

THE EFFECT OF CHILD-CARE PRACTICES AND EARLY MARRIAGE ON THE CAREER ASPIRATIONS OF INHERITED CHILDREN IN KOM

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ABSTRACT

The main purpose of this study was to investigate how child-care practices, and early marriage affect the career aspirations of inherited children in Kom. The study employed a survey research design with quantitative and qualitative approaches adopted. Quantitative data was collected with a questionnaire while interviews constituted the strategy to collect qualitative data. Questionnaires were completed by 400 participants drawn from Belo, Njinikom, and Fundong Sub Divisions in Boyo Division and 10 successors were interviewed. Descriptive and inferential statistics were used to analyze quantitative data while qualitative data were analyzed using the technique of content analysis. A multiple regression analysis with one set of predictors was conducted to evaluate how well a linear combination of child-care and early marriage significantly predicted the career aspirations of inherited children. The predictors were the two sub variables (child-care, early marriage), while the criterion variable was the career aspirations of inherited children. Cramer's V was used to calculate the strength of association between each categorical variable and career aspirations of inherited children. The linear combination of the two predictor variables was significantly related to the career aspirations $F(5,399) = 83.35, P < 0.1$. All the predictors (child-care and early Marriage) were statistically significant. Child-care ($t = 7.733, p = 0.04$), early Marriage ($t = 7.7, p < 0.01$). The findings showed that there was a significant relationship between the practice of matrilineal succession like child-care/early marriage and career aspirations of inherited children in Kom. This investigation concludes that the self-perception of inherited children in Kom affects their career aspirations. It was recommended amongst others that the Kom Regulatory Society (Kwiifoyn), which is an organ of decision-making in Kom should enact laws that protect inherited children.

KEYWORDS: Kom, Provision of needs, Parental Care, Discrimination, Stress, Early Marriage, Diseases

Background and Context

Succession is a cultural practice that has been perceived and conceptualized differently in different ethnic and cultural groups in Cameroon and elsewhere. In every cultural community, parents want to pass on strategies that will promote the survival of their children and foster their cultural and socialized competence (Edwards, Gandini, 1996; Keller 2003, 2007; LeVine, 1974). This fact is buttressed by Biovaninni, et. al., (1996) who opines that human intentions and understanding are organized in the light of cherished goals, values, and pictures of the world. The definition and practice of inheritance or succession differ from one context and cultural setting to another.

Nsamenang (2013) hold that while heredity pre-wires development, cultural tools and nurturing regimes supply the 'content' that accords meaning to individuals of both individualistic and collective cultures. This accounts for why the phenomenon of matrilineal succession and its various practices can be a determinant of career aspirations of the inherited children in Kom.

Most people have very strong attachments to their mothers and consequently their mothers' siblings (Friedman, 1980). Mother and child bond and relationship is likely to be stronger than the father and child bond in most cultures because of the belief that someone may doubt his or her biological father not the mother. In most cultures the attachment between mother and child is so strong that when someone insults another person's mother during an argument, that could be the beginning of a serious conflict. As a result, in matrilineal inheritance, a man's nephew that is the sister's son will have priority over his own biological son (Keller, 2003). Maternal uncle-nephew relationships therefore assume a dominant position .

Research on matrilineal succession has indicated comparative and contrastive definitions of child-care across cultures. Such studies have sought to understand the criteria that are most important in signifying child-care; and whether there are universally held conceptions of child-care or if these conceptions are cultural or context bound (Nsamenang, 2012). Whichever way, however, how inherited children perceive and define child-care will correspondingly determine their career aspirations. LeVine (1974) insists that while a mother normally takes care of her own children in all cultures, in some matrilineal cultures an "uncle-father" will take care of his nieces and nephews instead. In other words, social fathers here are uncles. There is a disconnection between the role of father and. In such matrilineal cultures, especially where residence is also matrilineal, a man will exercise guardianship rights not over the children he fathers but exclusively over his sisters' children, who are viewed as his own flesh Biovaninni, et. al., (1996). These children's biological father, unlike an uncle who is their mother's brother and thus their caregiver is in some sense a stranger to them, even when affectionate and emotionally close. This may be true for the traditional Akan culture. According to Biovaninni, et. al., (1996), attributing to Kristen Hawkes, among foraging groups matrilineal societies are less likely to commit female infanticide than are patrilineal societies.

Early marriage is a formal marriage or informal union entered into by an individual before reaching a certain age (Super, 1981) specified by several global organizations such as UNICEF as minors under the age of 15. The legally prescribed marriageable age in some jurisdictions is above 18 years, especially in the case of girls and even when the age is set at 18 years, many jurisdictions permit earlier marriage with parental consent or in special circumstances, such as teenage pregnancy. In certain countries, even when the legal marriage age is 18, cultural traditions take priority over legislative law (Nsamenang, 2013). Early marriage violates the rights of children; it affects both boys and girls, but it is more common among girls. Early marriage has widespread and long term consequences for child brides and grooms. According to several UN agencies, comprehensive

sexuality education can prevent such a phenomenon (UNESCO, 2008). Several factors contribute to early marriage. These include;

Dowry and bride price

Providing a girl with a dowry at her marriage is an ancient practice which continues in some parts of the world. This requires parents to bestow property on the marriage of a daughter, which is often an economic challenge for many families (Keller, 2003). The difficulty to save and preserve wealth for dowry was common, particularly in times of economic hardship, or persecution, or unpredictable seizure of property and savings. These difficulties pressed families to betroth their girls, irrespective of her age, as soon as they had the resources to pay the dowry. Thus, LeVine (1974) notes that European Jews would marry their girls early, once they had collected the expected amount of dowry. A bride price is the amount paid by the groom to the parents of a bride for them to consent to him marrying their daughter (Wandira, 1971). In some countries, the younger the bride, the higher the price she may fetch. This practice creates an economic incentive where girls are sought and married early by their families to the highest bidder. Child marriages of girls are a way out of desperate economic conditions, or simply a source of income to the parents. Bride price is another cause of early marriage and child trafficking.

Persecution, forced migration, and slavery

Social upheavals such as wars, major military campaigns, forced religious conversion, taking natives as prisoners of war and converting them into slaves, arrest and forced migrations of people often made a suitable groom a rare commodity (Nsamenang, 2013). Bride's families would seek out any available bachelors and marry them to their daughters, before events beyond their control moved the boy away. Persecution and displacement of Roma and Jewish people in Europe, colonial campaigns to get slaves from various ethnic groups in West Africa across the Atlantic for plantations, Islamic campaigns to get Hindu slaves from India across Afghanistan's Hindu Kush as property and for work, were some of the historical events that increased the practice of early marriage before the 19th century (Keller, 2003).

Fear, poverty, social pressures and sense of protection

A sense of social insecurity has been a cause of early marriages across the world. For example, in Nepal, parents fear likely social stigma if adult daughters stay at home (Kraemer, 1993). Other fear of crime such as rape, which not only would be traumatic but may lead to less acceptance of the girl if she becomes victim of a crime (UNESCO, 2008). For example, girls may not be seen as eligible for marriage if they are not virgins. In other cultures, the fear is that an unmarried girl may engage in illicit relationships, or elope causing a permanent social blemish to her siblings, or that the impoverished family may be unable to find bachelors for grown up girls in their economic social group (Nkwi, 2014). Such fears and social pressures have been proposed as causes that lead to early marriages. Insofar as early marriage is a social norm in practicing communities, the elimination of early marriage must come through a change of those social norms (Tchombe, 2007). The mindset of

the communities, and what is believed to be the proper outcome for a child bride, must be shifted to bring about a change in the prevalence of child marriage.

Extreme poverty may make daughters an economic burden on the family, which may be relieved by their early marriage, to the benefit of the family as well as the girl herself (Nkwi, 2014). Poor parents may have few alternatives they can afford for the girls in the family; they often view marriage as a means to ensure their daughter's financial security and to reduce the economic burden of a growing adult on the family (LeVine 1974). Child marriage can also be seen as a means of ensuring a girl's economic security, particularly if she lacks family members to provide for her. In reviews of Jewish community history, scholars claim poverty, shortage of grooms; uncertain social and economic conditions were a cause for frequent early marriages.

Although the general marriageable age is 18 in the majority of countries, most jurisdictions allow for exceptions for underage youth with parental and/or judicial consent. Such laws are neither limited to developing countries, nor to state religion. In some countries a religious marriage by itself has legal validity, while in others it does not, as civil marriage is obligatory (UNESCO, 2008).

According to Nkwi (1983), most inherited children form a strong self-concept which holds their internal careers together even as they experience unexpected changes in their external career. He further suggested that an inherited child's thoughts about his or her occupation would also explain the person's perception on non-organizational success. Likewise, Nsameng Tchombe (2012) found that positive occupational self-concept would positively influence inherited children's perception of career success. According to Nkwi (1983) and Biovaninni, et. al., (1996), inherited children's career anchors are the occupational self-concept or core career values comprising self-perceived talents and abilities, competencies, basic values and motivation. Career anchors can evolve as an inherited child gains occupational and life experience. Once the career anchors have been formed, it functions as stabilizing and integrating forces in individuals' career by explaining their work contributions and providing measurable criteria for career success. Hence, career aspirations are significant in inherited children's career success because it influences career choices, affects decisions on career mobility, shapes an inherited child's career path, determines views of the career future, influences the selection of specific occupations and work settings and influences the inherited child's reactions to their work experiences (Schein, 1996).

Mbiti (1970) also noted that inherited children's interpretations of career success rest on an individual's particular career orientation. He states that career aspirations, values, perceptions and effective reactions to job experiences are aspects of the internal career that have significant influence on job satisfaction, commitment and retention within an organization. Specifically, his study among 78 research, development and engineering professionals indicated that managerial, pure challenge and entrepreneurship orientations were positively correlated with job discretion, job involvement and organizational commitment. In addition, geographic security, lifestyle and service orientations were

positively correlated with inherited children's career satisfaction. Therefore, his study supported that the internal career will determine inherited children's career decision and choices, which will then lead to their objective and subjective career success.

The inherited child is responsible for developing not only marketable skills, but also new attitudes, such as career resilience and adaptability (Nana, 2012). But the successors are morally responsible for softening possible negative effects for the inherited children in order to increase their chances for possible higher career aspirations (Gandini, et. al., 1996). These negative effects may include job insecurity; decline in employability as a result of the successors investing less in the inherited children's education and training (Humphries & Dyer, 2001)

Purpose of the study

This study sought to address the following specific objectives;

- Investigate the extent to which child-care practices affect the career aspirations of inherited children.
- Determine the extent to which succession order affects the career aspirations of inherited children.
- Examine the extent to which parent-child relations affect the career aspirations of inherited children.
- Investigate the extent to which early marriage affects the career aspiration of inherited children.
- Ascertain the extent to which family wealth management affects the career aspirations of inherited children.

METHODOLOGY

The cross-sectional survey design was adopted for the study, making use of space sampling, theory and methods triangulation to give a comprehensive picture of participants' conceptions of child-care. Ethical standards were maintained in collecting information from participants, by explaining to the participants the relevance and usefulness of the study and justifying why the respondent had to participate in the study. The convenient and systematic sampling techniques were employed to select 400 participants. A questionnaire titled 'Questionnaire for Inherited Children in Matrilineal Succession (QUICMS)' was used for the study. A Likert scale was constructed based on the perception of inherited children themselves, existing literature and validation from expert researchers in matrilineal succession. The tool was then administered to a broader sample of 400 participants from across three Sub Divisions in Boyo Division of the North West Region of Cameroon. As for the quantitative data, a pre-designed EpiData Version 3.1 (EpiData Association, Odense Denmark, 2008) database which has in-built consistency and validation checks was used to enter the data. Further consistency data range and validation checks were performed in SPSS version 21.0 (IBM Inc., 202) to identify invalid codes. Data was made essentially of categorical variables and they were analyzed using frequency and proportions and multiple Response Analysis to aggregate response within

conceptual components. Association between categorical variables was measured using Cramer's V test. This test uses the same principles as the Chi-Square test and yields generally similar trend of statistics. Logistic Regression Model was employed to assess the effect of child-care practices on matrilineal succession indicators on the career aspirations of inherited children. The Likelihood test of model helped to predict among the set of predictors for the components related to matrilineal succession those that significantly predict the outcome indicator (Nana, 2012). Data was presented using frequency tables, charts, and code-grounding-quotation table. All statistics were presented at the 95% Confidence Level (CL), Alpha-0.05.

The Statistical Package for Sciences (SPSS) software, version 20.0, was used to analyze the quantitative data collected, particularly the close-ended items. Descriptive statistics such as percentages mean score, and standard deviations were used to present and describe various aspects of the data (for example, the demographic information of inherited children and the close-ended questionnaire items). The independent t test and the one-way ANOVA were used to compare means within the variables under investigation, thereby supplying the inferential statistics for this study. Meanwhile, the one-way ANOVA was used to test for significant differences between means for inherited children variables in relations to matrilineal succession and career aspirations. The chosen level of significance for the test was .05. The content analysis approach was used to analyse written responses from the open-ended questions.

RESULTS

Summarily, results showed what inherited children their conceptions of matrilineal succession were. Questionnaire data were entered in Epi-Info 6.04d (CDC, 2001), not too different from those earlier earmarked among inherited children in other cultural backgrounds. This is certainly because majority of inherited children included in the study were currently living in the village; and as it is in most African countries today, most inherited children in urban places are becoming more and more westernized with well adapted Euro-American values and conceptions of career aspirations. The only difference was that unlike typical Euro-American youth, they defined inherited children with both psychological and sociological markers. Psychologically, they conceived inherited children to mean having a sense of dependence on the successor (57.6%), emotionally instable due to the lost of a beloved father (83.6%), irresponsibility (90.1%), and financially handicapped (72.0%). They also added attaining specific role transitions (72.9 %) as key indicators of inherited children's career aspirations.

Table 1: showing the characterization of career aspirations

ISSUES	POSITIVE RESPONSE			NEGATIVE RESPONSE			X	SD
	SA	A	TOTAL	D	SD	TOTAL		
My successor usually discusses my career issues with me	60 (15%)	51 (12.8%)	111 (27.7%)	14 (3.5%)	275 (68.8%)	289 (72.3%)	1.74	1.16
My husband/wife is the one who chose a career for me.	28 (7%)	109 (27.3%)	137 (34.2%)	82 (20.5%)	181 (45.3%)	263 (65.7%)	1.96	1.00
I wish to pursue a career choice of high status though I got married early	145 (36.8%)	68 (17%)	213 (53.3%)	104 (26.0%)	83 (20.8%)	187 (46.7%)	2.69	1.17
My successor asked me to get married early so that my spouse could sponsor me to have a job	55 (13.8%)	131 (32.8%)	186 (46.5%)	52 (13%)	162 (40.5%)	214 (53.5%)	2.20	1.12
I am paying for the career I am pursuing	69 (17.3%)	137 (34.3%)	206 (51.5%)	69 (17.3%)	125 (31.3%)	194 (48.5%)	2.69	1.17
The financial status of my husband/wife influenced my career aspirations	64 (16%)	149 (37.3%)	213 (53.3%)	81 (20.3%)	107 (26.5%)	187 (46.7%)	2.43	1.05
The successor is paying for the career I am pursuing.	18 (4.5%)	99 (24.8%)	117 (29.3%)	83 (20.8%)	200 (50%)	283 (70.7%)	2.35	1.11
I am not thinking of any career because there is nobody to support me.	31 (7.8%)	78 (19.5%)	109 (27.3%)	118 (29.5%)	173 (43.3%)	291 (72.7%)	1.92	.96
The negligence of my successor made me to start working for my future career at a tender age	43 (10.8%)	239 (59.8%)	282 (70.5%)	12 (3%)	106 (26.5%)	118 (29.5%)	3.05	1.59
My successor imposed a career on me.	8 (2%)	82 (20.5%)	90 (22.5%)	53 (13.3%)	257 (64.3%)	310 (77.5%)	1.59	.86
Total	521 (13.0%)	1143 (28.6%)		668 (16.7%)	1669 (41.7%)		22.28	10.76
		41.6%		58.4%				

Statistical evidence from table brings to limelight the fact that 289(72.3%) out of 400 inherited children denied while 111(27.7%) accepted the fact that their successor usually discusses career issues with them. Equally a majority of 263(65%) denied while 137(34.2%) accepted that their husband/wife is the one who chose a career for them. I wish to pursue a career choice of high status though I got married early. On the other hand a majority of 213(53.3%) were positive while 187(46.7%) were negative about pursuing a career choice of high status though they got married early. As to whether their successor asked them to get married early so that their spouse could sponsor them to have a job, 186(46.7%) reacted positively while 214(53.3%) reacted negatively to the statement. Also 206(51.5%) accepted that they were paying for the career they were pursuing while 194(48.5%) denied this fact. Still a majority of 213(53.3%) accepted while 187(46.7%) refused the fact that the financial status of their husband/wife influenced their career aspirations. When asked if successors were paying for the career they were pursuing a majority of 283 (70.7%) denied while 117(29.3%) accepted. Concerning the assertion “I am not thinking of any career because there is

nobody to support me”, 291(72.7%) reacted negatively while 109(27.3%) reacted positively. On the other hand, a majority of 282(70.5%) agreed while 118(29.5%) disagreed to the fact that the negligence of the successor made them to start working for their future careers at a tender age. Equally a majority of 310(77.5%) disagreed with the fact that their successors imposed a career on them while just a minority of 90(22.5%) agreed to that fact.

Summarily as can be seen from the preceding table, 1664 (41.6%) of the inherited children’s opinions on their career aspirations were positive while a majority of 2336(58.4%) was negative. The mean of the career aspirations was 22 less than the hypothesized test value of 25. This was enough evidence that the career aspirations of inherited children were unfulfilled. Generally the standard deviations for the items were low indicating that the responses were close to the mean, that is to say the respondents had similar responses. Qualitative data revealed that inherited children had a lot of difficulties such as; nobody to rely on, no plans for future, no money to further education, limited support, no money to pay for their trade or education and no one to depend on.

The above difficulties affected their career aspirations in that; most of them could not aspire for higher jobs because of no support, no fatherly influence in most of their decisions, no one to share worries, lack of funds to establish a business, most of them are unable to further their education, could not register for competitive examinations

The respondents presented the following as measures taken to overcome their difficulties; establishing out of the village, working very hard with help from their spouses, resorted to odd jobs, work on farms, doing petit trading and part time jobs, joining monthly “njanjis”.

Table 2: Showing the associations between demographic variables and career aspirations

Categorical variable	Cramer's V	p-value
Sex	.350	.000
Age	.340	.000
Category of adversity	.280	.000
Best social network	.335	.000
highest certificate	.310	.000
Living with	.335	.000
Educational level of successor	.368	.000
Educational level of mother	.372	.000
Successor’s occupation	.270	.000
Mother’s occupation	.327	.000
Source of finances for education/trade	.287	.000
Source of support when in difficulties	.319	.000

Cramer,s V was used to calculate the strength of association between each categorical variable and career aspirations of inherited children. Three of the Cramer’s coefficients(sex, educational level of successor and educational level of mother) had large effect size while the rest had a medium effect size based on the standards set by Cohen (1988) as $df=2(0.07=$ small effect, $0.21=$ medium and $3.5=$ large effects. we can infer that all the demographic variables had effects on the career aspirations of inherited children with the highest effect coming from educational level of mother, educational level of successor and sex of the inherited children.

Table 3: Showing the characterization of child-care practices

ISSUES	POSITIVE RESPONSE			NEGATIVE RESPONSE			X	SD
	SA	A	TOTAL	D	SD	TOTAL		
My needs are provided by my mother.	83 (20.0%)	178 (44.3%)	262 (65.3%)	85 (21.3%)	54 (13.5%)	139 (34.7%)	2.73	.94
My needs are provided by my maternal uncle.	82 (20.5%)	87 (21.1%)	169 (42.3%)	31 (8.5%)	200 (50%)	231 (57.7%)	1.99	1.24
When my father died I dropped out of school.	42 (10.5%)	71 (17.8%)	114 (28.5%)	74 (18.5%)	213 (53.3%)	286 (71.5%)	1.86	1.05
When I am sick, only my mother takes care of me	47 (11.8%)	103 (25.8%)	150 (37.5%)	98 (24.5%)	152 (38.0%)	250 (62.5%)	1.95	.97
When I am sick, the successor takes care of me	25 (6.3%)	80 (20%)	105 (26.3%)	61 (15.1%)	234 (58.5%)	295 (73.7%)	1.79	1.02
The successor has neglected me	138 (34.5%)	102 (25.5%)	240 (60%)	20 (5%)	140 (35%)	160 (40%)	2.51	1.32
I am being taken care of by my late father’s friends	11 (2.8%)	60 (15%)	71 (17.7%)	114 (28.5%)	215 (53.8%)	329 (83.3%)	1.60	.77
The successor discriminates between us and his children.	90 (22.5%)	140 (35.0%)	230 (57.5%)	11 (2.78%)	59 (14.8%)	170 (42.5%)	2.60	.79
My successor gives me a lot of stress	45 (11.3%)	170 (42.5%)	215 (53.7%)	144 (36.0%)	41 (10.3%)	185 (46.3%)	2.51	.76
Only my foster parents have been taking care of me	66 (16.5%)	83 (20.8%)	149 (37.3%)	141 (35.3%)	110 (27.55)	251 (62.7%)	2.02	.97
Total	729 (18.2%)	1074 (26.9%)		779 (19.5%)	1416 (35.4%)		21.56	8.78
	45.5%			54.9%				

Statistical evidence from table 3 indicates that a majority of 262(65.3%) out of 400 inherited children accepted that their needs were provided by their mothers while 138(34.7%) denied this fact. When

verified to know if their needs were provided by their maternal uncles, 169(42.3%) accepted while a majority of 231(57.7%) refuted the fact. Considering the question whether their father’s death caused them to drop out of school, 114(28.3%) accepted and a majority of 286(71.5%) denied. Equally a majority of 250 (62.5%) denied the fact when they were sick, only their mother took care of them while 150(37.5%) accepted. When asked if the successor took care of them when they were sick, a sweeping majority of 295(73.7%) were negative, while 105(26.3%) were positive. As to whether the successors had neglected them, a majority of 240(60%) accepted while 160 (40%) inherited children denied this fact.

On the other hand, only 71(17.7%) out of the 400 inherited children were positive about “am being taken care of by their late father’s friends” while a majority of 329(83.3%) were negative. When asked if the successors discriminated between them and their biological children, 230(57.5%) accepted and 170(42.5%) refused. Also 215(53.7%) inherited children agreed that the successors gave them a lot of stress while 185(46.3%) denied the assertion. When asked if only their foster parents had been taking care of them, a majority of 251(62.7%) were negative while 149(37.3%) were positive.

On the other hand, the interviews conducted with the successors as concerns child-care revealed as follows: inherited children expected too much from them. Widows expected them to provide all their needs meanwhile their late husband could not do so. Some of the inherited children delivered without husbands and expected them to take care of them and their children. They had to continue the payment of inherited children’s bills.

The mean of the child-care practices was 21.56. This was less than the hypothesized test value of 25. This was enough evidence that the child care practices towards the inherited children were unsatisfactory. Generally, the standard deviations for the items were low indicating that the responses were close to the mean, that is to say the respondents had similarly responses.

Table 4 : Showing the characterization of early marriage

ISSUES	POSITIVE RESPONSE			NEGATIVE RESPONSE			X	SD
	SA	A	TOTAL	D	SD	TOTAL		
When my father died, the successor asked me to look for a wife/husband	21 (5.3%)	112 (28%)	133 (33.3%)	71 (17.8%)	196 (49%)	267 (66.7%)	1.93	1.08
I got married before 18 years.	85 (23.3%)	82 (20.5%)	167 (41.85)	36 (9%)	197 (49.3%)	233 (58.2%)	2.13	1.23
I got married without the consent of my successor.	40 (10%)	35 (8.8%)	75 (18.7%)	11 (2.8%)	314 (78.5%)	325 (81.3%)	1.49	.99

I got married because I was pregnant/ impregnated a girl and dropped out from school.	13 (3.3%)	82 (20.5%)	95 (23.7%)	11 (2.8%)	294 (73.5%)	305 (76.3%)	1.64	.93
I had a child with a girl/boy and decided to get married not to frustrate my children.	13 (3.3%)	102 (25.5%)	115 (28.7%)	58 (14.4%)	227 (56.8%)	285 (71.3%)	1.76	.95
My family gave me out early in marriage because they thought that the younger the bride, the higher the bride price	23 (5.8%)	51 (12.8%)	74 (18.5%)	24 (6%)	302 (75.5%)	326 (81.5%)	1.49	.99
I got married early for my spouse to take care of my mother	72 (18%)	58 (14.5%)	130 (32.5%)	82 (20.5%)	188 (47%)	260 (67.5%)	2.04	1.16
I got married early because when my father died we were forced out of the compound.	43 (10.8%)	73 (18.3%)	116 (29%)	177 (31.8%)	167 (29.3%)	284 (71%)	2.16	2.34
My parents forced me to marry early for fear that I may have sexually transmitted diseases	12 (3%)	86 (21.5%)	98 (24.5%)	50 (12.5%)	252 (63%)	302 (75.5%)	1.83	1.22
I got married early for my spouse to provide my needs when my father died.	32 (8%)	104 (26%)	136 (34%)	24 (6%)	240 (60%)	264 (66%)	2.00	1.31
Total	354 (8.7%)	785 (19.4%)		544 (13.3%)	2377 (58.5%)		18.47	11.09
	28.1%			71.9%				

Statistical evidence from the preceding table revealed that concerning the assertion “When my father died, the successor asked me to look for a wife/husband”, a majority of 267(66.7%) out of 400 inherited children were negative while 133(33.3%) of them were positive. Only 167(41.8%) of them accepted that they got married before 18 years while a majority of 233(58.2%) denied that fact. Also a majority of 323(81.3%) reacted negatively to the fact that they got married without the consent of their successor while 75(18.7%) of them reacted positively. As to whether they got married because they were pregnant/ impregnated a girl and dropped out from school, 305(76.3%) of them reacted negatively while 95(23.7%) of them reacted positively. Equally a majority of 285 (71.3%) reacted negatively to the fact that they had a child with a girl/boy and decided to get married not to frustrate their children while 115(28.7%) accepted that fact. As to whether their family gave them out early in

marriage because they thought that the younger the bride, the higher the bride price, 302(75.5%) denied while only 98(24.5%) of them accepted. Still a majority of 260(67.5%) denied the fact that they got married early for their spouse to take care of their mother while 140(32.5%) accepted the fact. Equally 284(71%) denied the fact that they got married early because when their fathers died they were forced out of the compound while 116(29%) accepted the fact.

A majority of 308(75.5%) reacted negatively to the fact that their parents forced them to marry early for fear that they may have sexually transmitted diseases while 98(24.5%) reacted positively. As to whether they got married early for their spouse to provide their needs when their father died, 136(34%) agreed while 264(66%) denied that fact. It was evident from the preceding table that only 1138(28.1%) of the early marriage practices were positive while a majority of 2921(71.9%) of these early marriage practices was negative.

The mean of early marriage was 18.47. This was less than the hypothesized test value of 25. This was enough evidence that many of the inherited children did not get married early. Generally the standard deviations for the items were low indicating that the responses were close to the mean, that is to say the respondents had similarly responses.

DISCUSSION

Child-care practices and the career aspirations of inherited children

The findings revealed that a majority of inherited children who participated in this study accepted that their needs were provided by their mothers while very few of the participants denied this fact. This is indicative of the fact that the principles of child-care make children to be more dependent on their mothers than their fathers. This also accounts for the reason why matrilineal succession is traced from the mother and they play important roles in deciding who becomes the successor.

The findings suggest that positive maternal relationship is a protective factor across cultures. The fact some of the respondents refused that their needs are not provided by their mothers showed that the successors also provided protective factors for career aspirations. This support differed from successor to successor and the perception of individual inherited children determined their closeness to the successor. Mothers especially widows play a very important role in the upbringing of their children despite the difficulties which some of them go through.

The findings of this study revealed that despite the numerous difficulties which widows went through, they still took care of the needs of their children. This was evident in the fact that most of the inherited children whose fathers died when they were less than ten years ended up with at least an advanced level certificate or learned a trade.

When verified to know if the needs of inherited children were provided by their maternal uncles, very few accepted while a majority of the respondents refuted the fact. This showed that uncles do

not support their nephews and nieces in Kom as most people claim. Therefore, there is no significant relationship between support from maternal uncles and the career aspirations of inherited children in Kom.

This study also revealed that most of the inherited children agreed that the successors gave them a lot of stress while very few denied the assertion. Stress is ubiquitous and reflected in many different contexts that can affect the quality of parent-child relationships. Maternal social factors may either promote or strain parent-infant adaptation over time. Prenatal psychosocial stressors significantly affect infant health and development.

The findings of this study revealed that most of compounds succeeded by nephews in Kom have remained uninhabited till today because of irresponsibility exhibited by these successors on aspects of poor child-care practices. Nkwi (2014) demonstrate that if one becomes a Yindo (successor) by tradition, you cannot will the compound to whosoever of your choice. The same tradition that made you a Yindo will make him whose rightful turn it is to be a Yindo. This view is contrary to the findings of this study because the results showed that 60.2% of the successors affirmed that they succeeded through a will in compounds that were not supposed to be willed. As you did not enter the compound on your own, so the next person cannot enter by your own will.

The study also revealed that poor child-care practices were manifested in the attitude of the successors towards the widows. This is a bad practice because the rights of the widows and orphans are upheld by Kom tradition (Ngam 1996). He also holds that the most operative word in this change is that the consent of the widows and her children must be sort. It is no longer by imposition or forceful tactics but by dialogue. This consent goes beyond property and land to the person of the widow. It means the Yindo cannot have the widow as a wife as a right but through consent, that is through dialogue.

Early marriage and the career aspirations of inherited children

Statistical evidence revealed that concerning the assertion “When my father died, the successor asked me to look for a wife/husband”, a majority of the inherited children were negative while very few of the respondents were positive. Equally, the findings of this study revealed that very few of the participants accepted that they got married before 18 years while a majority denied that fact. Out of these percentages, 57.5% were females while 42.5% were males.

Also a majority of the respondents reacted negatively to the fact that they got married without the consent of their successor while very few of them reacted positively. This finding is partly corroborated by UNICEF (2014) that boys are sometimes married as children, although according to UNICEF, "girls are disproportionately the most affected" child marriage is five times more common among girls than boys. Research on the effects of child marriage on underage boys is small. As of September 2014, 156 million living men were married as underage boys. As to whether the

respondents got married because they were pregnant/ impregnated a girl and dropped out from school, 305 (67.3%) of them reacted negatively while 95 (23.7%) of them reacted positively.

Also as to whether the respondents had a child with a girl/boy and decided to get married not to frustrate my children, most of the respondents reacted negatively to the fact that they had a child with a girl/boy and decided to get married not to frustrate their children while very few accepted that fact. Even if education is discontinued and employment is sought, serious problems still remain. In fact, a number of researchers have argued that a major impediment to male involvement in the fatherhood role stems, in part, from the centrality of the breadwinner concept in our definition of adequate fathering (Bernard, 1981; Pleck, 1983; Teti and Lamb, 1986)

As to whether the respondents got married early for my spouse to take care of my mother, a majority of them denied the fact that they got married early for their spouse to take care of their mother while a minority accepted the fact. Concerning the variable on whether they got married early because when my father died we were forced out of the compound most of the respondents denied the fact that they got married early because when their father died they were forced out of the compound while a minority accepted the fact. Additional factor causing early marriage is the parental belief that early marriage offers protection. Parents feel that marriage provides their daughter with a sense of protection from sexual promiscuity and safe from sexually transmitted infections. However, in reality, young girls tend to marry older men, placing them at an increased risk of contracting a sexually transmitted infection Protection through marriage may play a specific role in conflict settings.

As to whether their parents forced them to marry early for fear that they may have sexually transmitted diseases, most of the inherited children reacted negatively to the fact while very few reacted positively. This finding is supported by Laiou (1993) when he states for example that girls may not be seen as eligible for marriage if they are not virgins. In other cultures, the fear is that an unmarried girl may engage in illicit relationships, or elope causing a permanent social blemish to her siblings, or that the impoverished family may be unable to find bachelors for grown up girls in their economic social group.

CONCLUSION

In Cameroon, like other developing countries, career improvement measures have not kept pace with increase in access (Sector Wide Approach/Education, 2005). In Hattle's (2003) opinion, the challenge is to identify what matters in inherited children's career and then concentrate on enhancing them to truly make a difference. As indicated earlier, current research points to patrilineal succession which is popular and has strongest influences on inherited children's career aspirations under patrilineal succession (Mpokosa & Ndaruhutse, 2008). In Kom successors are high on the succession policy agenda and are increasingly recognized as a key to improving the career aspirations of inherited children. To be veritable guarantors of succession order, successors must be of best

possible quality in terms of provision of the enabling environment for the career aspirations of their inherited children.

Parent-child relationship is also important in the improvement of career aspirations of the inherited children. Indeed, current research equally recognizes succession order as a key factor in matrilineal succession and its influence on inherited children's motivation, commitment and working conditions (Leithwood, 2006; Leu & Price-Rom; Barth, 1981). Therefore, in tribes that practice matrilineal succession in Cameroon and Kom in particular, concerted efforts must be geared towards improving the quality and quantity of career opportunities for inherited children. This is imperative especially in the context where the country is struggling with limited resources to attain the global imperative of providing 'education for all' and fighting against unemployment.

This study corroborates other works which emphasize the key role of successors in bringing about improvement in inherited children learning in the workplace. However as demonstrated in this study and some earlier research (see for example, Villegas, 2003; Hodkinson & Hodkinson, 2005, Nsamenang, 2012), there are other mediating factors influencing such learning which foster career aspirations. For example, inherited children's characteristics, government policies and regulations, traditional norms and customs. Furthermore, many scholars are of the opinion that successors in general, should be viewed as a continuum (see Dembele & Schwille, 2007; Duthilleul, 2005) in which the succession order builds on and strengthens each other. Stated in another way, the range of inherited children's career aspiration is viewed as an 'integrated whole' (Cobbold & Dare, 2011). The practices of matrilineal succession must be strengthened so that it plays its critical role of improving the quality of career aspirations of the inherited children.

This investigation concludes that the self-perception of inherited children in Kom affects their career aspirations. The study also highlighted internal and external support systems that enhance career aspirations of inherited children. Inherited children whose successors do not support their career aspirations resilience or protective factors associated dropping out of school by determination, hardworking, self-control, discipline and association with those who can help them cope in life. It is generally accepted that cultural capital forms a gateway to a better socioeconomic position for the individual, as well as to the general prosperity of society. Moreover, both successor and the widow have the potential to stimulate career aspirations to instill a positive self-perception in the inherited children. The attitude towards school and social support from the successors are the most consistent predictors of educational aspirations across all three types of education. This offers important clues towards reducing socioeconomic differences.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The findings of the study have led the researcher to make the following recommendations: Firstly, supportive successors and paternal relatives are key elements in building career aspirations of inherited children. They should be very observant in monitoring the different activities that their

inherited children engage in from childhood and within peer groups so as to be able to identify, encourage and support those activities that will promote healthy personality traits which are profitable and enriching for the psychosocial wellbeing that foster career aspirations of inherited children.

Secondly, social workers or Non-governmental Organization (NGOs) and other welfare services could organize capacity building workshops and sensitize inherited children and their successors on more values that are necessary for the development of steadfastness among inherited children. They should also encourage inherited children to be optimistic about life and develop life goals or personal aspirations and expectations.

Thirdly, the Kom Regulatory Society (kwifoyn), which is an organ of decision-making in Kom should enact laws that protect inherited children. Kwifoyn should follow up to ensure that successors play their rules while avoiding the tears of the widows as the tradition stipulates.

Fourthly, parents, members of the community and stakeholders, should identify and strengthen such standards that these inherited children manifest among peers and allow them to take and act on decisions individually that could help improve upon their wellbeing. More so, they can also use rewards so as to encourage inherited children to keep and uphold such coping abilities.

Fifthly, teacher training colleges should offer courses on career aspirations. They should also offer courses for pre-service teachers on educating inherited children based on career research. They should use colleagues who are inherited children as important resource in building socially responsible behaviours among inherited children with difficulties in school. They can also do so by teaching such values to inherited children and enabling them to see the importance of perseverance or persistence.

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