# DETERMINANTS OF MARITAL ASPIRATION AMONG YOUTHS IN EKITI STATE

## BY

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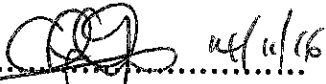
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i

# CERTIFICATION

This is to certify that ADEYEMO ORIADE ADENIKE of the Department of Demography and Social Statistics, Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences, carried out a Research on the Topic **"DETERMINANTS OF MARITAL ASPIRATION AMONG YOUTHS IN EKITI STATE"** in partial fulfillment of the award of Bachelor of Science (B.Sc) in Federal University Oye-Ekiti, Nigeria under my Supervision.

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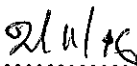
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# DEDICATION

This project is dedicated to GOD Almighty who has given me the opportunity through his only begotten son JESUS CHRIST to complete this project and the Degree programme successfully. Also, this project is dedicated to the memory of my mother, late Mrs. Adeyemo Taiwo, may her soul continue to rest in peace.

# ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

# CONTENTS

# ABSTRACT

In Nigeria, marital aspirations among youths have been a phenomenon held with high degree of traditionalism and cultural interference. Hence, every youth desire marriage based on cultural norms or religious norms but there has not been a clear cut as to why youths desire marriage. This study examines the determinant of marital aspirations among youth in the study area. Two hundred and fifty youths (aged 15-24) men and women were randomly selected using convenience sampling technique. Data were collected through quantitative method. The data collected were subjected to basic thorough analytical techniques. The binary logistic regression technique was used to test formulated hypotheses and pattern of relationship between the dependent and independent variables. Ninety-four percent (94%) of the respondents desires marriage while seventy-five percent (75%) of the respondents desired to marry at age 25years and above. Significant relationship was established between respondent's residence, parent marriage type, level of education, religion and their desire to get married (P<.005). The study also confirms a significant relationship between sex, ethnicity, employment status and desired age at marriage. The logistic regression reveals that respondents aged 20-24years are 1.6 times more likely to marry above 25years compared with those in aged 15-19 years. The study concludes that there should be proper policy for job opportunities for the youths; this will improve their financial status and marital aspirations.

**Keywords**: Marital aspiration, Youths, Socio-demographic, cohabitation.

# CHAPTER ONE

## 1.0 INTRODUCTION

## 1.1 BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

Around the globe, most of the theoretical and empirical work on determinants of marital aspiration focused on marriage. Adolescents and young adult typically undergo several key transitions including completing schools, finding jobs, the desire to get married and initiating childbearing (National Research Council and Institute of Medicine,2005). The transition of adulthood is a period of significant developmental changes that shape the nature and quality of young people's future lives (Lloyd 2005). Given this developmental interdependence, turning point like completion of school or establishing economic freedom in youthful adulthood might be important for young people in making arrangements for marriage since marriage has ended up finishing event of adulthood, embarked upon only after other indicators of maturity has been reached (Furstenberg 2010). The improvement over different life areas is interdependent, meaning that every marker to adulthood encourages young people in taking on other adult roles (Sneed et al 2007).

Marriage is an important institution both for the individual and the society at large. For the individual, it is a significant and memorable event in one's life cycle also as well as the most important foundation in the family formation process, in addition it also marks the beginning of an individual's separation from the parental unit, even if generations continue to be socially and economically interdependent. For the society as a whole, it unites several individuals from different families and represents the creation of a production and consumption unit as well as one for the exchange of goods and services (Hallman and Quisumbing, 2008). In most societies marriage defines the onset of the socially acceptable time for childbearing and is the most

1

predominant context for childbearing in most countries. Age at marriage is of particular interest because it marks the transition to adulthood in many societies; the point at which certain options in education, employment, and participation in society are foreclosed; and the beginning of regular exposure to the risks of pregnancy and childbearing. There are also growing concern about young people's ability to successfully move into adulthood (Kimmel 2008).

The formation of aspirations tends to begin early in childhood and aspirations are adapted and changed in light of new experiences, choices and information, including an individual's awareness of their own abilities and the opportunities open to them. Social class, socio-economic status and income have been identified as correlates of aspirations, with higher levels related to higher aspirations, although these can be over-ridden by the effects of attitudes and beliefs (Morrison Gutman and Akerman, 2008). Marriage as a social phenomenon has an effective role in establishing and forming a family which is important for creating future generations, fostering children, transferring culture, and maintaining the human life in the social environment. Marriage is a critical factor of human evolution in the social life. It makes human to move through the cycle of happiness with a partner who provides his/her emotional, spiritual, and mental needs peacefully and constantly. According to the saying of Great Prophet of Islam (PBUH) a man maintains half of his faith through marriage. From the literature it is clear that aspirations are personal and dynamic: aspirations may mean different things to different people and they are formed and develop in response to different environments and circumstances.

There is no agreed definition of 'youth'. It is often understood to be the period of transition from childhood to adulthood, encompassing processes of sexual maturation and growing social and economic autonomy from parents and careers (Bennell, 2007). For operational purposes, it is sometimes defined with reference to age brackets: the United Nations applies an age range of 15

2

to 24 years old for its work on youth (with under 15s being classed as 'children'), however, anthropologists and sociologists draw attention to the fact that social categories such as 'adolescents' and 'youth' are culturally and historically constructed (Thorsen, 2007), and can change over time and from one social context to next. According to the United nation, they define youth as person between the age of 15 and 24 (UNESCO, 2013). They recognize the fact that young people are heterogeneous group in constant evolution and that the experience of being young varies across regions and within countries. For the most part, the terms 'youth' and 'young people' are used interchangeably, as both refer to the approximate age range during which the transition to adulthood generally occurs.

Young people in all regions of the world experience some degree of difficulty and uncertainty as they transit to adulthood, but the situation youth face in West and Central Africa is one of the most difficult in many respects. Adolescents in these regions often live in areas that are affected by widespread poverty, frequent conflicts and an acute lack of adequate social services and infrastructure. Not surprising then, youth in these regions continue to be characterized in negative and generalized terms such as marginalized, disempowered, destabilizing and without status. In fact, they have been referred to by some as a lost generation (Kaplan 2004).

Globally, there has been a lot of changes in family behavior which includes; high divorce rates, non-marital cohabitation and fertility that began in the last twentieth century which has been the subject of much research. As education levels rise, the expectations about job quality and standards of living within marriage also rise at the same time that young people's ability to obtain good jobs appears to be declining relatively quickly in the context of a more competitive and in formalized labor market. Few studies go beyond wages to measure job status or career.

Hence, marital aspiration is a difficult term to understand, encompassing all objective and subjective measure of couple-level wellbeing. In addition to meeting the emotional and sexual needs of human nature, marriage leads to human growth and evolution; and in line with his economic needs develops his socio-cultural communications. This is recognized as a norm and principle in the world. One of the most important points about marriage is its timing.

The last several decades have witnessed nothing short of a revolution in marriage and family relationship. There have been widespread and profound changes in the transition to marriage across region over the last few decades (Antoine and Marcoux; 2014). Traditional practices and norms relating to power, authority, and not least, gender, are strong and often complicate or impede the attempts of adolescents to generate meaningful lives for themselves. At least since the 1980's, youth are allowed to decide whether to ever enter life stages such as marriage and childbearing, the timing of entrance and the order of these stages. As a result, "delays in marriage, rising rates of cohabitation, high rates of non-marital childbearing, and delays in marital births combined with changing patterns of schooling and work have meant that the movement into adulthood has become even less a predictable sequence of events that it once was" (Dew and Eggebeen, 2009).However, despite the growing popularity of unmarried cohabitation among youth in several African cities, and even though the rise of cohabitating unions has become a policy issue and the subject of heated public debate in some countries (Bocquier and Khasakhala 2009; Mokomane 2005; Casale, Posel, and Rudwick; 2011).

Cohabitation is a selective of less-educated, younger adults, divorcees and those who are more supportive of egalitarian roles (Edin and Reed 2005; Smock 2005), however, cohabitation is quite common among young adults (Litcher and Qian 2008). In fact, unmarried cohabitation and marriage are still often treated as synonymous by Africanist demographers, who tend to group

cohabiting and married women under the general label "women in union". This lack of distinction is problematic, however, as the increasing prevalence of unmarried cohabitation, even as a prelude to formal marriage, may reflect not only larger social changes such as the emergence of new values and expectations among the young generation of African city dwellers with respect to partnership and family (Cole and Thomas 2009; Werner 2006) but may also have important implications for women and their children.

Marriage as defined as broadly to include all socially recognized unions, including legal marriage and any other type of union that is recognized and reported in particular countries. However, little is known about how different social-demographic variables come together to play a role in the youth imagination in their decision making processes regarding marriage formation. One's ideas surrounding timing, best conditions, necessity and gender differences regarding marriage, as well as the acceptance of marriage dissolution form the so called attitudes toward marriage (Pearce and Thornton, 2007). The principal focus is on documenting trends in age at which youths desire marriage in Ekiti state, and influence of socio-demographic characteristics, specifically education and rural–urban residence. This study therefore extends the research on attitudes toward marriage by focusing on how young people view their pathway to marriage, applying a quantitative analysis to a representative sample of young people as they transition into adulthood.

## 1.2 STATEMENT OF THE RESEARCH PROBLEM

The present situation of marriage issue is associated with many problems due to luxurious lifestyle, heavy unreasonable dependence to higher educations, unemployment, and waiting for being employed. Problem in the cycle of marriage causes damages and have negative effects on the social environment; it also leads to the decline of population. On the other hand, it threatens the human capital which is the most important possession of any society. Conflicts could arise

due to both early marriage such as weakness in moral and economic management, and its opposite point (i.e. late marriage). Although, late marriage is deemed to increase the human capital of a society and the individual has a better and more logical insight in choosing her/his spouse, but when this increase in the age becomes excessive, it will lead to emotional and mental disappointment. In general terms, marriage must be done at the appropriate age, not so early based on sexual instincts and economic pressures and not so late that leads to mental and social disorders, and even social damages (Kazemi, 2004).

Several studies has also indicated that an increase in age at marriage leads to a rise in premarital sex which done without contraception gives rise to unwanted pregnancies and a rise in adolescent fertility (Jones, 2007).Furthermore, children whether born prior to during or after parental cohabitation are at increased risk for negative sequelae including premature birth, school failure, lower education, more poverty during childhood and lower income as adults, more incarceration and behavioral problems, single parenthood, medical neglect and chronic health problems both medical and psychiatric, more substance, alcohol and tobacco abuse and child abuse (Mathurs, 2015). Among the consequences of marriage difficulty is reduction of marriage opportunity for women. This can be due to delaying the marriage and might bring about the tendency to have illegitimate sexual relationships and birth of children outside of the legal framework of marriage. An increase in the number of illegal children removes the obscenity of this issue in the society (Ahmadi, 2008).

The period between completing school, finding a job that meets one's expectations, and accumulating the necessary resources for marriage has not only lengthened, but is also increasingly accompanied by uncertainty, anxiety and frustration, as well established patterns of employment and family formation are gradually disrupted. Some have dubbed this prolonged

period of anxious waiting for the different elements of life that mark a completed transition to adulthood to come together as "wait adulthood" or "waithood" for short (Dhillon and Yousef 2007, Singerman 2007).

## 1.3 RESEARCH QUESTION

1. What is the extent of marital aspiration among youths in Ekiti State?

2. What is the desired age at marriage among youths in Ekiti state?

3. What are the factors associated with youth's desirability to get married and their desired age at marriage in Ekiti state?

4. Is there any relationship between the socio-demographic variables (age, education, current relationship status, residence, occupation, religion, etc.) and marital aspirations among youths in Ekiti state?

## 1.4 OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

Main objective

5. To examine the factors associated with youth's desirability to get married and their desired age at marriage in Ekiti state.

Specific objectives

- To examine the extent of marital aspiration among youth's in Ekiti State.

- To know the desired age at marriage among youths in Ekiti state.

- To investigate the relationship between the socio-demographic variables (age, education, current relationship status, residence, occupation, religion, etc.) and marital aspiration?

## 1.5 JUSTIFICATION OF THE STUDY

In Nigeria, marriage as a social institution has weakened as a result of varieties of important cultural, legal, and economic changes: increases in intimacy expectations, greater social approval of alternatives to marriage, the greater economic independence of women, "no-fault" divorce reform, the rise in social insurance programs that make individuals less dependent on families, the expansion of market and consumer mores into family life, and lesser social supports and pressures to get and stay married from family, friends, professionals, churches, business, and government. Moreover, divorce in one generation increases divorce in the next. One large recent study found that children whose parents divorced were 76 percent more likely to divorce themselves, even after controlling for family characteristics and the parents' pre-divorce marital quality (Alan Booth, Amato and Paul, 2008). In other words, several changes in the demographic shifts in socio-economic status, education levels, social and religious attitude, and the increase in cohabitation have also led to the change in the number and quality of marriages.

This study will be useful for several reasons. First, trends in youth's attitudes toward marriage can provide an indication of whether current trends in adult marriage patterns are likely to continue. In addition, information on youth desirability for marriage is an important indicator of their health and well-being, making this study of interest to a range of policymakers and researchers concerned with the status of youth. Finally, the growing interest in marriage formation programs that serve adolescents has created a need for improved research evidence concerning youth age at marriage and attitudes toward marriage. This information can help program developers design relationship and marriage education programs that are age-appropriate and in tune with the experiences of today's youth. It can also help policymakers and

program operators better assess the needs of youths in their communities and choose program models that are most appropriate for the teens they serve.

## 1.6 OPERATIONAL DEFINITION OF TERMS

**MARRIAGE**: This is called a matrimony or wedlock. It is a socially or ritually recognized union or legal contract between spouses that establish rights and obligations between them, and their children and relationship, public, official and permanent. Marriage is referred to as the joining of two people in a bond that putatively last until death, but in practice increasingly cut short by divorce.

**ASPIRATION**: this is a strong desire to have or do something, or longing to have, or aim. It can also be referred to as a goal or objective that is strongly desired. It is also a hope or ambition of achieving something.

**YOUTH**: This is the time of life when one is young, but often means the time between childhood and adulthood (i.e. Maturity).youth is an experience that may shape an individual level of dependency, which can be marked in various ways according to different cultural perspectives. According to United Nation, they define youth as person between the age of 15 to 24 (UNESCO, 2013).

**TRANSITION**: The process or period of changing from one state or condition to another. It is also a movement, development or evolution from one form, stage or style to another.

**AGE**: A period of human life, measured by years from birth, usually marked by a certain stage or degree of mental or physical development and involving legal responsibility and capacity.it is a particular period of life at which a person becomes naturally or conveniently qualified or disqualified for anything.

# CHAPTER TWO

# LITERATURE REVIEW

## 2.0 INTRODUCTION

This chapter shows the review of past literatures that have been done on this study.

## 2.1 OVERVIEW OF MARITAL ASPIRATION

In recent years, few demographers have heeded van de Walle's appeal to explore the process and timing of marriage for its own sake. Yabiku et.al, analysis of the effect of community variables on the timing of marriage in a region of Nepal experiencing rapid social change is a notable exception (Yakibu, Axin, Ghimire and Robinson, 2002). There is, however, a large descriptive literature. Although lacking much in the way of explanatory variables, this research documents trends and differentials in the age of first union among women, with a particular focus on the practice of early marriage in the developing world (Choe MK, Thapa S, and Achmad, 2001; Heaton, Forste, and Otterstrom, 2002; Rashad and Osman, 2003; Westoff, 2003). Although marriage remains almost universal in sub-Saharan Africa, there have been widespread and profound changes in the transition to marriage across the region over the last few decades (Lloyd 2005; Marcoux and Antoine 2014). Even in West Africa, where a large proportion of women still marry early, in most countries the median age of first marriage among women and, to a lesser extent, among men has consistently risen since the end of the 1970s, especially in urban areas (Hertrich 2007; Tabutin and Schoumaker 2004). Not only are first marriages postponed, but the process of union formation is also changing in many African cities. Given the rising age at first marriage, the study of marital aspirations is ever more important to research on young adulthood, finally given changing expectations about the timing of marriage and the ongoing debate about

the meaning of marriage relative to other relationship statuses (Heuveline and Timberlake 2004, Sassler 2010).

Perhaps because of popular concern regarding the declining significance of marriage, research on marriage expectations to date have concentrated primarily on generations and generational trends in youth expectation to marry (Gassanov, Koch-Turner and Nicholson, 2008; Giordano, Longmore , and Manning; 2007). In addition, as Hall (2006) and Byrd (2009) have shown, cultural and individual notions of marriage play an important role in the lives and the relationships of unmarried individuals. The vast majority of young adults think it is important to be married someday. Eighty-three percent of unmarried youths aged 20 to 24 were in this category, and 70 percent of them expressed the view that there was a good or certain chance that they would be married within the next 10 years, suggesting that most young adults continue to value marriage despite many people's concern that marriage as a social institution is in decline (Amato, Booth, Johnson, & Rogers, 2007; Wilson, 2002). The low rate of marriage among young adults can be explained partially by the trend toward delaying marriage. Whereas the median age at first marriage in 1960 was 20 for women, by 2006, the median age had risen to 26 (Galston, 2007). Men marry later than do women, with a median first marriage age of 23 in 1960 and 28 in 2006. People are marrying later in life than they did 40 years ago and young adults today are spending more time unmarried than earlier generation did (Schoen and Standish 2001; Field 2004). Over the same period cohabitation and non-childbearing become increasing common (Bumpass and Lu 2000; Chandra, Martinez, Mosher, Abma, and Jones, 2005).

For a long time, marriage in sub-Saharan Africa occurred early and was universal, but since the end of 1970s most countries in the region have been moving into a new phase marked by a consistent rise in women's age at first marriage, especially in urban areas (Hertrich 2007;

Schoumaker and Tabutin ; 2004). Even in West Africa, where in rural areas early marriage is still the norm, in cities rapid transformations have been observed from one generation to the next, with postponement of first marriage in some countries reaching up to seven years (Calvès 2007). Not only do urban youth in sub-Saharan Africa marry later, they also initiate their first union differently. Previous research shows that pregnancy and childbearing precipitate both marriage and cohabitation and that the effect is more pronounced in the transition to marriage, especially in countries or among social groups where the pressure to give birth within marriage is strong (Agadjanian and Dommaraju 2011; Didonna, Pereiro, and Pace, 2014; Gabrielli and Hoem 2010; Hoem and Kostova 2008;). In fact, strong evidence exists across the continent that the prevalence of unmarried cohabitation where urban youth choose to live together without performing any religious, traditional, or civil marital ceremonies has risen considerably in recent decades (Bocquier and Khasakhala 2009; Casale, Posel, Rudwick, and 2011; Mokomane, 2005). For example, report that men and women do not differ in their reported desires for marriage and children; however, both women and men perceived women as having stronger desires (Erchull , Liss, Axelson, Staebell, and Askari, 2010). Existing research shows that youth from married-parent families are better off than children raised in other family settings (Amato 2001; Amato & Sobolewski 2001; McLanahan 2005). There is also some evidence that educational attainment promotes positive interactions within cohabiting couples (Brown 2003). Research assessing the implications of education, employment and social disengagement on general mate preferences or marital transitions suggest that financial security is important to many among young people in deciding whom and when to marry. For instance, Bunton and Tuckers (2010) qualitative work revealed the role of uncertainty and instability, financial and otherwise, in preventing young people from marrying. Although, religiosity has previously been associated with marital

aspirations. Furthermore, because relationship quality has been associated with views of marriage (Lander, Lei and Simons, 2011) and with marital aspiration (Kenney and McLanahan 2006).

## 2.2 ECONOMIC STATUS AND MARITAL ASPIRATION

A research has shown certain factors to be important in predicting when youths began to assume an adult identity, for many young people, economic independence has been shown to be a primary factor in establishing such an identity(Furstenberg 2008 and 2010). Research focusing on unmarried mothers has found that black women place more emphasis on the affordability of marriage (the amount, source, and regularity of income from fathers) than do white women (Edin, 2000). Similarly, research has shown that people with lower income and educational levels tend to rate such financial considerations as more important for relationships than do people with higher socioeconomic status. Earlier generations were likely to view economic security and childrearing as important elements of successful relationships, particularly within marriage (Clark, Funk. and Taylor; 2007) but more couples today value the emotional side of relationships.

Qualitative studies on low-income unmarried parents have also shown that economic circumstances are associated with marital decision-making. Interviews with low-income single mothers shows that money is very much an issue and that the mothers expect that the male be a reliable breadwinner; his inability to do so is one basis of these mothers' hesitation to marry Similarly, in the study of unmarried, new parents report that couples are hesitant to marry unless economic stability has been achieved. (Edin, Gibson, and McLanahan 2009). However, mistrust and expected infidelity cultural factors feature prominently in low-income men's and women's descriptions of their reasons for delaying marriage (Carlson, England, and McLanahan 2004; Edin and Kefalas 2005; Gibson-Davis 2007). One study using qualitative data collection method

13

suggests that financial status affects the marriage decision even among co-residing couples with children (Gibson-Davis, Edin, and McLanahan (2005). Most research work on socio-economic factor and violent conflict has combined married and cohabiting couples in one sample (e.g. Benson et al. 2003; Caetano, Cunradi, and Schafer, 2002; De Maris, Fox, Hill and Van Wyk 2003). De Maris (2003) found that partner's unemployment and neighborhood disadvantage were related to physical violence, whereas Cunradi showed that income but not unemployment was negatively associated with violent conflict. Several studies have linked financial instability to marital dissolution and divorce (Brustein 2007; Lewin 2005; Kalmjn, Loeve and Manting 2007). Though, from the adult-transition perspective, it is not only work status and earnings but also work hours that might encourage the development of an adult identity, because increased work hours indicate increased investment in adult role. A research assessing whether young people expected to marry within the next 5 years found that hours of employment to be positively associated with the general expectation to marry (Gassanov M.A, Nicholson L.M, Koch-turner, 2008).

Recent and historic work has explored the link between relative income and subjective well-being (Card, Mas and Rothstein 2008; Clark, Frijters and Sheild 2008; Luttmer 2005, and others), health outcomes and health behaviors (Eibner and Evans 2005; Miller and Paxson 2006, and others), suicide (Daly, Johnson and Wilson 2007), social capital (Fischer and Torgler 2006) and even soccer performance (Torgler and Schmidt 2007). Current research on delayed marriage among low-income populations emphasizes two factors: perceived economic barriers to marriage and lack of trust between men and women. The importance of feeling economically stable before marriage is prevalent among low-income families, with some work suggesting that economic concerns are the most important reason for marital delay (, Edin, Gibson-Davis and McLanahan

2005; Gibson-Davis 2007). Smock Manning and Porter (2005) demonstrated that a lack of financial security has a significant barrier to marriage for cohabiting couples Hence, although economic security has been consistently associated with marital behavior, young adulthood is increasingly unstable in that youths today are taking longer than those in the past to finish their education and establish their career (Arnett, 2004).

## 2.3 EDUCATION ATTAINMENT AND MARITAL ASPIRATION

Quantitative studies in the fields of demography, sociology, and economics have generally demonstrated that the occurrence and stability of marriage are linked to good economic circumstances. That is, people with higher education and better economic prospects are more likely to become married, to stay married, and to have children within marriage (e.g., Carlson, England, and McLanahan, 2004; Lichter Sweeney, 2002). However, recent findings suggest that the impact of a higher level of education on fertility is mostly driven by delaying age at marriage (Dufloet al. 2012; Kirdar, Koç and Tayfur , 2009). Despite evidence for greater variability in the timing and sequencing of transition into adult roles and responsibilities, recent empirical investigations have identified a limited number of the distinct transition into adulthood primarily by the timing of family formation and participation in post-secondary education (Macmillan &Cother 2005;Osgrod Ruth, Ecdes, Jacobs,& Barber 2005; Sanderfur, Eggerling-Boeck,& Park 2005).

Recent estimates suggest that 60% of marriages among women without high school degrees will end in separation or divorce, compared to one third for college graduates (Bumpass and Raley, 2003). The long period of education in the universities and the increasing proportion of girls compared to boys (according to some statistics only 43.35% of participants in the university entrance exam are boys) resulted in certain outcomes. First, most of boys and girls avoid

marriage and wait till the end of their education, and then employment. Second, many girls with academic degrees are not willing to marry boys who have not entered university, and a high percentage of them remain unmarried or become forced into marriage, as we can observe today. In other words, women's education has reduced the benefits and advantages they could obtain from marriage and thus decreased their tendency to early marriage and contributed to the increased age of marriage (Zarrabi V., Mostafavi S.F. 2011).

Although past work have consistently shown that school enrolment and higher educational attainment affect marital behavior by delaying entry into marriage and that stable ability to earn a family wage in particular among men tend to accelerate entry into marriage (Guzzo,2006). Thus, marital delay among the poor may not necessarily be the result of a distinctive subcultural perspective on marriage but rather a reaction to widespread cultural evolution in the marriage timing, and perceived necessity of marriage (Cherlin, 2009). Several scholars have questioned whether there is adequate evidence to prove that slavery, as opposed to more recent economic factors like male joblessness or more recent changes in norms and attitudes about marriage, accounts for the sharp increase in non-marital births in the mid to late 20th century (Ellwood and Jencks 2004; Wilson 2009).

## 2.4 COHABITATION AND MARITAL ASPIRATION
Cohabitation rates have increased dramatically during recent years, and many young adults will cohabit before or as an alternative to marriage. According to national estimates, the proportion of women that had cohabited by their late thirties has steadily increased from 30 percent in 1987, to almost 50 percent in 1995(Smock. P, 2000), to 61 percent by 2002 (Abma J, Chandra, Jones, Martinez, and Mosher, 2005). Motivations for cohabiting may include testing compatibility as a couple before marriage, wanting to spend more time together, and needing to share financial

16

burdens. Although the reasons that men and women cohabit are diverse and not fully understood, it seems clear that cohabitation increasingly has become viewed as an acceptable type of family formation even among young adults who have never been married and never cohabited (Smock, Huang, Manning, & Bergstrom, 2006).

Several studies have pointed to the widespread acceptance of cohabitation, and are consistent with other research showing that the majority of marriages and remarriages began as cohabitations, that most young adults have cohabited or will do so, and that cohabitation has become an increasingly common context for childbearing and child rearing (Bergstrom, Huang, Manning, and Smock, 2006). Cohabiting partners are less likely to pool their income (De Ruijter and Treas, 2008). Previous research has also found cohabiters report lower marital aspiration (Brown and Booth, 2005) and higher levels of victimization and perpetration than married individuals (Brown and Bulanda 2008). Several studies have found that socio-economic determinants of marital aspiration are positively related to the odds that a cohabiting couple will marry (Edin and Reed 2005; Lichter, Mellott and Qian, 2006).

Demographic shifts in socio-economic status, education levels, social and religious attitudes, and the increase in cohabitation have also led to the change in the number and quality of marriages (Amato, Johnson, Booth, & Rogers, 2003). Along with this, the increase in childbearing outside of wedlock has weakened the social institutional drive, or the social norms that drive people's behavior, towards marriage (Cherlin, 2004). The increase in divorce has dramatically led to more remarriages and an increase in cohabitation (King and Scott, 2005). Cohabitation exists as a prelude to marriage or as an alternative to it (Sassler, 2004).

17

## 2.5 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

### 2.5.1 REVIEW OF RELATED THEORIES

This study uses the idea from economics to examine how socio-demographic factors shape youths desirability for marriage formation. The economic approach of rational choice is restricted to an isolated individual who balances costs and benefits to maximize utility (Becker, 1991). In contrast to the individualistic approach of rational choice, the social psychological approach of reasoned action theory considers both personal attitudes. Each approach may partially explain the dynamics underlying youths decision-making regarding marriage formation. This study thereby asks whether the motivations underlying youth's decisions regarding marriage are rational choice.

The contrast between Becker's and Oppenheimer's hypotheses stems from the assumption about the prevailing types of marriage (or family). Becker's is essentially about a complementary or traditional, breadwinner type of family. In contrast, as gleaned from Oppenheimer's (1997, 2000) discussion of the disadvantages of gender based specialization, her proposition assumes that the prevailing, or at the least, the type of marriage aimed at is a symmetrical model, an emerging type of family where couples profit from economic inter-dependence and husbands engage in housework though not necessarily equal to the wives' unpaid domestic work (Bachrach, Hindin, and Thomson, 2000; Cherlin, 2000).

### 2.5.2 RATIONAL CHOICE THEORY

The New Home Economics approach applies an individualistic rational choice perspective to the area of family including marriage, divorce, and fertility as well as relationships among family members. Linking activities at the micro-economic (individual) level to trends at the macro (societal) level, the approach assumes that individuals are forward-looking, consistent in their behaviors, and act to maximize their welfare (Gary Becker, 1991). According to Becker (1991),

individuals are not however, completely free in their behaviors; their actions are restricted by limited resources. Lack of information or opportunities can also restrict individuals' decision-making. Time is a finite resource running throughout the life course. As the provision of goods on the market increases, time becomes more valuable when individuals are faced with increased choices during the limited life span. Thus, individuals balance the costs and benefits of their choices regarding the attainment of certain goals. The rational choice approach, applied to family formation, posits that in marriage, men and women exchange their respective comparative advantages in the labor market and household work, thus maximizing both their individual and collective welfare (Becker, 1991). Following this logic, men's economic resources, such as employment, income, and education, are predicted to be positively associated with marriage rates; women's economic resources are predicted to be negatively associated with marriage rates, considering that women's economic independence reduces what they can gain from marriage based on exchange through the marriage bond (Becker, 1991; Moffitt, 2000; Teachman, Polonko and Leigh, 1987; Trent and South, 1989).

Past research supports the positive effects of men's employment, income, and schooling on marriage formation. Numerous studies also identify positive effects of employment and educational attainment on marriage formation for men in the setting of Nepal (Niraula, 1994; Yabiku, 2004, 2005 and 2006). Becker's (1991) individualistic economic approach, thus, can be used to predict the same pattern of association between economic resources and marriage timing for youths in Ekiti-state. Compared to research on men, research on women's economic resources provides mixed findings. Some research suggests negative effects of women's economic resources on marriage formation (Martin, 1995; Singh and Samara, 1996). Others find no effect of women's economic resources on marriage formation (Manning & Smock, 1995).

19

Still others confirm the positive effects of women's education and employment on marriage formation (Bloom and Bennett, 1990; Goldscheider and Waite, 1986; Goldstein & Kenney, 2001; Lichter, D.T., McLaughlin, D.K., Kephart, G, and Landry, D.J, 1992; Oppenheimer, 1994). In regards to marriage formation, some find education and employment to have positive effects and others find negative effects (Aryal, 2006; Niraula, 1994; Yabiku, 2004, 2005 and 2006).

The reported negative association between timing of marriage and economic resources for women is likely due to a temporal conflict between time invested in human capital accumulation and the normative timing of marriage. Sweeney (2002) finds that for younger cohorts of women, education has a positive effect on marriage; for older cohorts of women, the effect appears to be negative. This change in the effect of education is likely because for older cohorts of women, high educational attainment may have meant they were in school past the normative age of marriage and were therefore less likely to find a partner, but women from younger cohorts were able to complete their education before the normative age for marriage, which is sufficiently postponed, compared to that to old cohorts. Goldscheider and Waite (1986) confirm education effects to be sensitive to the timing of marriage. Although school enrollment may have the effect of postponing marriage due to the conflict between student and family roles (Tambashe and Shapiro, 1996; Thornton, Axinn and Teachman, 1995; Yabiku, 2006), after schooling is completed, marriage rates eventually increase.

## 2.6 CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

| INDEPENDENT VARIABLES | DEPENDENT VARIABLES |
|---|---|
| **SOCIO-DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS**<br><br>Age<br><br>Sex<br><br>Place of Residence<br><br>Level of education<br><br>Religion<br><br>Ethnicity<br><br>Parent marriage type<br><br>Current relationship status | **MARITAL ASPIRATION**<br><br>• Desire to get married<br>• Desired age at marriage |
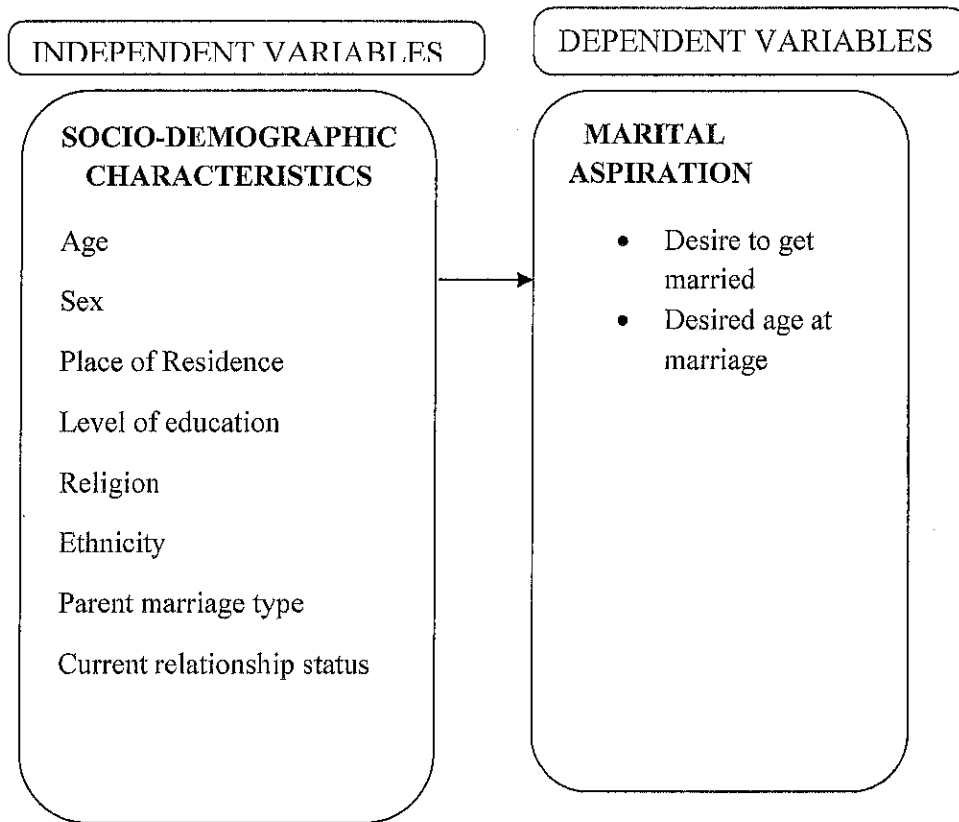
**Figure 1: conceptual framework showing the variables that will be used in the study.**

Figure 1 therefore explains the interrelation between the independent variables and the dependent variable. The independent variables can influence the marital aspiration of youth. The background variables are variables that interact with the independent variables to affect the outcome of the dependent variable and they tend to either weaken or strengthen the dependent variable. The direction of the arrow indicates that as the independent variables move to influence the marital aspiration of youths. For example, age, current relationship status, religion, parent type of marriage, is expected to influence the youth desirability for marriage and their desired age at marriage, but a factor such as employment and educational status of such respondent could be an intervening variable for desired age at marriage among youths in Ekiti state. Better or good education predicts a better job, higher incomes and also good societies. When there is an increase

in education it will promote the financial, professional and socio-economic does that did it (Lynch and Kaplan 2000).

## 2.7 HYPOTHESIS

**H0**: There is no significant relationship between socio-demographic factors (Place of residence, age, education, and parent type of marriage) and the desire to get married among youths in Ekiti state.

**H0**: There is a significant relationship between socio-demographic factors (Place of residence, age, education, and parent type of marriage) and desired age at marriage among youths in Ekiti state.

# CHAPTER THREE

## METHODOLOGY

## 3.0 INTRODUCTION

This chapter is concerned with the aim of stating the manner in which the research is conducted. It is perhaps the crux of this study because it is the background against which the findings and conclusions are evaluated. Therefore, the chapter highlights procedures involved in the research exercise as well as general methods and processes of data collection. Again, the chapter highlights the sampling techniques and subjects used for the study through questionnaires.

## 3.1 BACKGROUND OF STUDY AREA

Ekiti State is one of the six new states created on 1st October 1996 by the then Provisional Ruling Council and announced by the then Head of State, General Sani Abacha in a national broadcast to mark Nigeria's 36th independence anniversary. This makes Ekiti State one of the thirty six states of the Federal Republic of Nigeria today. It was carved out of the former Ondo State, which itself came out of the old Western State created in 1967. It is now made up of Ekiti Central, Ekiti North, Ekiti South and Ekiti West Divisions. Before its creation, Ekiti State had twelve Local Government Areas but, at its creation, four more Local Government Areas were created, bringing the number to sixteen. Ado-Ekiti is the capital of the state.

## 3.2 STUDY POPULATION

This study was carried out in Ekiti-state; Ado-Ekiti and Oye-Ekiti towns precisely. The target populations were youths (both men and women) that are; people within the ages 15-24 years.

## 3.3 SAMPLE SIZE AND SAMPLING TECHNIQUE

A convenient and stratified technique was used in administering the questionnaires whereby every respondent has equal chance of being selected or being part of the population. Respondents were randomly selected form two (2) towns in Ekiti State, which are Ado-Ekiti, representing the Urban and Oye-Ekiti representing the rural area. Sampling size is the number of respondents included in the research. In this study, 250 volunteered youths aged 15-24 in each town were selected randomly.

## 3.4 SOURCES OF DATA

Primary data was used to gather information in this study. The data were collected using a quantitative approach. Sets of questionnaires were administered as a means of data collection method. The questionnaire is divided into three sections (A-C). Section A collects data on the socio- demographic characteristics of the respondents; (B) respondent's perception on marital aspiration and; (C) respondent perception on career and marriage. To avoid ambiguity, researcher explained the questions to the respondents who do not understand the question while administering the questionnaires. The questionnaires were collected on the spot and respondents who complained that they could not fill the questionnaires immediately were not forced.

## 3.5 VARIABLESDESCRIPTION AND MEASUREMENT

**3.5.1 INDEPENDENT VARIABLES**: The Independent variables are measured as follows:

Age: it was a continuous variable

Sex: it was a categorical variable divided into two; Male and Female

Place of Residence: It was divided into two (2) categories; Rural and Urban.

Level of Education: it was a categorical variable divided into four categories; No Education, Primary Education, Secondary Education and Higher Education.

Religion: it was measured in four categories; Catholic, Other Christians, Islam, Traditional.

Current relationship status: it was divided into three categories; either respondent is in relationship cohabiting, in relationship not cohabiting, or not in a relationship at all.

Employment status: it was divided into 5 categories

Parents' Marital Status: Parents marital status was a categorical variable

## 3.5.2 DEPENDENT VARIABLE

Marital aspirations in this study were measured using;

Desire to get married: it was measured in two categories; Yes and No

Desired age at marriage: it was measured in two categories; $\leq 24$ and $\geq 25$

## 3.6 DATA ANALYSIS AND TECHNIQUES

A cross-sectional descriptive analysis was adopted to analyze demographic characteristics of the respondents. Primary data was collected for this research due to the need for direct responses from the respondents directly involved. In obtaining primary data, questionnaires were used as the data collection method and also statistical package for social scientist software were employed (SPSS 20). Further analysis of the quantitative data was done using (SPSS 20) software at three levels;

**Univariate Analysis:** it involves the percentage, frequency counts and summary statistics of relevant variables (age, education, occupation, religion, residence).

**Bivariate Analysis:** it involves cross tabulations of two or more variable. It also employed the use of Chi-Square to test the relationship between the dependent variables and the independent

variables in categorical forms. Fisher's exact test was used to show the relationship between variables with counts in a cell that is 5 or less.

**Multivariate Analysis:** it involves using binary regression order to analyze the effect of socio-demographic, economic, and cultural factors on youth marital aspiration in Ekiti-State. The multivariate analysis employed binary logistic regression. The general binary logistic regression model used for the multivariate analysis is

$$\log(\frac{p}{1-p}) = \beta_0 + \beta_1 x_1 + \beta_2 x_2 + ... \beta_n x_n$$

Where p = probability of marital aspirations among respondents

$x_1$-$x_n$ = predictor variables

$\beta_0$, $\beta_1$ - $\beta_n$ = regression coefficients

## 3.7 ETHICAL CONSIDERATION

Verbal informed consent was duly sought and obtained from research participants who took part in the study. The respondents were duly addressed before giving the questionnaires and they were assured of confidentiality of information given by them. To avoid being bias, those that refused to participate in the study were not forced.

## 3.8 LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

The target study area chosen in this study was Ekiti-State only; therefore results may not be totally generalizable. Using cross-sectional study, the causation cannot be determined because convenience sampling does not ensure that everyone in the population has the chance of being selected, therefore, results was interpreted with caution.

# CHAPTER FOUR
## DATA ANALYSIS, PRESENTATIONS AND INTERPRETATION

### 4.0 INTRODUCTION

This chapter aims at looking at factors associated with marital aspiration. This study involves respondents who are youths aged 15-24. The result of these analyses that is the Univariate, bivariate and multivariate levels are shown below:

### 4.1 UNIVARIATE ANALYSIS

**Table 1. Socio-demographic characteristics of respondents**

| *Variables* | *Frequency (N = 250)* | *Percentage (%)* |
|---|---|---|
| **Age** | | |
| 15 – 19 | 89 | 35.6 |
| 20 – 24 | 161 | 64.4 |
| **Residence** | | |
| Rural | 100 | 40.0 |
| Urban | 150 | 50.0 |
| **Sex** | | |
| Male | 133 | 53.2 |
| Female | 117 | 46.8 |
| **Ethnicity** | | |
| Yoruba | 213 | 85.2 |
| Igbo | 20 | 8.0 |
| Hausa | 3 | 1.2 |
| Others | 14 | 5.6 |
| **Family Type** | | |
| Monogamy | 179 | 71.6 |
| Polygamy | 60 | 24.0 |
| Cohabiting | 11 | 4.4 |
| **Parents' Marital Status** | | |
| Single | 56 | 22.4 |
| Married | 186 | 74.4 |
| Divorced | 8 | 3.2 |

*Source: Author's field work, 2016*

**Table 1. Socio-demographic characteristics of respondents (cont'd)**

| *Variables* | *Frequency* *(N = 250)* | *Percentage (%)* |
|---|---|---|
| **Religion** | | |
| Christian | 223 | 89.2 |
| Islam | 21 | 8.4 |
| Traditionalist | 3 | 1.2 |
| Others | 3 | 1.2 |
| **Marital Aspiration** | | |
| Yes | 235 | 94.0 |
| No | 15 | 6.0 |
| **Preferred marriage age** | | |
| ≤24 | 57 | 24.3 |
| ≥25 | 178 | 75.7 |
| **Relationship status** | | |
| Cohabiting relationship | 41 | 16.4 |
| Relationship not cohabiting | 79 | 31.6 |
| Not in a relationship | 130 | 52.0 |
| **Level of Education** | | |
| None | 11 | 4.4 |
| Primary | 3 | 1.2 |
| Secondary | 67 | 26.8 |
| Post-secondary | 144 | 57.6 |
| Others | 25 | 10.0 |
| **Employment status** | | |
| Employed | 7 | 2.8 |
| Unemployed | 171 | 64.8 |
| Self- Employed | 63 | 25.2 |
| Student | 9 | 3.6 |

*Source: Author's field work, 2016*

**RESEARCH QUESTION 1:**

**What is the extent of marital aspiration among youth in Ekiti state?**

Table 1 revealed the socio-demographic characteristics of the respondents. Majority, (64.4%) of the respondents belonged to the age group 20 – 24, 53.2 % of them are female and 60.0% of them live in urban centers. With regards to their ethnic group, Majority of the respondents are Yoruba (85.2%). Seventy-two percent of the respondents belonged to family with monogamous

setting and are still married (74.4%). With respect to the respondents' relationship status, 52% of the respondents are not in a relationship at the time of the survey. While 57.6% of the respondents attained a post-secondary education, 68.4% of them are unemployed. This study also revealed that majority of the respondents are Christians (89.2%) and 94% of them desire marriage, and majority of the respondents will like to get marriage at the ages between 25years and above.

## 4.2.1 BIVARIATE ANALYSIS

### Table 2. Relationship between Socio-demographic characteristics of respondents and marital aspirations

| Variables | Marital Aspiration | | | $\chi^2$ | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Yes<br>n = 235 (%) | No<br>n =15 (%) | Total<br>N = 250 (%) | | p - value |
| **Age** | | | | | |
| 15 – 19 | 85 (36.2) | 4 (26.7) | 89 (35.6) | 4.535 | 0.328* |
| 20 – 24 | 150 (63.8) | 11 (73.3) | 161 (64.4) | | |
| **Residence** | | | | | |
| Rural | 94 (40.0) | 6 (40.0) | 100 (40.0) | 18.257 | **0.000** |
| Urban | 141 (60.0) | 9 (60.0) | 150 (60.0) | | |
| **Sex** | | | | | |
| Male | 125 (53.2) | 8 (53.3) | 133 (53.2) | 0.341 | 0.991 |
| Female | 110 (46.8) | 7 (46.7) | 117 (46.8) | | |
| **Ethnicity** | | | | | |
| Yoruba | 199 (84.7) | 14 (93.3) | 213 (85.2) | 1.244 | 0.742* |
| Igbo | 19 (8.1) | 1 (6.7) | 20 (8.0) | | |
| Hausa | 3 (1.3) | 0 (0.0) | 3 (1.2) | | |
| Others | 14 (6.0) | 0 (0.0) | 14 (5.6) | | |
| **Marriage Type** | | | | | |
| Monogamy | 171 (72.8) | 8 (53.3) | 179 (71.6) | 14.862 | **0.048** |
| Polygamy | 53 (22.6) | 7 (46.7) | 60 (24.0) | | |
| Cohabiting | 11 (4.7) | 0 (0.0) | 11 (4.4) | | |
| **Parents' Marital Status** | | | | | |
| Single | 50 (21.3) | 6 (40.0) | 56 (22.4) | 3.758 | 0.153* |
| Married | 178 (75.7) | 8 (53.3) | 186 (74.4) | | |
| Divorced | 7 (3.0) | 1 (6.7) | 8 (3.2) | | |
| **Relationship status** | | | | | |
| Cohabiting relationship | 37 (15.7) | 4 (26.7) | 41 (16.4) | 2.451 | 0.294 |
| Relationship not cohabiting | 73 (31.1) | 6 (40.0) | 79 (31.6) | | |
| Not in a relationship | 125 (53.2) | 5 (33.3) | 130 (52.0) | | |
| **Level of Education** | | | | | |
| None | 9 (3.8) | 2 (13.3) | 11 (4.4) | 18.141 | **0.047*** |
| Primary | 2 (0.9) | 1 (6.7) | 3 (1.2) | | |
| Secondary | 65 (27.7) | 2 (13.3) | 67 (26.8) | | |
| Post-secondary | 135 (57.4) | 9 (60.0) | 144 (57.6) | | |
| Others | 24 (10.2) | 1 (6.7) | 25 (10.0) | | |
| **Employment Status** | | | | | |
| Employed | 7 (30.0) | 0 (0.0) | 7 (2.8) | 0.884 | 0.829 |
| Unemployed | 161 (68.5) | 10 (66.7) | 171 (68.4) | | |
| Self- Employed | 59 (25.1) | 4 (26.7) | 63 (25.2) | | |
| Student | 8 (3.4) | 1 (6.7) | 9 (3.6) | | |

*Source: Author's Field work, 2016        *Fisher's exact test applied*

**Table 2.1 Relationship between Socio-demographic characteristics of respondents and marital aspirations (cont'd)**

| Variables | Marital Aspiration | | | $\chi^2$ | |
| | Yes n = 235 (%) | No n =15 (%) | Total N = 250 (%) | | p - value |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Religion of Respondents** | | | | | |
| Christian | 212 (90.2) | 11 (73.3) | 213 (85.2) | 48.493 | **0.000*** |
| Islam | 20 (8.5) | 1 (6.7) | 21 (8.4) | | |
| Traditionalist | 0 (0.0) | 3 (20.0) | 3 (1.2) | | |
| Others | 3 (1.3) | 0 (0.0) | 3 (1.2) | | |

*Source: Author's field work, 2016*  *Fisher's exact test applied*

**RESEARCH QUESTION 2**: What are the determinants of marital aspiration among youths in Ekiti state?

Table 2 revealed the marital aspiration of respondents with respect to their socio-demographic characteristics. Majority of respondents who desire marriage fall within the age group 20-24 years (63.8%). Urban residence desire marriage more than Rural residence (60%). With respect to the gender of respondents, male respondents desire marriage more than female respondents do. Eighty-four percent of respondents who desire marriage are Yoruba, while 72.8% of respondents who desire marriage come from a monogamous family settings and 75.5% of respondents whose parents are currently married desire marriage. With respect to respondent's level of education, respondents with post-secondary education desire marriage more than respondents from other educational class (57.4%). This study also revealed that respondents who were currently unemployed as at time of survey also constitute the majority of those who desire marriage and respondents who are Christians constitute the majority of respondents who desire marriage (90.2%).

**Table 2.2 Relationship between Socio-demographic characteristics of respondents and desired age at marriage**

| Variables | Desired age at marriage | | | $\chi^2$ | p - value |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| | ≤ 24 *n = 57 (%)* | ≥ 25 *n = 178 (%)* | Total *N = 235 (%)* | | |
| **Age** | | | | | |
| 15 – 19 | 26 (45.6) | 59 (33.1) | 85 (36.2) | 2.907 | 0.088 |
| 20 – 24 | 31 (54.4) | 119 (66.9) | 150 (63.8) | | |
| **Residence** | | | | | |
| Rural | 22 (38.6) | 72 (40.4) | 94 (40.0) | 0.062 | 0.804 |
| Urban | 35 (61.4) | 106 (59.6) | 141 (60.0) | | |
| **Sex** | | | | | |
| Male | 13 (22.8) | 112 (62.9) | 125 (53.2) | 27.904 | 0.000 |
| Female | 44 (77.2) | 66 (37.1) | 110 (46.8) | | |
| **Ethnicity** | | | | | |
| Yoruba | 46 (80.7) | 153 (86.0) | 199 (84.7) | 1.244 | 0.742* |
| Igbo | 7 (12.3) | 12 (6.7) | 19 (8.1) | | |
| Hausa | 0 (0.0) | 3 (1.7) | 3 (1.3) | | |
| Others | 4 (7.0) | 10 (5.6) | 14 (6.0) | | |
| **Family Type** | | | | | |
| Monogamy | 37 (64.9) | 134 (75.3) | 171 (72.8) | 5.892 | 0.053* |
| Polygamy | 19 (33.3) | 34 (19.1) | 34 (19.1) | | |
| Cohabiting | 1 (1.8) | 10 (5.6) | 11 (4.7) | | |
| **Parents' Marital Status** | | | | | |
| Single | 17 (29.8) | 33 (18.5) | 50 (21.3) | 5.069 | 0.079* |
| Married | 37 (64.9) | 141 (79.2) | 178 (75.7) | | |
| Divorced | 3 (5.3) | 4 (2.2) | 7 (3.0) | | |
| **Relationship status** | | | | | |
| Cohabiting relationship | 7 (12.3) | 30 (16.9) | 37 (15.7) | 0.970 | 0.616 |
| Relationship not cohabiting | 20 (35.1) | 53 (29.8) | 73 (31.1) | | |
| Not in a relationship | 30 (52.6) | 95 (53.4) | 125 (53.2) | | |
| **Level of Education** | | | | | |
| None | 3 (5.3) | 6 (3.4) | 9 (3.8) | 2.429 | **0.657** |
| Primary | 0 (0.0) | 2 (1.1) | 2 (0.9) | | |
| Secondary | 16 (28.1) | 49 (27.5) | 65 (27.7) | | |
| Post-secondary | 30 (52.6) | 105 (59.0) | 135 (57.4) | | |
| Others | 8 (14.0) | 16 (9.0) | 24 (10.2) | | |
| **Employment Status** | | | | | |
| Employed | 3 (5.3) | 4 (2.2) | 7 (3.0) | 7.841 | 0.049 |
| Unemployed | 44 (77.2) | 117 (65.7) | 161 (68.5) | | |
| Self- Employed | 7 (12.3) | 52 (29.2) | 59 (25.1) | | |
| Student | 3 (5.3) | 5 (2.8) | 8 (3.4) | | |

**Table 2.2 Relationship between Socio-demographic characteristics of respondents and desired age at marriage(cont'd)**

| Variables | Desired age at marriage | | | $\chi^2$ | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | ≤ 24 $n = 57$ (%) | ≥ 25 $n = 178$ (%) | Total $N = 235$ (%) | | p - value |
| **Religion of Respondents** | | | | | |
| Christian | 5 (8.8) | 12 (6.7) | 17 (7.2) | 1.215 | **0.749** |
| Islam | 47 (82.5) | 148 (83.1) | 195 (83.0) | | |
| Traditionalist | 5 (8.8) | 15 (8.4) | 20 (8.5) | | |
| Others | 0 (0.0) | 3 (1.7) | 3 (1.3) | | |

## RESEARCH QUESTION 3

**What is the desired age at marriage among youths in Ekiti state?**

Table 3 shows the relationship between respondent's socio-demographic characteristics and their desired age at which they would like to marry. Majority of the respondents who are between the ages of 20 – 24 desire to marry at age 25 years and above (67%). About 60% of the respondents who lived in urban centers desire to marry at ages 25 and above. With respect to the sex of the respondents, majority of the respondents who are male (62.9%) desire to marry at ages 25 and above, Yoruba (86%), with married parents (79%) and had post-secondary education (59%). With respect to the religion of the respondents, 83% of the respondents who are Muslims desire to marry at ages 25 and above.

## 4.3 MULTIVARIATE ANALYSIS

**Table 3: Binary Logistic Regression for predictors of Marital Aspirations among respondents**

| | Model 1 | | | Model 2 | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | 95% CI | | | 95% CI | |
| | OR | Lower | Upper | OR | Lower | Upper |
| **Age (in Group)** | | | | | | |
| 15 – 19 | 1.0 (R.C) | | | 1.0 (R.C) | | |
| 20 – 24 | 1.54 | .130 | 2.26 | 1.63 | 0.29 | 1.35 |
| **Residence** | | | | | | |
| Rural | 1.0 (R.C) | | | 1.0 (R.C) | | |
| Urban | 1.328 | 0.298 | 5.913 | 1.14 | 0.53 | 2.46 |
| **Sex** | | | | | | |
| Male | 1.0 (R.C) | | | 1.0 (R.C) | | |
| Female | 1.65 | 0.15 | 2.83 | 8.25* | 3.58 | 18.96 |
| **Ethnicity** | | | | | | |
| Yoruba | 1.0 (R.C) | | | 1.0 (R.C) | | |
| Igbo | 1.25 | 0.09 | 2.37 | 0.52 | 0.66 | 4.10 |
| Hausa | 0.362 | 0.16 | 3.25 | 3.70* | 0.01 | 5.31 |
| Others | 2.462 | 0.035 | 5.68 | 1.40 | 0.29 | 6.81 |
| **Family Type** | | | | | | |
| Monogamy | 1.0 (R.C) | | | 1.0 (R.C) | | |
| Polygamy | 0.36* | 0.11 | 5.26 | 0.15 | 0.14 | 1.59 |
| Cohabiting | 1.34* | 0.31 | 19.35 | 0.35 | 0.32 | 3.87 |
| **Parents' Marital Status** | | | | | | |

| | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Single | 1.0 (R.C) | | | 1.0 (R.C) | | |
| Married | 1.28 | 0.46 | 22.04 | 4.34 | 0.59 | 31.66 |
| Divorced | 0.64 | 0.11 | 47.12 | 2.22 | 0.27 | 18.09 |
| **Relationship Status** | | | | | | |
| Cohabiting relationship | 1.0 (R.C) | | | 1.0 (R.C) | | |
| Relationship not cohabiting | 1.59 | 0.13 | 2.58 | 1.28 | 0.56 | 2.95 |
| Not in a relationship | 0.13 | 0.12 | 19.22 | 3.38 | 0.89 | 12.74 |
| **Level of Education** | | | | | | |
| None | 1.0 (R.C) | | | 1.0 (R.C) | | |
| Primary | 0.46 | 0.02 | 5.76 | 4.13* | 0.12 | 6.37 |
| Secondary | 1.36* | 0.24 | 9.35 | 0.75 | 0.20 | 2.74 |
| Post-secondary | 3.26* | 0.54 | 2.37 | 1.19 | 0.35 | 4.05 |
| Others | 0.76 | 0.12 | 2.36 | 1.10 | 0.16 | 7.45 |
| **Employment Status** | | | | | | |
| Employed | 1.0 (R.C) | | | 1.0 (R.C) | | |
| Unemployed | 2.27 | 0.12 | 11.7 | 3.76 | 0.62 | 22.78 |
| Self- Employed | 1.20 | 0.02 | 8.41 | 7.34* | 1.08 | 49.62 |
| Student | 0.81 | 0.19 | 3.28 | 2.53 | 0.18 | 34.93 |
| **Religion** | | | | | | |
| Christian | 1.0 (R.C) | | | 1.0 (R.C) | | |
| Islam | 1.28* | 0.15 | 5.36 | 0.78 | 0.14 | 5.26 |
| Traditionalist | 0.63 | 0.23 | 1.26 | 0.62 | 0.34 | 2.11 |
| Others | 2.37* | 0.07 | 2.42 | 1.21 | 0.21 | 3.45 |

*Refers to p-values <0.05

**RESEARCH QUESTION 4:**

**Is there any significant relationship between socio-demographic and marital aspiration among youths in Ekiti state?**

This table above represents the result of logistic regression analysis of the relationship between socio-demographic variables and marital aspiration in two models. The result shown above revealed that in model 1 revealed that respondents who belonged to the age group 20-24 are 15% likely to desire marriage compare respondents in age group 15-19 years. More so, urban respondents are 13% more likely to desire marriage, compare to respondents who live in rural areas. Female respondents are 1.6 times more likely to desire marriage, compare to the male respondents. Respondents who are Hausa are 2.4 times more likely to desire marriage compared to the reference category. Likewise, respondents who are from polygamous family settings are 64% less likely to desire marriage compare to respondents from cohabiting households. With respect to respondent's relationship status, respondents in relationships not cohabiting are 1.5 times more likely to desire marriage compared to respondents who are not in a relationship. The educational status of the respondents is also a significant predictor of marital aspirations; respondents with post-secondary education are 3.2 times more likely to desire marriage compared to respondents with other educational qualifications. Respondents who are currently unemployed are 2.2 times more likely to desire marriage compared to respondents who are still schooling. With regards to the respondents religion, respondents with other religions are 2.3 time more likely to desire marriage, compared to respondents who practice other religions.

The result shown above revealed that in model 2, revealed that respondents who belonged to the age group 20-24 are 16% more likely to have a desired age of marriage compare respondents in

age group 15-19 years. More so, urban respondents are 1.1 times more likely to have a desired age of marriage compare to respondents who live in rural areas. Female respondents are 8.2 times more likely to have a desired age of marriage compare to the male respondents. Respondents who are Hausa are 3.7 times more likely to have a desired age of marriage compared to the reference category. Likewise, respondents who are from cohabitating family settings are 65% less likely to have a desired age of marriage compare to respondents from other reference households and also respondents from divorced parents are 2.2times more likely to have a desired age at marriage. With respect to respondent's relationship status, respondents not in relationships are 3.3 times more likely to have a desired age of marriage compared to respondents who are not in a relationship. Also, respondents with primary education are 4.1 times more likely to have a desired age of marriage compared to respondents with other educational qualifications. Respondents who are currently self-employed are 7.3 times more likely to have a desired age of marriage compared to respondents who are still schooling. With regards to the respondents religion, Islam respondents are 22% less likely to have a desired age of marriage compared to respondents who practice other religions.

However based on the study, it shows that in model 1, age, residence, sex, ethnicity, others are not significant to the study and also in model 2, religion, parent marital status and others are not significant to the study.

**4.4 DISCUSSION**
The study analyzed primary data which was collected through a means of well-structured questionnaire, which asked series of questions on marital aspirations from the respondents. The sample size for the study was 250; all respondents were selected based on a simple random sampling technique. Univariate, Bivariate and Multivariate analysis techniques were employed in

the course of this study. The univariate analysis in this study was carried out using tables of frequency distributions to describe the background characteristics of the respondents. The bivariate analysis was done using the chi-square ($\chi^2$) and Fisher's exact test to show the association between the marital aspirations of the respondents and their various socio-economic and demographic background characteristics that are categorical variables. Furthermore, Binary logistic regression model was used in the multivariate analysis using to models to determine the strength of association and identify predictors of marital aspirations among youth population in the study area. The study revealed that Majority of respondents who desire marriage fall within the age group 20-24 years. Majority of the respondents in urban areas desire marriage more than rural residence. With respect to the gender of respondents, male respondents desire marriage more than female respondents. Eighty-four percent of respondents who desire marriage are Yoruba, while majority of respondents who desire marriage come from a monogamous family setting and has parents who are currently married desire marriage. With respect to respondent's level of education, half of the respondents with post-secondary education desire marriage more than respondents from other educational class. This study also revealed that respondents who were currently unemployed as at time of survey also constitute the majority of those who desire marriage and respondents who are Christians constitute the majority of respondents who desire marriage. Majority of the respondents who are between the age of 20 – 24 desire to marry at ages 25 and above. Majority of the respondents who lived in urban centers desire to marry at ages 25 and above. With respect to the sex of the respondents, majority of the respondents who are male desire to marry at ages 25 and above and are Yoruba's with married parents and had post-secondary education (59%). With respect to the religion of the respondents, 83% of the respondents who are Muslims desire to marry at ages 25 and above.

# CHAPTER FIVE
# SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

## 5.0 INTRODUCTION

This study examined the marital aspirations among youths in Nigeria. The Rational choice theory was used as a theoretical framework in examining how youths from different works of life with different socio-demographic status desires marriage.

## 5.1 SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

The main objective of this study is to examine the determinants of marital aspiration among youths in Ekiti state. The study specifically aimed at examining the extent of marital aspiration among youths, to know the desired age at marriage, and to investigate the relationship between socio-demographic factors (age, religion, place of residence, ethnicity, level of education, parent marital status etc.) and marital aspiration among youth in Ekiti state. The study revealed that majority of the respondent's desire marriage. The calculated p-value from chi-square to test the association for socio-demographic variables shows that level of education, sex, respondent's residence status and religion significantly influence the determinants of marital aspiration among youths. However, based on the table 4 of this study, parental marriage type, level of education, and religion showed significant relationship with respondent's desire to get married, and while age, sex, residence ethnicity, parent marital status, current relationship status and employment status showed no significant relationship with youths desirability for marriage. Majority of the respondents who are between the age of 20 – 24 desire to marry at ages 25 and above and also, majority of respondents who lived in urban centers desire to marry at ages 25 and above. With respect to the sex of the respondents, majority of the respondents who are male desire to marry at ages 25 and above, majority of respondents who are Yoruba  with married

parents and least of the respondents with primary education desire to marry at ages 25 above. with respect to the religion of the respondents, 83% of the respondents who are Muslims desire to marry at ages 25 and above.

## 5.2 CONCLUSION

From the study, respondents who are educated are more likely to desire marriage and also have a desired age of marriage; this is an indication that education is a good predictor of marital aspiration. Employment status, sex and ethnicity are significantly influence the desired age at marriage which serves also as a good predictor of marital aspirations among the respondents. To increase marital aspirations among the youth populations, jobs and marriage incentives must be available to the youths.

## 5.3 POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

The percentage of youths who desire marriage will soon be reduced in the coming years. To increase marital aspirations among the youth population, the following steps should be taken,

- There should be proper policy for job opportunities for the youths to improve their financial status and marital aspirations.

- Program developers should design more relationship and marriage education that are age-appropriate and in tune with the experiences of today's youth.

- The government should provide for conducive environments for economic benefits among youths.

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