 Percentage of Questionnaires Distributed to each NGOs

Source: Author's Compilation

It is evident from the above table and figure that 80 questionnaires in total, 20 for each of the sampled NGOs, will be distributed equally to them. Keep in mind that a few of these NGOs are made up of parents, community leaders, and religious leaders.

Additionally, for the purpose of the interview, respondents were evenly chosen from the sample population. These groups of responders will be chosen among the stakeholders, who are primarily made up of a few parents, local and religious leaders.

For religious leaders who have a congregation, in-depth interviews were done. The goal is to comprehend how they view early marriage and the steps they have taken to discourage it in their societies. Six Islamic clerics and six Christian priests were sampled, with the numbers chosen based on differences in the percentages of Muslims and Christians in the state. The parents and leaders of the community (government officials, women leaders, heads of community associations, and traditional leaders) were sampled in the same manner (number-wise). Eighteen responders in all were interviewed. The inputs of each group—parents, community leaders, and religious leaders—served as a counterpoint and reality check for each other.

### **3.4 Description of the Research Instruments**

Structured questionnaires were adopted in this study to get data from the respondents. A questionnaire is a research tool that is mostly used in survey or statistical analysis study, which consists set of questions in different formats. Primarily, it is used in research to ask the participants general, and close-ended questions.

### **3.5 Validity of the Research Instruments**

The researcher's subjective assessment of the validity and usefulness of the measuring tool is the primary focus of face validity <sup>4</sup>. It goes on to say that in order to verify the degree of face validity of the survey instrument, one can seek the advice of subject-matter experts. Therefore, the questionnaire will be created by the researcher and validated by specialists in the fields of sociology and gender studies in order to determine the validity of the survey instrument. The

project manager will get the items when they have made any necessary modifications. Because the project supervisor's judgement will be the deciding factor in whether or not to approve the instrument, face and content validity will be employed in this effort to validate the instruments.

### **3.6 Reliability of the Research Instruments**

The reliability of a research instrument concerns the extent to which the instrument yields the same results on repeated trials. Reliability of the research instrument is the measure of the dependability and the internal consistency of the items of the instrument of data collection. The data required for this study were gathered from questionnaires administered directly by the researcher with responses from the respondents, thus, the data was found suitable, appropriate and reliable for this study. Cronbach alpha coefficients were used to evaluate the survey instrument's internal reliability once more (SPSS). Therefore, the researcher only took into consideration the elements that returned an alpha value of 0.7 or above.

### **3.7 Administration and Method of Data Collection**

Copies of the questionnaire were administered to the sample drawn from the population. The researcher administered hard copies of the research instruments to the NGOs with the help of well-trained research assistants to ensure the questionnaires are distributed accurately and for prompt retrieval. Although the data in this study were mainly primary, the researcher adopted also, secondary data with respect to this research. The primary data were sourced directly from the stakeholder and actors in the activities of Non-Governmental Organizations. The secondary data were gathered from various texts and published work as related to the study.

### **3.8 Method of Data Analysis**

The data analysed in this study comprise of those both from primary and secondary sources. The qualitative data were analysed using descriptive statistics of mean and standard deviation through SPSS. The qualitative descriptive data analysis essentially has to do with summarising the information generated in the research verbally. The adoption of the foregoing analytical method because the study principally relied on the primary data.

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## Endnotes

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2. D. B. Baridam, *Research Methods and applications*. Shebroke Associates, Port Harcourt. 2020.
3. J. Collins & R. Hussey. *Business Research: A Practical Guide for Undergraduate and Postgraduate Students*, 4<sup>th</sup> edition. Macmillan Education UK, Red Globe Press. 2014.
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## Chapter Four

### Results and Discussion of Findings

This chapter's objective is to provide and evaluate the information gathered from respondents regarding the NGOs' intervention initiatives designed to prevent early marriage in Nigeria's Borno State. The goals of the study, which were outlined in this thesis's first chapter, were also covered in this chapter. The main conclusions gathered from the questionnaires and interviews about the NGO intervention programmes for preventing early marriage in Borno State are also highlighted and analysed in this chapter. This chapter was also organised as follows: an overview of the data collection, a quick remark on its presentation and analysis, and a summary of the chapter.

#### 4.1 Demographic Data Analysis

Descriptive statistics were utilised in the study to produce insightful results on the respondents' demographic characteristics. The primary factors under analysis are the respondents' gender, position within the company, and level of education.

**Table 4.1 Respondents' Position/Level**

Position/Level of respondents	Number retrieved	Percentage (%)
<b>Valid</b> Top Level Managers	5	7
Middle Level Managers	15	21.5

Lower Level Managers	25	35.7
Contract Staff	10	14.3
Stakeholders	15	21.5
Total	70	100

Source: Author's Compilation, 2023

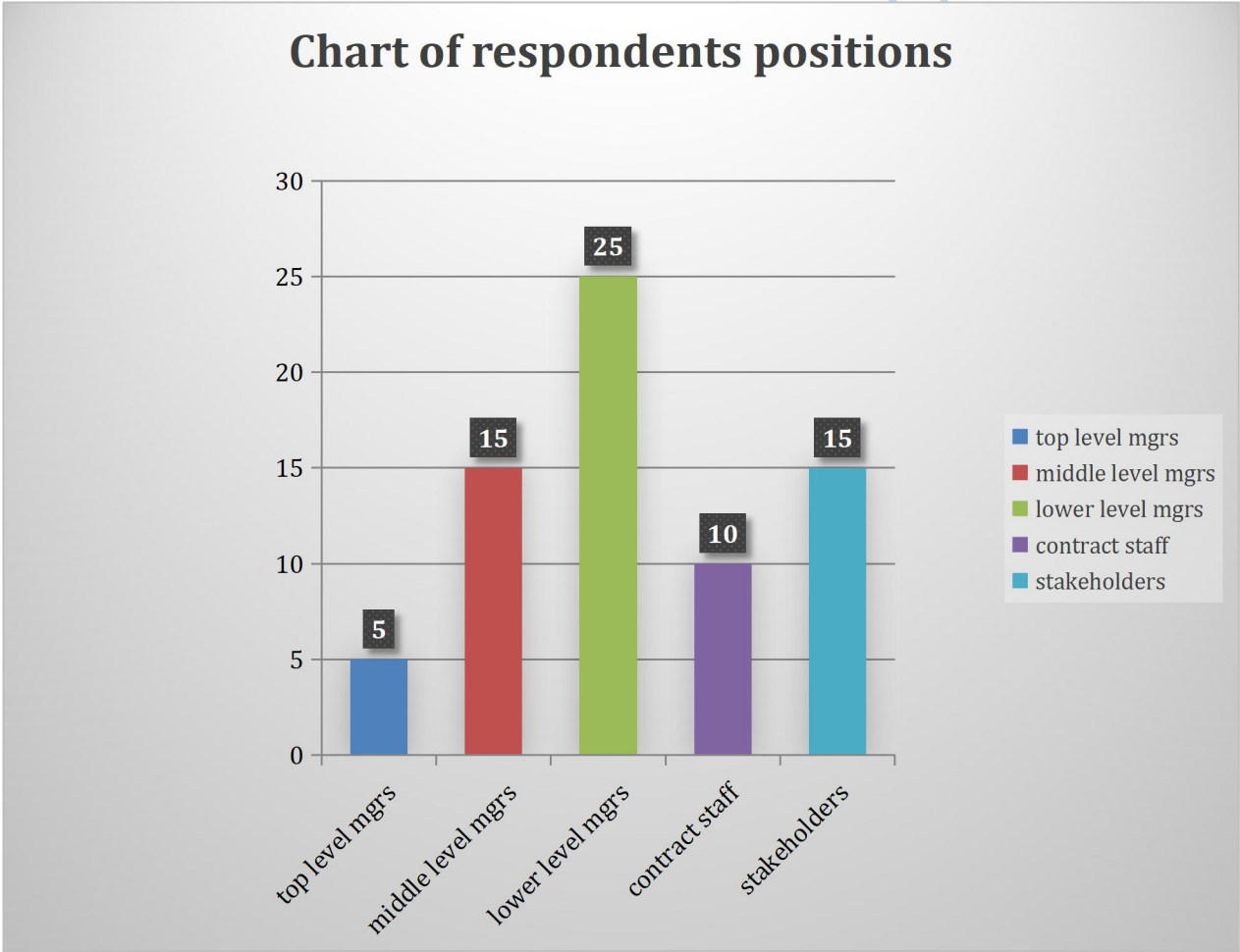


Fig. 4.1 Charts of Respondent's Positions

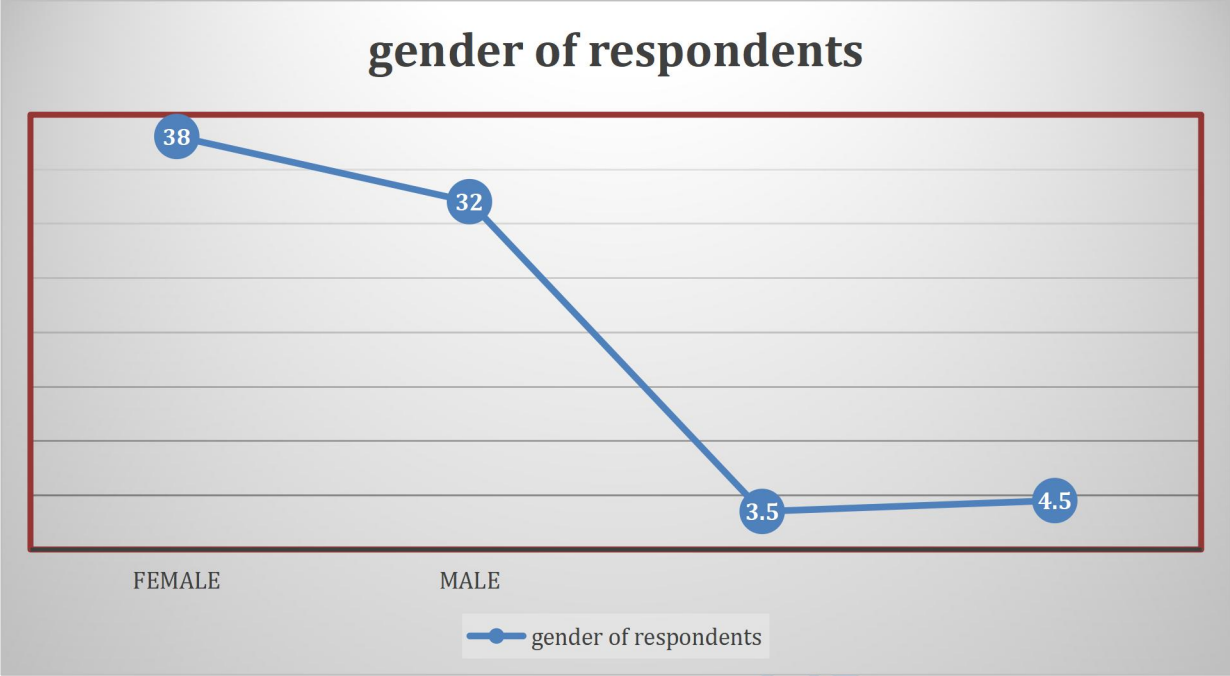
Source: Author's Compilation, 2023

Table 4.2 and Figure 4.2 show that 5 (7% of the respondents) are top-level managers, 15 (21.5%) are middle-level managers, 25 (35.7%) are lower-level managers, 15 (21.5%) are selected from stakeholders in the communities where the NGOs operate, and 10 (14.3%) are contract workers. As can be seen from above, every level and stakeholder are represented among the responders.

**Table 4.2 Respondents' Gender**

		<b>Number</b>	<b>Percentage (%)</b>
Valid	Female	38	54.3
	Male	32	45.7
	Total	70	100.0

Source: Author's Compilation, 2023



**Fig.4.2 Gender Distribution of Respondents**

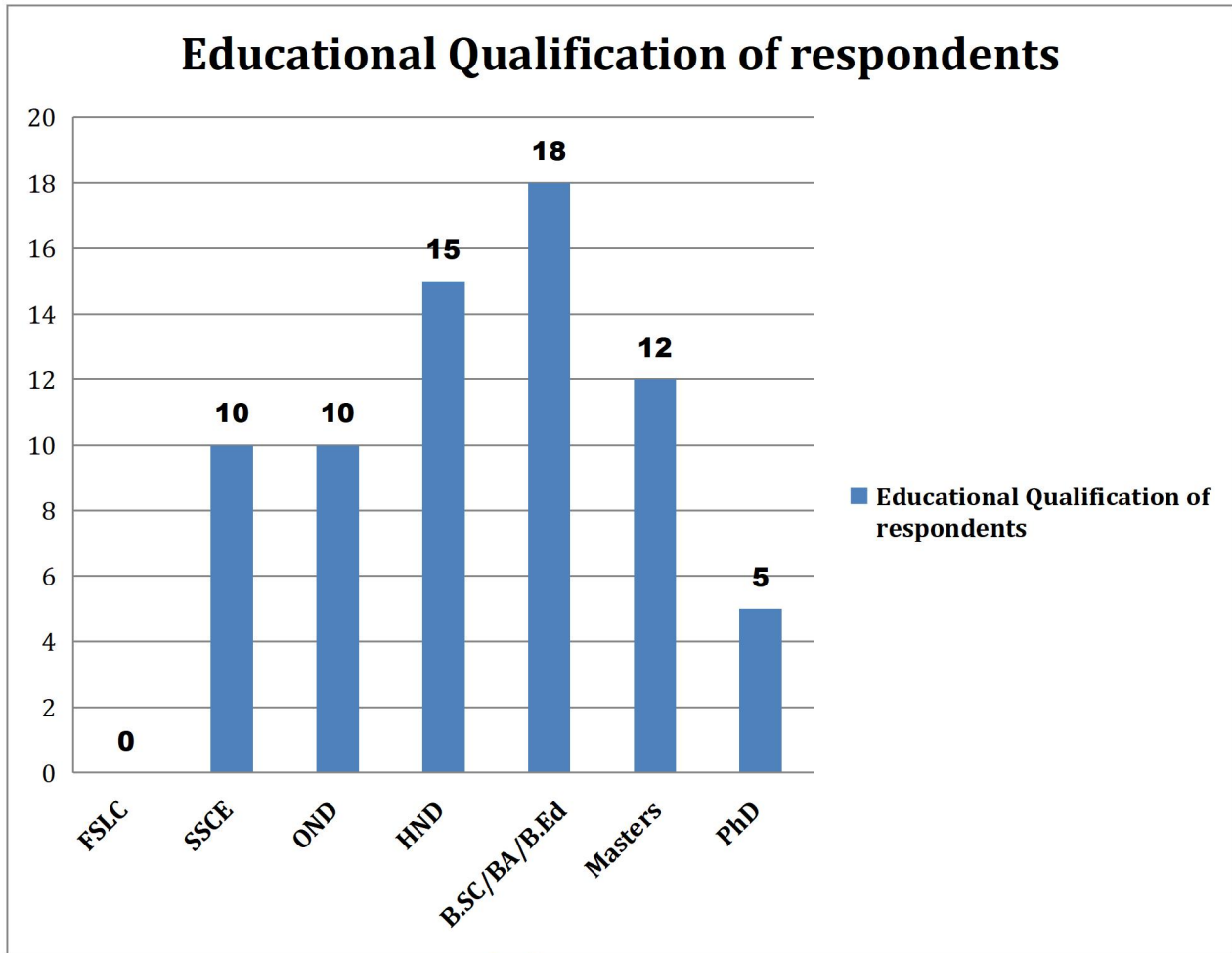
**Source: Author's Compilation, 2023**

Table 4.3 and the above figure 4.3 demonstrate that 32 (45.7%) of the respondents identified as male, and 38 (54.3%) as female. This indicates that men make up the majority of responders. This indicates that among the respondents, there are more women than men.

**Table 4.3 Academic Qualification of Respondents**

	Academic Qualification	Number	Percentage
<b>Valid</b>	FLSC	-	0
	SSCE	10	14
	OND	10	14
	HND	15	21
	B.Sc/B.A, B.Ed	18	26
	Masters	12	17
	Ph.D.	5	7
	Total	70	100.0

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**Fig. 4.3: Educational Qualification of respondents**

**Source: Author's Compilation, 2023**

0(0%) have a FLSC certificate, according to Table 4.4 and Figure 4.4. Ten (14%) have an SSCE certificate. 10 people, or 14%, have OND. 15 people (21%) have HND. There are 18 (26%) people with a B.Sc. or B.A. Only 5 people (7%) have a PhD, while 12 people (17%) have a master's degree. As a result, it is believed that the majority of responders have a good education and can understand and react to the pertinent topics.

## 4.2 Presentation of Data

Only 70 of the 80 completed questionnaires that were analysed and presented in tables during the data collection process yielded favourable results and improved understanding of the issue. The questions were straightforward and well-structured. The tables and statistics below show the 70 completed questionnaires that were successfully returned.

The issues that were previously posed in the first chapter in relation to the goal of this study are now summarised and examined using the appropriate data analysis method.

**Table 4.4 Questionnaire Analysis**

	<b>Names of oil and gas Firms</b>	<b>Distributed copies</b>	<b>Retrieved copies</b>	<b>Copies not returned</b>
1	National Agency for Prohibition of Traffic in Persons (NAPTIP)	20	17	3
2	National Human Rights Commission (NHRC)	20	18	2
3	Save the Children	20	17	3
4	GBV Sub Sector Working Group	20	17	2
	<b>Total</b>	<b>80</b>	<b>70</b>	<b>10</b>

Source: Research's Survey (2023)

**Fig.4.4 Frequency of Questionnaires Retrieved**

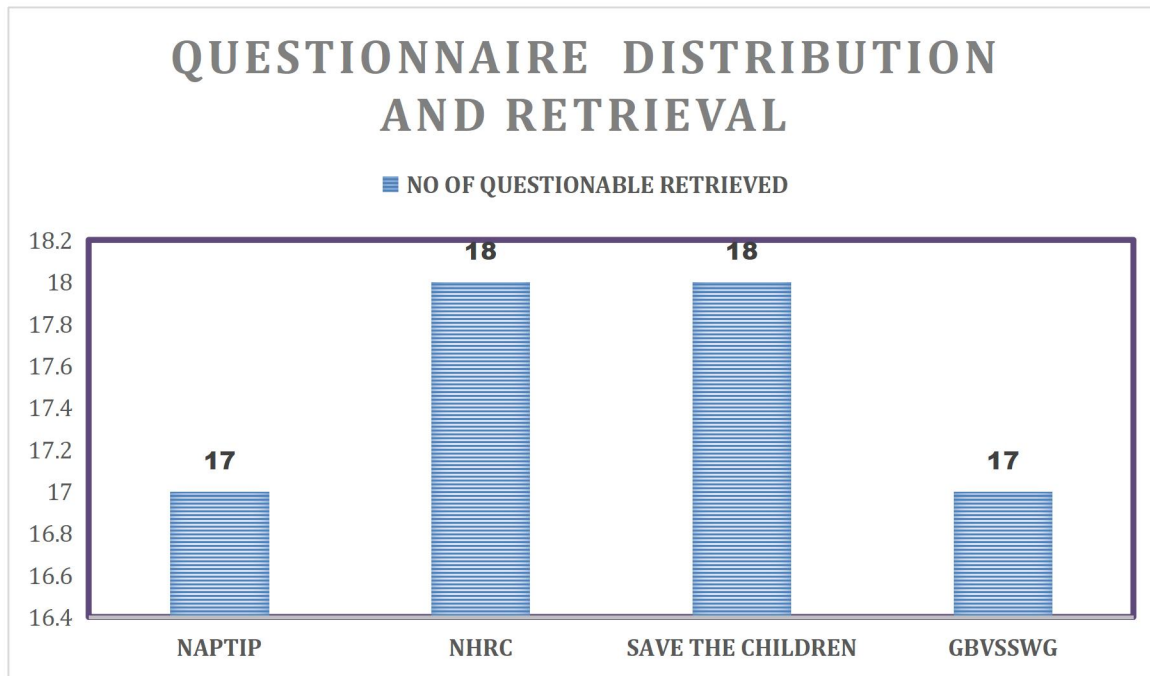


Table 4.1 and Figure 4.1's analysis showed that of the 80(100%) copies of the questionnaire that were given to the four NGOs that were chosen, 70(90%) were completed and returned, and the remaining 10(10%) were not. In order to understand why 90% of the copies were recovered, the researcher examined the 70 copies. Of the seventy copies that were distributed, seventeen came from GBVSSWG and NAPTIP, and eighteen from the NHRC and Save the Children.

#### 4.2 Presentation of Research Questions

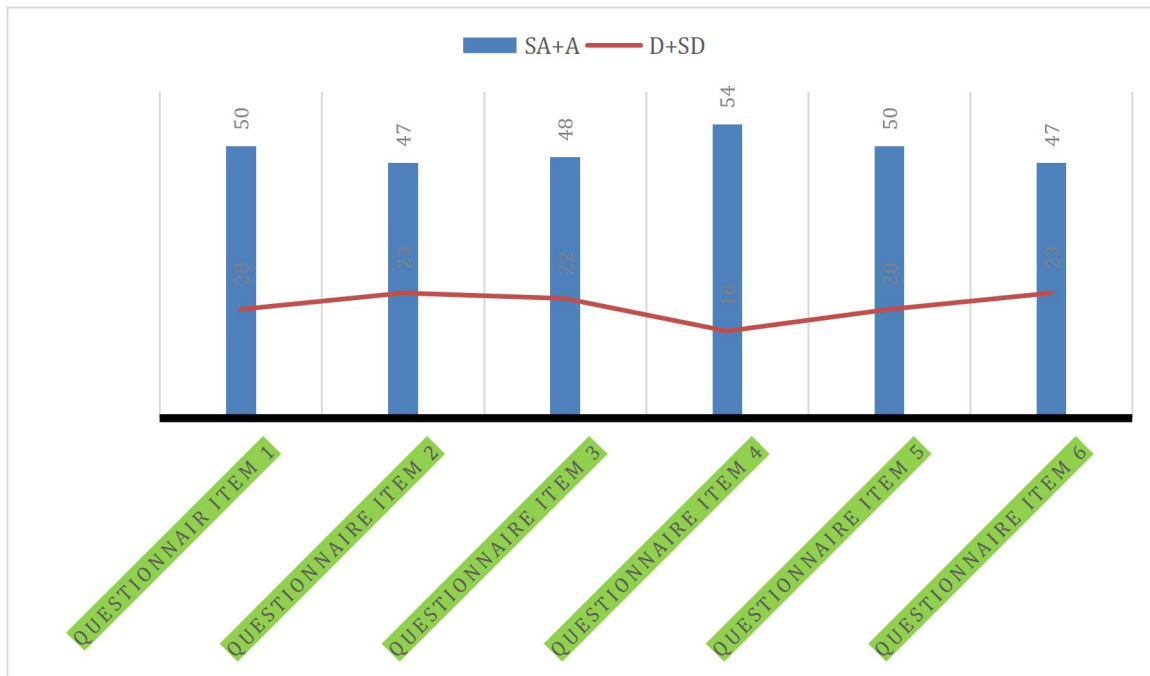
Following an analysis of the research questions, response rates on a 4-point Likert scale, ranging from strongly agree to strongly disagree, were collated and shown in the tables below:

**Research Question One: What is the nature of programmes being implemented by the NGOs to address early marriage?**

**Table 4.5: The nature of programmes being implemented by the NGOs to address early marriage?**

S/N	Questionnaire items	SA	A	D	SD
1	Multisectoral programme approach is used by much NGOs to campaign against early marriage	32(48%)	18(26%)	12(18%)	8(11%)
2	Holistic national action plans among the most populous programmes used by NGOs to attract the attention of stakeholders towards the welfare of the girl child	30(43%)	17(24%)	14(20%)	9(13%)
3	Promoting gender equality is one of the programmes used by NGOs to promote girls rights	35(50%)	13(19%)	17(24%)	5(7%)
4	School initiatives has been effective as a tool used by NGOs to reduce the number of out of school girls.	45(64%)	9(13%)	10(14%)	6(9%)
5	Community interventions is mostly used by NGOs to change some negative orientation about the girl child.	32(48%)	18(26%)	12(18%)	8(11%)
6	Media interventions programmes function well in the fight against sexual, emotional and psychological, physical and socio-economic violence against women	30(43%)	17(24%)	14(20%)	9(13%)

Source: Authors compilation, 2023



**Fig. 4.5: Frequency Chart of the nature of programmes being implemented by the NGOs to address early marriage in Borno State**

**Source: Author's Compilation, 2023**

According to the first item on the questionnaire, 50 (71%) of the respondents agreed that many NGOs successfully employ a multisectoral programme strategy to fight against early marriage, whereas 20 (29%) disagreed.

Regarding item two, 23 (33%) disagreed with 47 (67%) who acknowledged that one of the most popular initiatives utilised by NGOs to draw stakeholders' attention to the welfare of girl children is holistic national action plans.

Regarding the third inquiry, 48 (69%) of the respondents agreed that one of the programmes that NGOs employ to effectively promote girls' rights is promoting gender equality, while 22 (31%) disagreed.

In response to the fourth question on the questionnaire, 54 (77%) respondents said that school programmes had been successful in helping NGOs address the problems faced by out-of-school girls, while 16 (23%) disagreed.

Regarding the fifth question on the questionnaire, 50 respondents (or 71%) agreed that NGOs primarily utilise community interventions to alter negative attitudes towards female children, while 20 respondents (or 29%) disagreed.

Regarding item six, 23 (33%) disagreed with 47 (67%) who acknowledged that media interventions programmes are effective in combating physical, psychological, emotional, and sexual abuse against women.

The Likert ranking is used for the criterion mean, as indicated in the table below:

**Table 4.6: Mean score determination for the nature of programmes being implemented by the NGOs to address early marriage in BornoState**

Items rating(X)	Frequency (f)	Sum of frequency )	Mean
4	202	808	4.0
3	92	368	4.0
2	79	158	2.0
1	49	49	1.0
<b>Sum</b>	<b>442</b>	<b>1383</b>	
<b>Mean</b>		<b>3.13</b>	<b>3.13</b>

Source: researcher's computation

Mean score =  $\frac{FX}{F}$

Thus  $1383/442 = 3.13$

In addition, the mean score indicates that the multisectoral programme approach, comprehensive national action plans, gender equality promotion, school initiatives, community interventions, and media interventions programmes all work effectively to prevent early marriage. This is supported by the criterion mean value of 3.13, which is above the 2.5 criterion mean cut off mark.

#### 4.2.2 Research Question Two: What is the perception of residents on early marriage and gender-based violence in Borno State?

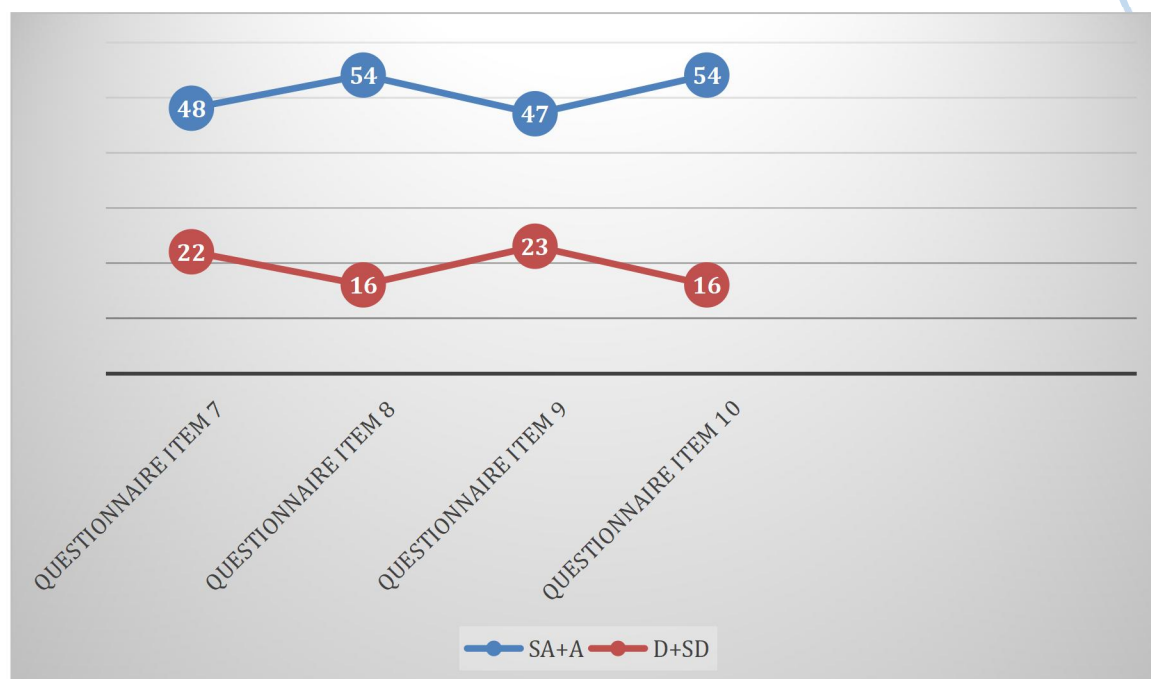
**Table 4.7: The perception of residents on early marriage and gender-based violence in Borno State?**

S/N	Questionnaire items	SA	A	D	SD
7	An average Borno person sees early marriage as just a “custom”, a “tradition” or part of people’s “culture	35(50%)	13(19%)	17(24%)	5(7%)
8	Early marriage is seen as a thing of pride to many Borno indigenes	45(64%)	9(13%)	10(14%)	6(9%)
9	Most Borno parents see it as a normal thing when their children particularly their daughters gets married early	30(43%)	17(24%)	14(20%)	9(13%)
10	Many parents assume that they can be privileged to see their grandchildren and take care of them as they are still yet	45(64%)	9(13%)	12(18%)	8(11%)

younger when their daughters marry early				
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Source: Authors computation (2022)

**Fig. 4.5: Frequency chart of the perception of residents on early marriage and gender based violence happens in Borno State**



**Source: Author's Compilation, 2023**

Regarding the seventh questionnaire item, 48 (69%) of the respondents agreed, while 22 (31%) disagreed, that the typical Borno person views early marriage as merely a "custom," "tradition," or aspect of people's culture.

Regarding the eighth questionnaire item, 54 (77%) of the respondents agreed that many Borno indigenous people view early marriage as a source of pride, while 16 (23%) disagreed.

Regarding item nine, 23 (33%) disagreed with the admission made by 47 (67%) that the majority of Borno parents consider it natural for their children, especially their daughters, to marry young.

Regarding item 10 of the questionnaire, 48 (69%) of the respondents agreed, while 22 (31%) disagreed, that many parents believe they can see and care for their grandchildren while they are still young.

**Table 4.8: Mean score distribution for the perception of residents on early marriage and gender-based violence happens in Borno State.**

Items (x)	Rating	Frequency (f)	Sum of Frequency	Mean
4		142	568	4.0
3		48	144	3.0
2		53	106	2.0
1		28	28	1.0
<b>Sum</b>		271	846	
<b>Mean</b>			<b>3.12</b>	<b>3.12</b>

Source: researcher's computation

Mean score =  $fx/f$

**Thus  $846/271 = 3.12$**

Regarding the mean score, the criterion mean value of 3.12, which is higher than the 2.5 criterion mean cut off mark, indicates that the average Borno person views early marriage as simply a "custom," "tradition," or part of people's "culture." Early marriage is also viewed as a source of pride for many Borno indigenous people; most Borno parents view it as normal for their children, especially their daughters, to marry young, and many parents believe that this gives them the opportunity to see and care for their grandchildren while they are still quite young.

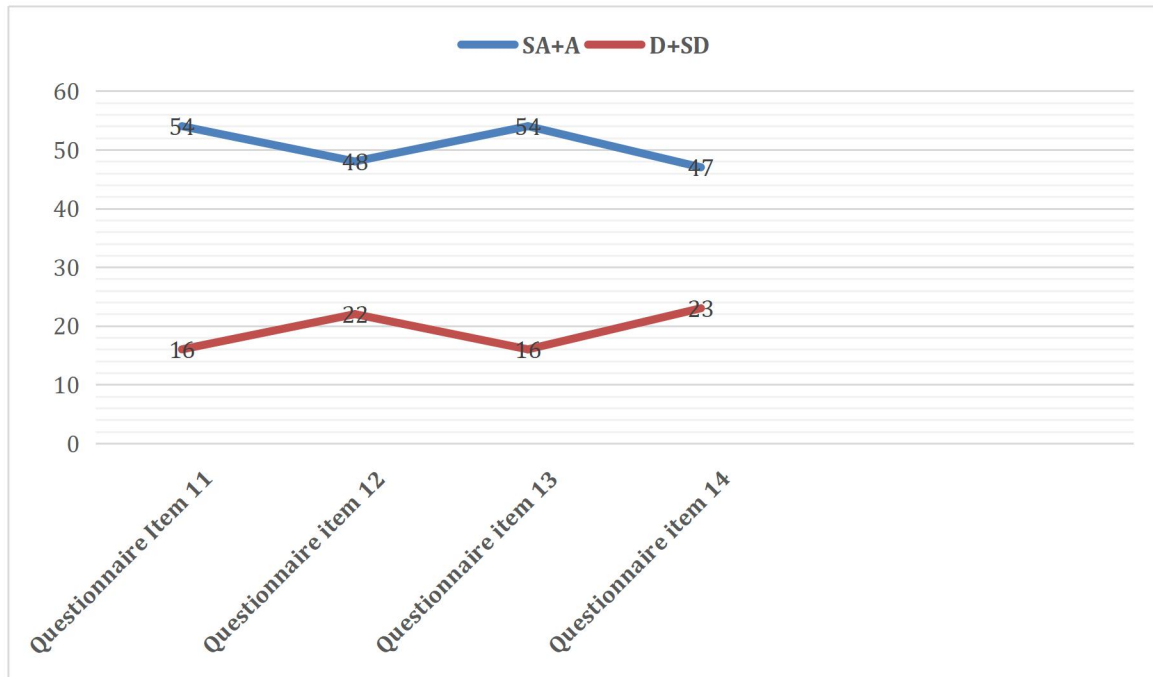
**Research Question Three: What is the influence of the NGOs programmes on the fight against early marriage?**

**Table 4.9: The influence of the NGOs programmes on the fight against early marriage**

S/N	Questionnaire items	SA	A	D	SD
11	Activities of NGOs has led to increase in maintaining sexual and reproductive health, by ensuring that both girls and boys learn about sex, reproduction and the related risks at an early age.	45(64%)	9(13%)	12(18%)	8(11%)
12	There is reduction in the fears that sex education will encourage early sexual relations and pregnancy.	35(50%)	13(19%)	17(24%)	5(7%)
13	There is increase in the campaign that buttress the fact that education and learning is the key to girls' progress which led to persuading parents to keep their daughters in school and ensuring that they receive basic education as a right.	45(64%)	9(13%)	10(14%)	6(9%)
14	There has been an increase in number of individuals and NGOs who are willing to give school scholarship for girls.	30(43%)	17(24%)	14(20%)	9(13%)

Source: Authors computation (2022)

**Fig. 4.6: Frequency chart of the influence of the NGOs programmes on the fight against early marriage**



**Source: Researcher's computation (2023)**

Regarding the eleventh item on the questionnaire, out of the 54 respondents (77%) who agreed that NGOs' efforts have increased the maintenance of sexual and reproductive health by making sure that boys and girls alike are taught about sex, reproduction, and the associated risks at a young age, 16 respondents (23%) disagreed.

Regarding the twelfth item on the questionnaire, 48 (69%) of the respondents agreed that there is a concern that sex education will promote early sexual intercourse and pregnancy, while 22 (31%) disagreed.

In response to item thirteen, 47 (67%) acknowledged that there has been a rise in the campaign that supports the idea that learning and education are essential for girls' development. This has resulted in parents being encouraged to keep their daughters in school and making sure they receive a basic education as a right, while 23 (33%) disagreed.

Regarding item fourteen of the questionnaire, 48 (69%) of the respondents agreed and 22 (31%) disagreed that there is a rise in the number of people prepared to provide school scholarships for girls.

**Table 4.10: Mean score distribution for the influence of the NGOs programmes on the fight against early marriage.**

Items rating	Frequency (f)	Sum of frequency	Mean
4	155	620	4.0
3	48	144	3.0
2	53	106	2.0
1	28	28	1.0
<b>Sum</b>	284	898	
<b>Mean</b>		<b>3.16</b>	<b>3.16</b>

Source: researcher's computation

Mean score =  $\frac{fx}{x}$

**Thus  $\frac{846}{271} = 3.16$**

Additionally, the mean score indicates that the criterion mean value of 3.16, which is higher than the 2.5 criterion mean cut off mark, indicates that more people accept that the work of NGOs has resulted in increased efforts to maintain sexual and reproductive health, ensuring that boys and

girls learn about sex, reproduction, and the risks associated with it at an early age, ensuring that there is a decrease in the concerns that sex education will encourage early sexual relations and pregnancy, and increasing the number of campaigns that support the idea that education and learning are essential to girls' advancement, which has led to persuading parents to keep their daughters in school and guaranteeing that they receive a basic education as a right; and

**Research Question Four: What are the challenges faced by the NGOs in their interventions programme towards early marriage?**

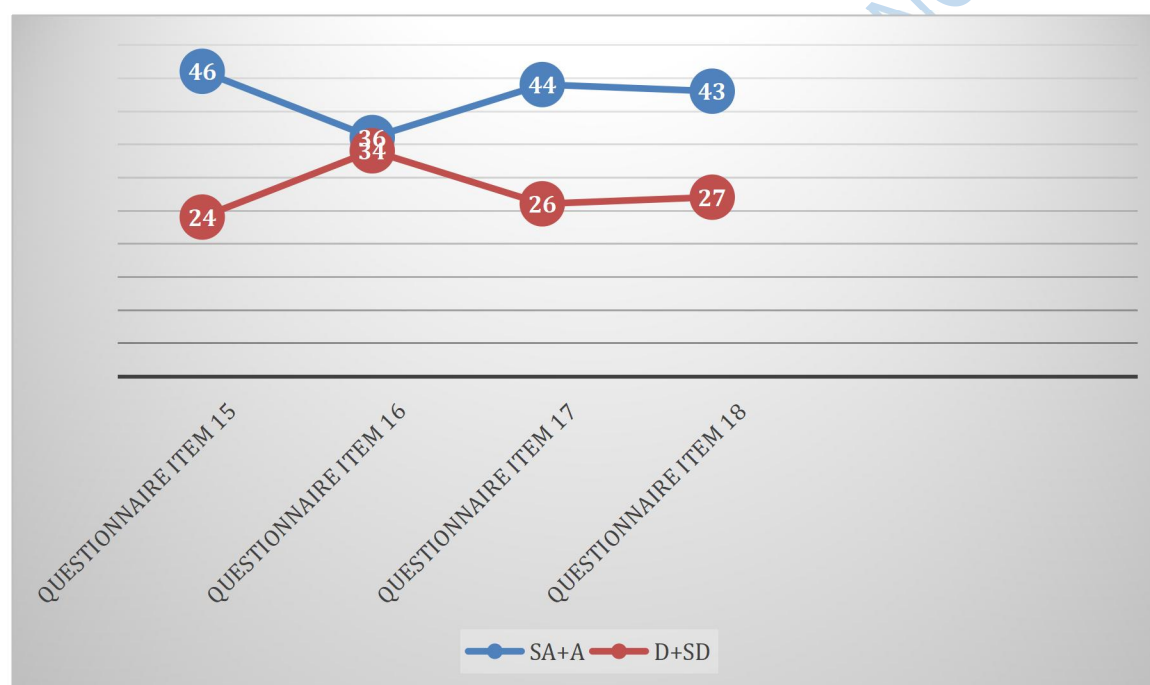
**Table 4.11: The challenges faced by the NGOs in their interventions programme towards early marriage**

S/N	Questionnaire items	SA	A	D	SD
15	Poor implementation of laws such as the non-adoption of the Child Rights Act of 2003 (CRA) by all states in the federation is hindering the fight against early marriage and gender base violence.	20(29%)	26(37%)	14(20%)	10(14%)
16	Victims are dependent who rely on their parents or guardians for right enforcement process hinders the ability of victim to pursue their case	18(26%)	18(26%)	17(24%)	17(24%)
17	The under-reporting of early marriage acts has encouraged certain cultural beliefs and	24(34%)	20(29%)	13(19%)	13(19%)

practices that infringe on the rights of the girl child and consequently encourage abuse					
18	Poor awareness by majority of the people is a major challenge faced by NGOs	23(33%)	20(29%)	17(24%)	10(14%)

Source: Authors computation (2023)

Fig. 4.7: Frequency chart of the challenges faced by the NGOs in their interventions programme towards early marriage.



Source: Author's Compilation, 2023

Regarding the fifteenth item on the questionnaire, 46 (77%) respondents agreed and 24 (23%) disagreed that the inadequate application of laws, such as the non-adoption of the Child Rights Act of 2003 (CRA) by all states in the federation, is impeding the effort to prevent early marriage.

Regarding question sixteen of the questionnaire, 36 (51%) respondents agreed that victims' dependence on their parents or guardians to ensure that the legal system works properly impedes their capacity to seek legal action, while 34 (49%) respondents disagreed.

Regarding item seventeen, 26 (37%) disagreed, while 44 (63%) said that the underreporting of early marriage acts has fostered certain cultural ideas and practices that violate the rights of girl children and so increase abuse.

Regarding item eighteen of the questionnaire, forty-three (61%) of the respondents agreed that a key difficulty encountered by NGOs is low public awareness, while 27 (39%) disagreed.

**Table 4.12: Mean score distribution for the influence of the NGOs programmes on the fight against early marriage.**

Items rating (x)	Frequency (f)	Sum of Frequency	Mean
4	85	340	4.0
3	84	252	3.0
2	57	114	2.0
1	50	50	1.0
Sum	<b>276</b>	<b>756</b>	
Mean		<b>2.74</b>	<b>2.74</b>

Source: Author's Compilation, 2023

Mean score =  $\frac{fx}{x}$

Thus  $\frac{7566}{274} = 2.74$

Additionally, the mean score indicates that the under-reporting of early marriage acts has encouraged certain cultural beliefs and practices that infringe on the rights of the girl child and, as a result, encourage abuse. The majority of people's lack of awareness is a major challenge faced by NGOs. Poor implementation of laws, such as the non-adoption of the Child Rights Act of 2003 (CRA) by all states in the federation, is hindering the fight against early marriage. The victim's dependence on their parents or guardians for the proper enforcement process makes it more difficult for them to pursue their case.

#### Analysis of Interview

Below is an analysis of the qualitative data that was produced by interviewing a few chosen stakeholders. Interviews with parents (PI), community leaders (CLI), and religious leaders (RLI) are the stakeholders. Following the procedures in framework analysis, content analysis and phenomenological analysis were used to complete the analysis. Content and phenomenological analyses were employed to gather information about the participants' experiences related to the topic. The analysis's findings support the opinions of the majority of respondents, who attested to Borno State's high rate of early marriage. Examples of interviewees include Binta Bala, {Religious Leaders' Interview (RLI)}, Hamza Halima, {Community Leaders' Interview (CLI)}, and Bulus Bala and Julius Musa, {Parents' Interview (PI)}. The synopsis of their agreed viewpoints revealed that Early child marriage is a fashionable practice in Borno state and the largest part parts of Northern Nigeria. Many girls and boy-children are married off against their determination. As such, young girls are married off with their educational pursuits being dashed. They confirmed that it has gotten to the extent that an average Borno person sees early marriage as just like normal thing.

Hadiza Bitrus, a different respondent who belongs to the (Parents' Interview (PI)) category, shared other people's opinions and said that

*Early marriage is seen as a thing of pride to an average Borno person. A lot of parents in Borno state see early marriage as a fortunate thing to see their grandchildren and take care of them as they are still yet younger.*

Within the area of {Community Leaders' Interview (CLI) and Religious Leaders' Interview (RLI)}, two further community leaders, Sarki Musa Gulak and Kaita Sani, as well as a religious leader, Rev. Yusuf Joshua, all reacted similarly by declaring that:

*It is unfortunate that many immature girls do not have a right to be heard on the issue of marriage. They are taught to accept as true that they must be absolutely loyal to their husbands no matter the condition with or without a opportunity to get a right education and occupation.*

Consistent with this, a further respondent, Aisha Bamayi, who is currently a parent {Parents' Interview (PI)}, stated that she was a victim of an early marriage.

*The broad-spectrum norm in the majority part of Borno communities is that it is healthier to be married as a virgin as early as 14 years of age, than to be married as an educated non virgin at adult hood. As such most parents find self-respect in the marriage of their daughters who have not known man than their educated daughter who they perceive is spoilt/corrupt women.*

Mallam Magaji Sule, another religious leader {Religious Leaders’ Interview (RLI)}, believed that:

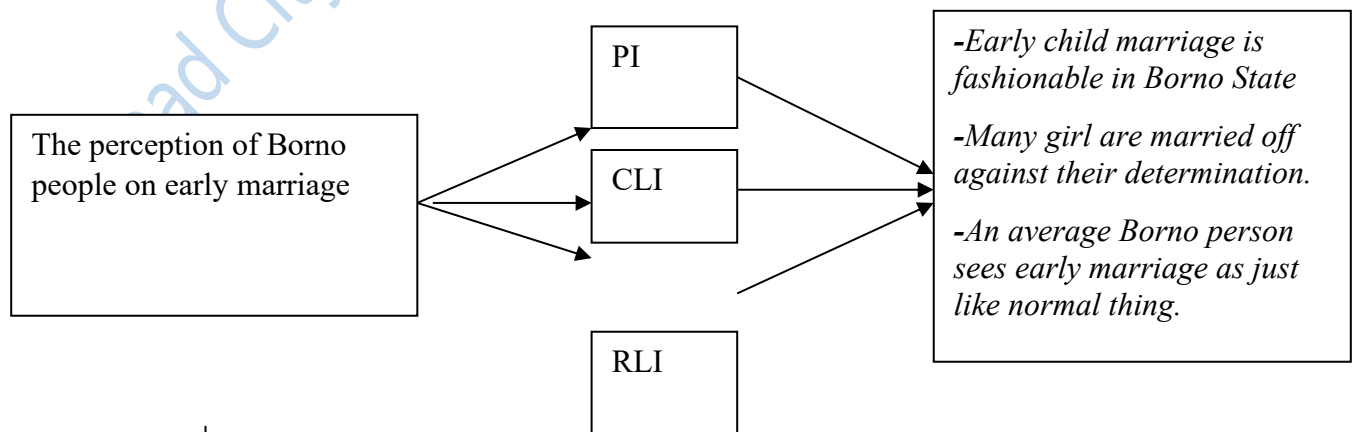
*“Although, I have a different positive view about early marriage, I do not support it” the general cultural and religious beliefs have oriented many parents into seeing early marriage as a standard way of life for their young girls in Borno State and so many northern parts of Nigeria. Most of the parents still believed that the place of woman is in the kitchen and her husband’s home.*

Kabiru Gambari, a parent, said in a {Parents’ Interview (PI-victim)} that:

*A girl who has a delayed marriage is commonly assumed to have been bewitched or suffering from some spiritual manipulations that hunt away suitors and potential husbands. So, most parents, in an attempt to put a stop to these assumptions, give out their wards out early in marriage.*

Flow Chart for Interview Analysis

**Fig. 4.8: Flowchart for the interview of the perception of Borno people on early marriage**



The perception of Borno people on early marriage

PI

- Early marriage is seen as a thing of pride to an average Borno person.  
-They see early marriage as a fortunate thing to see their grandchildren and take care of them as they are still yet younger.

The perception of Borno people on early marriage

CLI

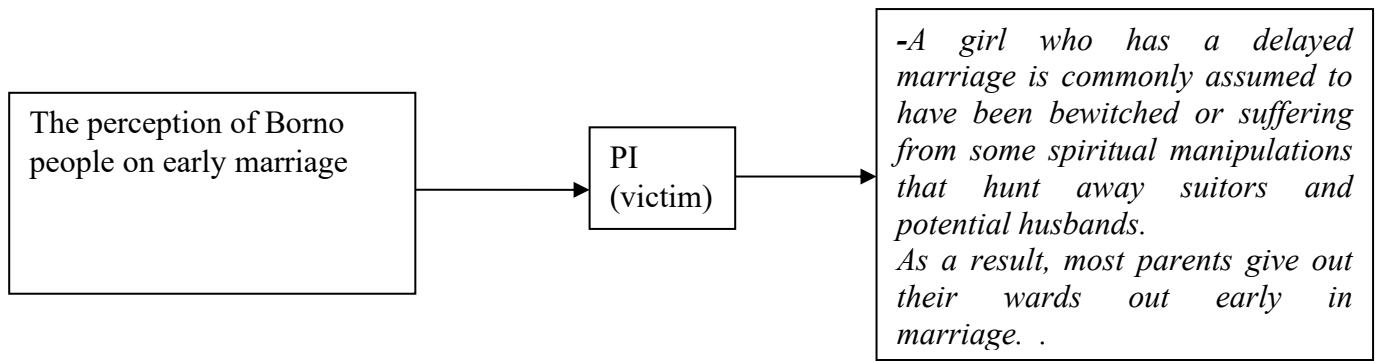
- It is unfortunate that many immature girls do not have a right to be heard on the issue of marriage.  
-Girls are taught to accept as true that they must be absolutely loyal to their husbands no matter the condition

RLI

The perception of Borno people on early marriage

RLI

-Although, I do not support it” the general cultural and religious beliefs have oriented many parents into seeing early marriage as a standard way of life for their young girls in Borno State  
-Most of the parents still believed that the place of woman is in the kitchen and her husband’s home.



**Source: Author’s Compilation, 2023**

### 4.3 Discussion of Findings

The purpose of this discussion chapter is to provide an analysis of the data analysis's findings.

This chapter concentrated on the four objectives and research questions related to the study's topic in order to accomplish this.

As stated in the first objective and research question, which looked at the programmes that NGOs implemented to prevent early marriage, most of the respondents attested to the fact that many NGOs effectively use multisectoral programme approaches to prevent sexual, emotional, psychological, physical, and socioeconomic violence. They also acknowledged that one of the most often used initiatives by non-governmental organisations (NGOs) to address issues of sexual, emotional, and psychological abuse as well as physical and socioeconomic violence is holistic national action plans. The respondents also concurred that NGOs may effectively reduce sexual, emotional, and psychological, physical, and socioeconomic violence by implementing initiatives that promote gender equality. Similarly, non-governmental organisations have found success using educational projects as a means of reducing physical, sexual, emotional, and psychological violence as well as socioeconomic violence. They also concur that NGOs

primarily employ community interventions to reduce sexual, emotional, and psychological abuse as well as physical and socioeconomic abuse.

Additionally, the majority of respondents acknowledged that media interventions programmes are effective in combating physical, psychological, emotional, and sexual violence as well as socioeconomic violence.

This result is further supported by the respondents' criteria mean value of 3.13, which is higher than the 2.5 criterion mean cut off mark and leads to the acceptance of the respondents' previously stated opinion.

The aforementioned outcome aligns with the efforts and outcomes of intervention initiatives by the National Agency for Prohibition of Traffic in Persons (NAPTIP), the National Human Rights Commission (NHRC), the GBV Sub Working Group, and Save the Children. Their report highlights their utilisation of a multisectoral programme approach, holistic national action, gender equality promotion, school initiatives, community interventions, media interventions, and other strategies to effectively curb sexual, emotional, and psychological, physical, and socioeconomic violence. These strategies bring together government ministries, service providers, and community groups that collaborate to address the various causes and consequences of child marriage<sup>1</sup>.

The outcome is also consistent with a survey that revealed the media initiative to be among the most well-known and meticulously assessed early marriage programmes in Africa<sup>2</sup>. The study found a correlation between media exposure to the North East series and shifts in knowledge and attitudes regarding intimate partner violence. The study used a series of radio and television

episodes to highlight intimate partner violence, date rape, and sexual harassment, among other social problems.

Moreover, the findings of this study are consistent with those of a previous research project on the use of intervention programmes to prevent violence against women. These programmes include advocating for gender equality as a crucial component of violence prevention, utilising school-based programmes to address gender norms and attitudes before they become deeply ingrained in children and youth, and implementing community interventions that can empower women and engage with men<sup>3</sup>.

Also, the outcome for this goal and study question revealed that early marriage is simply seen by the typical Borno person as a "custom," a "tradition," or a component of their "culture." The responders also attested to the fact that many Borno natives take great satisfaction in their early marriages. In a similar spirit, the majority believe that Borno parents generally accept early marriages for their children, especially for their daughters. They also confirmed that many parents believe that when their daughters marry young, they will have the luxury of seeing and caring for their grandchildren when they are still very little. The majority of respondents' position is further supported by the mean score, which is 3.12, over the 2.5 criteria mean cutoff point, indicating that the aforementioned positions of the respondents are accepted<sup>4</sup>.

In addition, the majority of respondents concurred that NGOs' efforts to teach boys and girls about sex, reproduction, and the hazards involved at a young age have increased efforts to maintain sexual and reproductive health. They also confirmed that there is a decline in the concerns that sex education may promote unplanned pregnancies and early sexual interactions. Furthermore, the participants acknowledged that there has been a rise in campaigns supporting the notion that education and learning are crucial for the advancement of females. These

campaigns have succeeded in convincing parents to send their daughters to school and guaranteeing that they obtain a basic education as a fundamental right. Respondents also concurred that more people and non-governmental organisations are willing to provide school scholarships for girls.

These opinions were supported by the criteria mean value of 3.16, which is higher than the 2.5 criterion mean cutoff line and indicates that the respondents accept the existence of NGOs' operations in relation to the aforementioned opinion.

The outcome of this work is consistent with a survey that was conducted through community intervention by Save the Children. They discovered that community initiatives have aided in altering people's attitudes and behaviours about early marriage. In an effort to end violence against women, it has also aided in organising entire villages or districts. In order to engage men and boys, the programme also promotes engagement from the larger community. It has aided in expanding women's employment prospects, giving them more say in domestic matters and the capacity to settle marital disputes, and bolstering their social networks<sup>5</sup>.

The analysis's findings indicated that respondents generally believed that the effort to prevent early marriage is being hampered by the inadequate application of laws, such as the Child Rights Act of 2003 (CRA), which is not adopted by any state in the federation. They also pointed to the fact that victims' inability to prosecute their complaints is hampered by their reliance on parents or guardians to ensure the proper enforcement process. The respondents also acknowledged that some cultural practices and attitudes that violate the rights of girls and hence promote abuse have been fostered by the underreporting of early marriage actions. Furthermore, the majority of

respondents concurred that one of the main obstacles NGOs faces in their campaign against early marriage is the general public's low level of awareness<sup>6</sup>.

The opinion of the respondents is accepted as meeting the criteria for affirmation in order to support this result. This is done by utilising the mean score and the criterion mean value of 2.74, which is over the 2.5 criterion mean cut off level.

According to the reviewed literature, the work's findings are consistent with studies that used survey design to investigate the causes, effects, and mitigating factors of girl-child marriage in Nigerian society<sup>7</sup>. The study found that creating awareness campaigns about the effects of early girl-child marriage and implementing laws correcting gender equality are some of the mitigating variables against initiatives that promote early marriage and gender-based violence. At least two of the factors mentioned by the respondents were represented in their findings.

## Endnotes

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## **Chapter Five**

### **Conclusion**

#### **5.1 Summary of Findings**

The study looked into early marriage in Nigeria's Borno State. The first chapter is divided into introductory sections that provide the issue statement, background information, goals, research questions, significance, scope, and other important details of the study. The second chapter covered the literature review, which emphasised the study's theoretical, empirical, and evaluational literature. The third chapter describes the study's methodology, which includes the tests that were employed, including frequency charts, basic percentages, tabular computations, descriptive statistics, and criterion mean. Chapter Five includes a summary, recommendations, and conclusions, whereas Chapter Four deals with data presentation, analysis, and interpretation as well as a discussion of findings.

According to the findings, the NGOs' campaigns to prevent early marriage consist of a multisectoral strategy, a comprehensive national action plan, gender equality promotion, educational initiatives, and media interventions. Thus far, these initiatives have shown to be effective in Borno State's efforts to combat early marriage.

The findings of the second research question and objective revealed that the typical Borno person views early marriage as a custom, a component of people's culture, a source of pride, and a normal occurrence when their children, especially their daughters, tie the knot early. Parents

believe that when their daughters marry young, they will have the opportunity to see and care for their grandchildren while they are still young.

The results also indicated that majority of Northern Nigeria, including Borno state, practiced early child marriage. As a result, a large number of boy and girl children are forced into marriage. Additionally, young girls have their dreams of going to school destroyed when they are married off. The situation has gotten so bad that the typical Borno now considers early marriage to be the norm.

Many young females lack a voice when it comes to marriage. They are taught to feel that regardless of the opportunity for an appropriate education and career, they must always serve their husbands. In most Borno villages, it is customary to marry as a virgin as early as age 14, rather than marrying as an educated non-virgin at an adult age. Parents consider the marriage of their unmarried daughters to be more respectable than that of their educated daughter, whom they consider to be spoiled. In Borno State and many other northern parts of Nigeria, cultural and religious beliefs have misled many parents into believing that early marriage is the natural way of life for their young girls. The majority of parents still held the view that a woman belongs in the kitchen and at her husband's house. It is commonly assumed that a female who has a delayed marriage has been subjected to spiritual manipulations or bewitched, which drive away possible husbands and suitors. Thus, most parents give their wards away early in marriage in an effort to avoid these presumptions.

The results also indicated that the NGOs' efforts have contributed to a rise in the public awareness campaign about the drawbacks of young marriage. By educating both boys and girls about sex education, this has increased awareness of sexual and reproductive health and decreased concerns that it will promote early immorality and pregnancy. Additionally, the

respondents acknowledged that there is a growing body of work supporting the idea that learning and education are the keys to girls' success. Respondents also concurred that more people and non-governmental organisations are prepared to stand up for the rights of girls.

The analysis's conclusion also revealed that respondents felt that the push against early marriage is being slowed down by bad legal implementation, such as the fact that Nigeria's states have not yet implemented the Child Rights Act of 2003 (CRA). The outcome further confirmed that victims' reliance on their parents or guardians for proper enforcement is a barrier to their capacity to pursue legal action. The respondents also acknowledged that the occurrence of early marriage actions has been aided by inadequate reporting of such incidents. Furthermore, the majority of respondents concurred that one of the main obstacles NGOs faces in their campaign against early marriage is the general public's low level of awareness.

## **5.2 Conclusion**

This study looked at the gender-based violence intervention activities run by non-governmental organisations in Borno State. We thus arrive to the following conclusion in light of the facts. Early marriage is quite common in Borno state because people still view it as a custom and a component of their culture, as well as a source of pride and a normal occurrence when their children, especially their daughters, get married young. They also view it as a privilege to be able to see and care for their grandchildren while they are still very young. Parents find more dignity in their daughter's marriage to a guy who has never met her than in their educated daughter, whom they consider to be spoiled. The orientation that the females receive promotes complete subordination to men under all circumstances. It is a widespread gossip that a girl who is beyond time for marriage is being spiritually controlled to ward off suitors and possible spouses. Thus, most parents give their wards away early in marriage in an effort to avoid these presumptions.

By making sure that boys and girls alike are taught about sex, reproduction, and the associated hazards from an early age, non-governmental organisations (NGOs) have contributed to the preservation of sexual and reproductive health. Concerns that sex education will promote early pregnancy and sex relationships have also diminished. Additionally, there is a growing movement supporting the idea that learning and education are essential for girls' advancement, which has resulted in convincing parents to support their daughters' attendance at school and make sure they have access to a basic education as a right. Due to the actions of the NGOs' intervention programmes, there has also been a rise in the number of people and NGOs willing to provide school scholarships for females.

The study's final conclusion about the difficulties faced by NGOs in the battle against early marriage was that the lack of state adoption of the Child Rights Act of 2003 (CRA) and other laws is making it more difficult to combat early marriage. The victims' inability to pursue their complaints is hampered by their reliance on their parents or guardians to ensure that the legal system operates correctly. The underreporting of early marriage laws has fostered societal norms and beliefs that violate the rights of girls and, as a result, promote abuse. Additionally, one of the biggest obstacles NGOs have in their campaign against early marriage is the general public's lack of information.

### **5.3 Recommendations**

It is crucial to take into account suggestions that would guarantee the continued success of NGOs' intervention activities in the battle against early marriage in Borno State, Nigeria, in light

of the findings of the study. The evidence derived from the work's conclusions is the basis for the adoption of these suggestions.

i. The government, donor organisations and other stakeholders should consciously support efforts to improve the programming that NGOs are doing to combat gender-based violence, including sexual, emotional, and psychological abuse as well as physical and socioeconomic abuse. The multisectoral programming strategy, comprehensive national action, gender equality promotion, school initiatives, and media interventions programmes of the NGOs that have demonstrated notable success from the results of this work should be the focus of this improvement.

ii. To change the prevailing mindset about early marriage, there should be a well-planned and persistent orientation and enlightenment campaign for the people of Borno. This is especially important for those who still view early marriage as a tradition and a part of people's culture, as something to be proud of, as a normal occurrence when their children, especially their daughters, get married young, and as a privilege to see and care for their grandchildren while they are still very young. It will also aid in transforming the long-standing mindset that views women, especially those in northern Nigeria, as men's instruments for sex and as second-class. Statements like "women belong in the kitchen," "women belong in other rooms," "women are meant only to bear children," and similar ones are part of this mindset.

iii. To reduce concerns that sex education will encourage early sexual relations and pregnancy, it is important to sustain and enhance the work of non-governmental organisations (NGOs) that have increased the maintenance of sexual and reproductive health by teaching boys and girls

about sex, reproduction, and the risks involved at a young age. increasing the number of people and NGOs willing to provide school scholarships for girls as a result of the activities of the NGOs intervention programmes; increasing the campaign that supports the idea that education and learning are the key to girls' progress, which led to convincing parents to keep their daughters in school and ensure that they receive basic education as a right.

iv. Better legal implementation is required to prevent a scenario in which the federation's efforts to combat early marriage are hampered by the states' failure to ratify the Child Rights Act of 2003 (CRA). Parents and other carers who frequently obstruct victims from accessing the proper enforcement procedures ought to undergo reorientation. When the victims come forward to speak out against the violation of their right as girls, there should also be a conscious effort to protect them and their parents or guardians. In order to deter certain cultural beliefs and practices that violate the rights of girls and hence foster abuse, there should also be improvements made to the reporting and awareness-raising surrounding early marriage actions.

The study's recommendations will have a significant positive impact on parents, family members, religious organisations, and society at large because the results will help them understand the role that women play in society and the importance of education over marriage, which exposes women to violence of all kinds. The Federal Ministries of Women's Affairs, Education, and Health as well as other pertinent government agencies will benefit from the recommendation as well because the data and information in this study will be helpful in developing action plans, programmes, and policies. The conclusions and suggestions of this study will encourage more research on the topic among academics, with the goal of bridging the knowledge gap in the areas not covered in this work. The study would also be beneficial to future researchers because its

conclusions would serve as a foundation for additional research in this area of study and a source of secondary data.

#### **5.4 Contribution to Knowledge**

Since there aren't any research specifically focusing on NGOs' interventions for early marriage in Borno State, this study has added to the body of knowledge by first examining such initiatives. By concentrating on the age gap of girls between the ages of 9 and 17 between the years 2018 and 2022, this study revised earlier research. The incorporation of both quantitative and qualitative data (interviews with parents, victims, community leaders, and religious leaders) in the research process adds another distinctive element to the study and produces a more thorough conclusion on the topic.

#### **5.5 Suggestion for Further Study**

The researcher would want to recommend that more research be done in areas such as government intervention in Borno State's campaign against early marriage.

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**Appendix**

Questionnaire

Section A

Lead City University Ibadan  
Faculty of Management and Social Sciences  
Department of Politics and International Relation (Peace and Conflict Studies)

Dear respondent

**Questionnaire**

I am a student of the above named school and department conducting a research on the topic;  
**The influence of NGOs in the control of early marriage in Borno State.** This questionnaire is meant to solicit your response on the subject matter. Be rest assured that your response will not be used for any other purpose order than the one intended. Confidentiality is highly guaranteed.

Thanks

Yours Faithfully

Mayowa **GBADEBO**

**Researcher**

**Instruction**

Kindly tick to indicate whether you strongly agree (SA), Agree (A), Disagreed (D) or Strongly Disagreed (SD) to each of the questionnaire items below.

**NATURE OF PROGRAMMES BEING IMPLEMENTED BY THE NGOs**

<b>S/N</b>	<b>Questionnaire items for nature of programmes being implemented by the NGOs to address early marriage Borno State</b>	<b>SA</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>D</b>	<b>SD</b>
1	Multisectoral programme approach is used by much NGOs to curb sexual, emotional and psychological, physical and socio-economic violence				
2	Holistic national action plans among the most populous programmes used by NGOs to checkmate issues of sexual, emotional and psychological, physical and socio-economic violence				
3	Promoting gender equality is one of the programmes used by NGOs to curb sexual, emotional and psychological, physical and socio-economic violence				
4	School initiatives has been effective as a tool used by				

	NGOs to curb sexual, emotional and psychological, physical and socio-economic violence				
5	Community interventions is mostly used by NGOs to curb sexual, emotional and psychological, physical and socio-economic violence				
6	Media interventions programmes function well in the fight against sexual, emotional and psychological, physical and socio-economic violence				

Source: Authors computation (2022)

### THE PERCEPTION OF BORNO STATE PEOPLE ON THE ISSUE OF EARLY MARRIAGE AND GENDER BASED VIOLENCE

S/N	Questionnaire items for the perception of Borno State people on the issue of early marriage and gender based violence	SA	A	D	SD
5	An average Borno person sees early marriage as just a “custom”, a “tradition” or part of people’s “culture				
6	Early marriage is seen as a thing of pride to many Borno indigenes				
7	Most Borno parents see it as a normal thing when their children particularly their daughters gets married early				

8	Many parents assume that they can be privileged to see their grandchildren and take care of them as they are still yet younger when their daughters marry early				
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**THE INFLUENCE OF THE NGOs PROGRAMMES ON THE FIGHT AGAINST  
EARLY MARRIAGE**

S/N	Questionnaire items for the influence of the NGOs programmes on the fight against early marriage and gender based violence	SA	A	D	SD
9	Activities of NGOs has led to increase in maintaining sexual and reproductive health, by ensuring that both girls and boys learn about sex, reproduction and the related risks at an early age.				
10	Reduction in the fears that sex education will encourage early sexual relations and pregnancy.				
11	There is increase in the campaign that buttress the fact that education and learning is the key to girls' progress which led to persuading parents to keep their daughters in school and ensuring that they receive basic education as a right.				
12	There has been an increase in number of individuals and NGOs who are willing to give school scholarship for girls.				

## CHALLENGES FACED BY NGOs IN THE FIGHT AGAINST EARLY MARRIAGE

S/N	Questionnaire items for challenges faced by NGOS in the fight against early marriage and gender based violence	SA	A	D	SD
13	Poor implementation of laws such as the non-adoption of the Child Rights Act of 2003 (CRA) by all states in the federation is hindering the fight against early marriage.				
14	Victims are dependent who rely on their parents or guardians for right enforcement process hinders the ability of victim to pursue their case				
15	The under-reporting of early marriage and gender based violence acts has encouraged certain cultural beliefs and practices that infringe on the rights of the girl child and consequently encourage abuse				
16	Poor awareness by majority of the people is a major challenge faced by NGOs				

**Source: Authors compilation, 2023**

## **Bio-data**

### **A. Personal Data**

Full Name: Oluwamayowa Oyebolatito GBADEBO  
Address: CBN Quarters Maiduguri, Borno State.  
E-mail: [gbadebooluwamayowa@gmail.com](mailto:gbadebooluwamayowa@gmail.com)  
Phone No: +2348068634451  
Date of Birth: July 29, 1998  
Place of Birth: Ogun State  
Nationality: Nigeria  
Next of Kin: Oyebusola Prevail GBADEBO  
CBN Quarters Maiduguri, Borno State.

### **B. Educational Background**

#### **Educational Institutions Attended with Dates and Qualifications**

- |  |         |
|--|---------|
| ❖ MSc. In Peace and Conflict Studies – Lead University, Ibadan | In view |
| ❖ BSc Political Science – Adeleke University Ede, Osun State   | 2018    |
| ❖ S.S.C.E –Immaculate College Maiduguri, Borno State           | 2014    |

### **C. Working Experience with Dates**

Secretary to the Director Army, Federal Ministry of Defense, Abuja	2019
❖ Secretary to the Director of Peace and Conflict Resolution, Borno Amicable Peace and Conflict Center, Federal High Court Maiduguri, Borno State	2016

#### **D. Awards and Fellowships**

Nil

#### **E. Membership of Academic and Professional Bodies**

Nil

#### **F. Publications**

Nil

#### **G. Major Conferences Attended with Dates**

Nil

#### **H. Reference**

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**Signature**

**Date**

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