

The Effects of Early Marriage in Selected Barangays of Datu Saudi-Ampatuan Municipality, Maguindanao Province

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ABSTRACT

This study sought to explore the effects and challenges of early marriage in the selected barangays (Elian, Dapiawan, and Kitango) of Datu Saudi Ampatuan Municipality, Maguindanao Province. The researchers used the mixed research method which combines quantitative and qualitative methods in the same study. The respondents were 40 males and 40 females who have been married at their early age and currently living in the municipality. The following were the findings of the study: The overwhelmingly majority of the respondents agreed that early marriage is being practiced in accordance with the Shari’ah Law, complying with the essential requisites of marriage in Presidential Decree 1083 or PD 1083. Meanwhile, 15% from the male respondents and 3% from the female respondents have admitted that there are disagreements that happened before the wedding commonly because of disapproval of their mother but easily resolve and facilitated. Majority of the respondents confirmed that the transaction between offer (ijab) and acceptance (qabul) duly witnessed by two competent persons after the guardian in marriage (wali) has given his/her consent. Large majority of the respondents also agreed that the “mahr” (dower) was given before the wedding and the female respondents were satisfied with the amount of the “mahr”. The researchers stated their recommendations addressed towards the Bangsamoro Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (BARRM), local government units (LGUs), Barangay officials, and the academic community, to formulate or create program interventions like adult literacy, financial literary, and livelihood for those illiterate couple and other less fortunate individuals.

KEYWORDS

Shari’ah; marriage; practice; ijab; qabul; mahr; wali

INTRODUCTION

Marriage is viewed as the sacred unification between a man and a woman for the purpose of legitimization of having children. It is a union between couples of opposite genders to acknowledge the legitimacy of them having children (Leach, 1951). Marriage is a physical and mental bond between a man and a woman as husband and wife to form a happy and eternal family (household) based on the Supreme Lordship (Rizal & Djannah, 2021). It is a marital arrangement wherein the married couple are identified to have the rights of sexual relationships with each other. The wife is acknowledged to give birth to her and her husband’s children (Haviland, 1996). It is customary for them to cohabit under the same roof and nurture each other.

Marriage is one of Islam’s religious duties as it is also believed to complete half of one’s Deen (Religion). Although it is one of the religious duties, it can only be completed through enjoining both of the parties involved. The Qur’an states: “And among His Signs

is this, that He created for you wives from among yourselves, that you may find repose in them, and He has put between your affection and mercy” (Al-Hilali & Khan: Ar-Rum 30:21).

On the report from the hadith of Prophet Muhammad (Peace Be upon Him), he said, “A woman is normally sought as a wife for her wealth, beauty, nobility, or religiousness (adherence to Islam), but choose a religious woman, and you will prosper” (Muslim: Vol. 3 Book 9, Hadith 1858). In another hadith, he said, “The whole world is a provision, and the best object of benefit of the world is the pious woman” (Muslim: Book 8, Hadith 3465).

The denial of girls’ opportunities to learn and acquire skills in life, separation from their dear ones, and increase of their vulnerability to various health problems are among the issues of early marriage. The region of South Asia has the most significant number of child brides, with almost half of girls married by 18, while in sub-Saharan Africa, it is more than one-third. Each year, 16 million adolescent girls deliver a child. Because of the fatalities on pregnancy and childbirth, it turned out to be one of the main reasons for the fatalities of girls aged 15-19 in these countries according to the United Nations (Ahmed, 2015).

Early childbearing problems are more prevalent in the region of CARAGA (38%) than the other regions, particularly NCR, CALABARZON, and ARMM (24%). Twenty-seven percent (27%) of young women aged 15-24 in the Philippines have started bearing a child. While twenty-four percent (24%) of these girls have delivered a child, the other 3% are pregnant with their firstborn. According to the Philippine National Statistics Authority, the number of girls who have started giving birth increases, from less than two percent among the aged 15 to 22% of women aged 19 and 59% of those aged 24. Thus, it increases the chances of the adolescent brides to come across various health risks brought by untimely pregnancies before they are considered to be physically and psychologically prepared for the responsibilities that were brought upon by early motherhood and childbirth. Oftentimes, girls choose to withdraw from school because of the burden of child marriage, pregnancy, and domestic chores (Miranda and Cases, 2020).

When it comes to marriage, the most suitable time for a person is when he/she attains sexual and mental maturity. For a man to become eligible for taking a woman’s hand in marriage, Islam has several recommendations. The case of child marriage raises new problems for the quality of family resources for couples who marry at the child age (Yusnita et al, 2022). According to Islamic laws, when a boy attains the age of fifteen or becomes sexually potent, he is baligh (mature) and has reached puberty. Presidential Decree No. 1083, known as The Code of Muslim Personal Laws of the Philippines, states that “any Muslim male at least fifteen years of age and any Muslim female of the age of puberty or upwards and not suffering from any impediment under the provisions of this Code may contract marriage. A female is presumed to have attained puberty upon reaching the age of fifteen.” This is different from The Family Code of The Philippines, Requisites of Marriage, and Chapter 1: Article 5, which states that “Any male or female of the age of eighteen years or upwards not under any of the impediments may contract marriage.” Nevertheless, this is not enough for entering into a contract of marriage. Rizvi (1995) stated that the idea of *Rushd* could also be interpreted as the capability of a sensible conduct or maturity, aside from the laws related to puberty. A husband is required to be a *Rashid* (mature). A wife is also required to be a *Rashidah* (the female counterpart of *Rashid*; mature) for the marriage to be rationally implemented.

With these, the researchers conducted a study and followed the Presidential Decree 1083 to explore the effects of early marriage and the challenges faced by the families who engaged in early marriage in the selected barangays of Datu Saudi Ampatuan, Maguindanao, as well as whether or not the early marriage that is being practiced follows the Shari’ah law.

RESEARCH METHODS

Although the topic primarily focuses in qualitative study, after examining the questionnaire provided, initial questions (name, age, etc.) are quantitative. Therefore, in this study, the researchers used mixed research method which combines quantitative and qualitative methods. The questionnaires were prepared by the researchers and used as the main instrument for gathering data.

This study's respondents are from the residents of barangays Elian, Dapiawan, and Kitango, Datu Saudi Ampatuan, Maguindanao. Snowball sampling was used in identifying the respondents. The study respondents were 40 males and 40 females who have been married at their early age and currently living in the municipality of Datu Saudi Ampatuan, Maguindanao.

The researchers used an in-depth interview as an instrument in data gathering. The researchers used a questionnaire for interviewing and interpreting the experiences of the respondents in their early marriage. The questionnaires were composed of three parts. The first part is all about the socio-demographic profile to determine the gender, current age, age at the time of marriage, years of marriage, number of children at the time of marriage, highest educational attainment, and monthly income. The second and third parts of the in-depth interview explored the respondents' causes of early marriage and its effects. Ethical considerations were observed in the study for the safety of the respondents.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Respondents' Profile

The following tables from Table 1 to Table 6 present the profile of the male and female respondents to provide clear distinctions in their profile in terms of current age, age at the time of marriage, number of their children at present, highest educational attainment and their monthly income.

Table 1. Profile of the Respondents in Terms of their Gender and Current Age

Male				Female			
Age	f	%	Description	Age	f	%	Description
15 - 20	14	35.00	Young Adult	15 - 20	16	40.00	Young Adult
21 - 26	19	47.50	Young Adult	21 - 26	15	37.50	Young Adult
27 - 32	2	5.00	Young Adult	27 - 32	2	5.00	Young Adult
33 - 38	3	7.50	Middle-Age Adult	33 - 38	3	7.50	Middle-Age Adult
39 - 44	2	5.00	Middle-Age Adult	39 - 44	2	5.00	Middle-Age Adult
45 - 50	0	0.00	None	45 - 50	2	5.00	Middle-Age Adult
Total	40	100.00		Total	40	100.0	
Mean =	23	Yrs Old	Young Adult	Mean =	24	Yrs old	Young Adult

Generally, the current ages of the male and female respondents have means of 23 and 24 years old respectively. All described as young adult respondents from selected Barangays of Datu Saudi Ampatuan, Maguindanao.

Respondents' Profile in Terms of Age at the Time of Marriage

Table 2 presents the age of respondents when they got married with corresponding frequencies and percentage to determine whether they already reached the legal age as prescribed in the P.D. 1083 and/or the puberty age according to Islamic Law.

Table 2. Profile of the Respondents in Terms of their Gender and Age at the Time of Marriage

Male				Female			
Age	f	%	Description	Age	f	%	Description
13	0	0	None	13	1	2.50	Young
14	0	0	None	14	3	7.50	Young
15	5	12.50	Young	15	13	32.50	Young
16	10	25.00	Young	16	8	20.00	Young
17	11	27.50	Young	17	10	25.00	Young
18	12	30.00	Young Adult	18	4	10.00	Young Adult
19	1	2.50	Young Adult	19	1	2.50	Young Adult
20	1	2.50	Young Adult	20	0	0	None
Total	40	100.00		Total	40	100.00	
Mean =	17	Yrs Old	Young	Mean =	16	Yrs Old	Young

The mean age of the male respondents is 17 years old and the mean age of female respondents is 16 years old which is one year younger than the male who got into early marriage at young life. This implies that majority of the respondents both male and female got into marriage in a young age. The data supports what stipulated in Holy Qur'an which stated that Islam did not clarify what age is the right time for marriage, in contrast to what others believe that it did.

Respondents' Profile in Terms of Number of Years in Marriage

Table 3 reveals that the same numbers of male and female respondents (19 or 47.5%) have been married 5 years ago. Similarly, there are 14 or 35% from both male and female respondents who got married 6 to 11 years ago. This means that majority of the male and female respondents have very short or short period of marriage and considered to be newlywed couples.

Furthermore, there are 2 or 5% of male and only 1 or 2.5% of female respondents who have been married for the past 12 to 17 years described as medium period of marriage. Also, there are 3 or 7.5% of male and 4 or 10% of female respondents with 18 to 23 years of marriage (Medium Period). There are only 2 or 5% of male respondents who have long period of marriage for 24 to 29 years and no one reached 30 to 35 years of marriage. On the other hand, only one female respondent reached a long period of marriage from 24 to 29 years and there's also one who has very long period of marriage from 30 to 35 years.

The male respondents have mean years of marriage of 6.5 years and the female respondents have mean of 7.7 years of marriage. These imply that the male and female respondents are still in the short period of years in marriage.

Table 3. Profile of the Respondents in Terms of their Gender and Number of Years in Marriage

Male				Female			
No. of Yrs	f	%	Description	No. of Yrs	f	%	Description
0 - 5	19	47.50	Very Short Period	0 - 5	19	47.50	Very Short Period
6 - 11	14	35.00	Short Period	6 - 11	14	35.00	Short Period
12 - 17	2	5.00	Medium Period	12 - 17	1	2.50	Medium Period
18 - 23	3	7.50	Medium Period	18 - 23	4	10.00	Medium Period
24 - 29	2	5.00	Long Period	24 - 29	1	2.50	Long Period
30 - 35	0	0.00	Very Long Period	30 - 35	1	2.50	Very Long Period
Total	40	100.00		Total	40	100.00	

Mean = 6.5 Years Short Period	Mean = 7.7 Years Short Period
s.d. = 6.7	s.d. = 7.6

Respondents' Profile in Terms of Number of Children

All respondents have an average number of children as revealed by the mean of 2 to 3 described as small number of children. These implies that majority of the respondents were observing birth spacing, considering the means of 6.5 and 7.7 years of marriage of male and female respondents respectively.

Table 4. Profile of the Respondents in Terms of their Gender and Number of Children

Male				Female			
No. of Children	f	%	Description	No. of Children	f	%	Description
0 - 1	17	42.50	Small	0 - 1	16	40.00	Small
2 - 3	18	45.00	Small	2 - 3	17	42.50	Small
4 - 5	2	5.00	Average	4 - 5	3	7.50	Average
6 - 7	1	2.50	Average	6 - 7	2	5.00	Average
8 - 9	1	2.50	Large	8 - 9	1	2.50	Large
10 - 11	1	2.50	Large	10 - 11	1	2.50	Large
Total	40	100.00		Total	40	100.00	
Mean = 2 to 3	Children		Small	Mean = 2 to 3	Children		Small

Profile of the Respondents in Terms of their Gender & Highest Educational Attainment

Table 5. Profile of the Respondents in Terms of their Gender & Highest Educational Attainment

Male				Female			
Level of Education	f	%	Description	Level of Education	f	%	Description
None	2	5.00	Never gone to Sch.	None	0	0.00	Never gone to Sch.
Primary Level	11	27.50	Primary	Primary Level	7	17.50	Primary
Elem Graduate	8	20.00	Elementary	Elem Graduate	12	30.00	Elementary
HS Level	16	40.00	Secondary	HS Level	18	45.00	Secondary
HS Graduate	1	2.50	Secondary	HS Graduate	1	2.50	Secondary
College Level	1	2.50	Tertiary	College Level	1	2.50	Tertiary
College Graduate	1	2.50	Tertiary	College Graduate	1	2.50	Tertiary
Total	40	100.00		Total	40	100.00	
Mode =	High School Level			Mode =	High School Level		

Majority of respondents both male and female were in primary level, elementary graduates and high level in terms of their gender and highest educational attainment. The finding means that both male and female respondents did not finish their secondary education when they got into early marriage.

Profile of the Respondents in Terms of their Gender and Monthly Income

Table 6. Profile of the Respondents in Terms of their Gender and Monthly Income

Male				Female			
Income (Php)	f	%	Description	Income (Php)	f	%	Description
0.0000	3	7.5	No Income	0.0000	26	65.00	No Income
1,000 - 4,999	28	70	Very Low Income	1,000 - 4,999	13	32.50	Very Low Income

5,000 - 9,000	7	17.5	Low Income	5,000 - 9,000	1	2.50	Low Income
10,000 - 14,999	1	2.5	Low Middle Income	10,000 - 14,999	0	0.00	Low Middle Income
15,000 - 19,999	1	2.5	Middle Income	15,000 - 19,999	0	0.00	Middle Income
Total	40	100.00		Total	40	100.00	
Mean =	Php 3000 (very low income)			Mean =	Php 1000 (very low income)		

Table 6 presents the profile of the respondents in terms of their gender and monthly income. Majority of the male and female respondents has a very low income amounting 3,000 pesos for male and 1,000 pesos for female per month. The findings mean that both male and female respondents have a very low income. The findings support the study of Nortajuddin (2020), which states that one of the deeper causes behind the practice is that families can have several children, and the family's income cannot afford and educate all of them. The girl often belongs to a low-income family, and her parents' consent to a forced marriage with a better financially placed man so that her family can have one less burden, as said by Suwaira Abdulmaulaula from the United Youth of the Philippines-Women, Inc. in Maguindanao.

The findings contradict to what Prophet Muhammad (Peace Be upon Him) stated in his Hadith, which he said, "A woman is normally sought as a wife for her wealth, beauty, nobility, or religiousness (adherence to Islam), but choose a religious woman, and you will prosper" (Muslim: Vol. 3 Book 9, Hadith 1858). In another hadith, he said, "The whole world is a provision, and the best object of benefit of the world is the pious woman" (Muslim: Book 8, Hadith 3465).

Perceived Early Marriage Practices

The male and female respondents' responses on the queries related to the requisites, conditions, and process of early marriage being practiced in the selected barangays of Datu Saudi Ampatuan, Maguindanao. It further shows that all of the respondents agreed that early marriage is being practiced in accordance with the Shari'ah Law, complying with the essential requisites of marriage in Presidential Decree 1083 or PD 1083.

When male respondents asked if their partner have reached the age of 15 at the time of their marriage, majority of the male respondents replied: "*Uway, sapulu endu walu lagun aku den kanu kinakawing salekami su kaluma ko sapulu endu pitu lagun sekanin.*" "Yes. I was 18 when we got married, while she was 17." Majority of female respondents said, "*Uway, sapulu endu pitu lagun aku kanu timpu a kinakawing salekami.*" "Yes, because I was already 17 when we got married." Majority of the male and female respondents stated that they are 15, 17, 18 and 19 year old when they got married. This data implies that both male and female respondents are sexually potent or in period of *baligh* (mature) and has reached puberty stage. These findings supports the Islamic laws stating that when a boy attains the age of fifteen or becomes sexually potent, he is *baligh* (mature) and has reached puberty. Presidential Decree No. 1083, known as The Code of Muslim Personal Laws of the Philippines, states that "any Muslim male at least fifteen years of age and any Muslim female of the age of puberty or upwards and not suffering from any impediment under the provisions of this Code may contract marriage. A female is presumed to have attained puberty upon reaching the age of fifteen." This is different from The Family Code of The Philippines, Requisites of Marriage, and Chapter 1: Article 5, which states that "Any male or female of the age of eighteen years or upwards not under any of the impediments may contract marriage." Nevertheless, this is not enough for entering into a contract of marriage. Rizvi (1995) stated that the idea of *Rushd* could also be interpreted as the capability of a sensible conduct or maturity, aside from the laws related to puberty. A

husband is required to be a *Rashid* (mature). A wife is also required to be a *Rashidah* (the female counterpart of *Rashid*; mature) for the marriage to be rationally implemented.

When the respondents asked that they knew each other before marriage, their common answers were: *“Uway, Nuget kami den egkilalay kagina magubay bun i walay nami endu ebpapakat kami bun iganat kanut manga wata kami pan.”* *“Yes. We have known each other for long because we were just neighbors and we were childhood friends.”* *“Uway, Kagina embalaya kamibun bagu kami nakawing.”* *“Yes, because we are boyfriend and girlfriends even before we got married.”* Some answers they knew each other because they are friend, neighbour, boy and girl friend, classmates, text mate, met at party and facebook friend. The data indicates that both male and female respondents replied that they knew each other before they got into marriage. They are boyfriend and girlfriend. They are not forced to get into early marriage. Al-Hilali & Khan: Ar-Rum 30:21 narrated that marriage is one of Islam’s religious duties as it is also believed to complete half of one’s *Deen* (Religion). Although it is one of the religious duties, it can only be completed through enjoining both of the parties involved. The Qur’an states: *“And among His Signs is this that He created for you wives from among yourselves that you may find repose in them, and He has put between your affection and mercy”*.

They also both said that they are not closely-related to their partner. The male respondent added: *“Apia nugget kami den egkalinia na dili kami. Magubay kami bun sa walay.”* *“Even though we’ve known each other for long, we are not closely-related. We’re just really neighbors.”* They were also asked if they were parentally arranged by their parents, in whom the male respondent replied: *“Dikena kami pinanegel sabap sa egkalinian ku bun sekanin endu egkalinian aku nin bun,”* *“We were not forced because we liked each other.”* This data implies that both male and female respondents were agreed that they are not forced to get into early marriage. They are not closely-related and they like each other before they got married. The finding contradicts to the idea of Home Office (2006), stated that in forced marriages, one or both parties involved are pushed into a marriage against their will. Sometimes, it leads to a point where their physical and emotional health is threatened. Unlike early marriage, one or both spouses are prohibited from initiating a divorce. Almost all child marriages are frequently viewed as forced marriages since most countries that practice this does not give consent to the children involved. This form of marriage has been widely practiced and eventually turned into tradition within various countries and communities for quite some time. Forced marriage is initiated to mean the absence of the consent of the youth involved. It also reached an extent where arrangements between both parties are rushed to the point that the children involved are not fully aware of what is happening or were not given the time to think thoroughly. At first, the term "force" was believed to be inappropriately used since this type of marriage does not initially tackle the issues of an arranged marriage, such as physical and mental abuse, until the spouses involved realizes that there are more issues than physical and mental abuse (Chantler, et. al, 2007).

When they asked: *“Were there any disagreements that happened before the wedding? How was the disagreement resolved? The female respondents confessed that they needed to convince her mother at first: “Kanu nuna dili pegkyug si Ina sabap sa tig nin na wata aku pan gid uged na pimitialan sekanin na manga babu ku taman sa miniyug den. Miniyug sekanin sabap sa katawan nin bun embalaya kami bun endu tig nilan na ya den temu i makawing kanu den.”* *“Although at first, my Mom was a bit hesitant because she thinks that I was still too young to get married, but my aunts managed to persuade her and she agrees because she was well-aware that we are in a relationship and they believe that it’s better for us to get married.”* They managed to resolve it through persuasion and acceptance: *“Tinalima den sekanin ni ina sabap inimbityala sekanin na manga babu ku.*

"She accepted him because my aunts managed to persuade and convince her." This data implies that there are disagreements that happened before the wedding commonly because of disapproval of their mother but easily resolve and facilitated. The data supports the idea of Gomez et.al (2016), stated that marriage is a form of union between a male and a female recognized by civil law, religious law, and customary rites. It is a process to form a bond between the spouses and their families or a larger community involved, either formal or informally acknowledged.

Does the transaction between offer (*ijab*) and acceptance (*qabul*) duly witnessed by two competent persons after the guardian in marriage (*wali*) has given his consent? They both agreed that the offer (*ijab*) and acceptance (*qabul*) duly witnessed by two competent persons. The male respondent also said that the person who stood as his witnesses were their father, barangay officials and religious leaders: *"Aiman Alnur"*. They considered a competent person because: *"Madtalu ku a kasaligan silan sabap sa manga matwa den mambu silan."* *"We could say that they are competent because they have already reached the mature age."* Some replied: *"Egkasaligan silan sabap sa egkangawnutan silan na dalpa"* *"They are competent because they are barangay leaders."* Other responded that: *"Egkasaligan silan sabap sa bamagagama silan"* *"They are competent because they are religious leaders."* While the female respondents had common answers stated that the person who stood as their witnesses were *ustadz*s, elders, uncle, barangay officials, father/parents and said that they could be considered as competent because: *"Kagina mga matwa den silan."* *"They have already reached the mature age."* *"Kasaligan silan sabap sa manga taw silan na barangay."* *"They are competent because they are barangay officials."* *Su manga ustadz, bapa ko ataw a manga matuwa sa pamilya nam."* *"They are ustadz, my uncles or elders of our family."* Both of the respondents also agreed that the customary *mahr* was given entirely before the time of marriage. The male respondent said: *"Uway, dala kami pan makawing na nakaenggay den su langun a sunggudan."* *"Yes. Even before the day of marriage, the mahr was already given as a whole."* The female respondent also commented that she was satisfied with the amount given.

The data implies that both male and female respondents agreed that the transaction between offer (*ijab*) and acceptance (*qabul*) duly witnessed by two competent persons after the guardian in marriage (*wali*) has given his consent and they are religious leaders, barangay officials, uncles, and parents. They also said that those witnesses were competent because they are religious leaders, barangay officials, and reached the mature age. They also agreed that the "*mahr*" was given before the wedding and the female respondents were satisfied with the amount of the "*mahr*".

Effects of Early Marriage in Terms of Education

Most respondents were unable to finish their studies because of poverty, war conflict between government troop and rebel groups and other reasons. Some of them also were influenced that it's better to go to work rather than go to school. In addition, majority of the participants was not able to finish their primary education and only managed to reach Grade 5 and 6 before quitting: *"Ya ku kabegkatadem na taman aku bu sa grade 5 su kinapangagi ku kagina minenda aku sabap sa nalugat aku den sa kabangagi. Kagina ya ku bun gangelay na su mga pakat apeg a tagapeda ku sya na kena bu bamangagi bali mana ya ku nailay na masu ya temu i kabenggalbek. Ya ku tinemu i kapenggalbek kagina para salaki na mas makadtabang pan intu sa laki."* *"I guess I reached grade 5 before I stopped my education because I got tired and no longer feel interested. It was also because there are some of my friends here who dropped their studies and preferred to work, it was one factor that made me believe that it's better to work. I also believed that starting to work is better and could help my living rather than going to school."* The female respondent also

added that: *“Su kinapangagi ku na sya aku bu nataman sa Grade 6.” “I only reached Grade 6 before I stopped my schooling.”* The finding indicates that early marriage is not the main reason why the respondents did not finish or stop from schooling but majority of them stated that the main reasons were poverty, peace in order of the place and personal reason or lack of knowledge on the importance of education in their life. For them schooling is wasting of time, instead they rather want to work in farm and have businesses to help their family. The data supports the opinion of Field and Ambrus (2006), stated that early marriage is still deemed a formidable social norm globally, particularly for girls. Multiple social and physical effects such as lower educational attainment, lower status in their husbands’ families, and adverse social outcomes are associated with early marriage, impacting the young mothers and their offspring’s lives.

When they were asked whether the education that they attained helped them in their day-to-day transactions, the male respondents said that: *“Uway. Ya ku bu madtalu a pakadtabang salaki na su kinagkataw ku sa kabamatya endu kapenggamit sa math anan. Iganat sa kinanggagalbek ku na madtalu ku a benal a nakadtabang i kinagkataw ku samba.”* *“Yes. The only thing I can think is that because of learning math and learning how to read and write, it really helped me on my work.”* While the female respondents have common answers, which says that: *“Kena bun ged.”* *“No. Not really.”* The finding reveals that male respondents agreed that learning in 3Rs such reading, writing and arithmetic helped them a lot in their current work but contradict the female respondents which stated that schooling not really helped in their current work considering that majority of them were plain housewives. The data support the result of the study made by Ahmed (2015), stated that early marriage among the issues that denial of girls’ opportunities to learn and acquire skills in life, separation from their dear ones, and increase of their vulnerability to various health problems.

The researchers also asked them whether they are planning to continue their studies or not, in which majority of the male respondents have said that: *“Di kena den. Kagina matuwa aku den para embalingan pan sa kabangagi. Masu makaya gid i lumudep aku pan sa elementary sa matuwa aku den. Ya ku mangagkaklase na mga wata den langun. Saki bu matwa salekanilan.”* *“No. Because I think it’s already late for me to go back to school. I think it is very embarrassing to go back and continue as an elementary. I will become the eldest among my classmates who are still kids.”* For the female respondents, majority of them admit that early marriage affected their educational career, when they asked if they were planning to go back to school, they responded: *“Kena den kagina gapuk aku den.”* *“No, because I feel lazy on going back to school.”* The result implies that both male and female respondents have no interest and planning to continue their studies considering they have many children, busy in working in the farm, satisfied with their current status in life, already old, no longer interested and busy in taking care of their children. The data supports the finding of Miranda and Cases (2020) stated that early childbearing problems are more prevalent in the region of CARAGA (38%) than the other regions, particularly NCR, CALABARZON, and ARMM (24%). Twenty-seven percent (27%) of young women aged 15-24 in the Philippines have started bearing a child. While twenty-four percent (24%) of these girls have delivered a child, the other 3% are pregnant with their firstborn. According to the Philippine National Statistics Authority, the number of girls who have started giving birth increases, from less than two percent among the aged 15 to 22% of women aged 19 and 59% of those aged 24. Thus, it increases the chances of the adolescent brides to come across various health risks brought by untimely pregnancies before they are considered to be physically and psychologically prepared for the responsibilities that were brought upon by early motherhood and childbirth. Oftentimes,

girls choose to withdraw from school because of the burden of child marriage, pregnancy, and domestic chores.

Effects of Early Marriage in Terms of Economics

Due to the fact that majority of them were unable to finish their studies, they resorted to working at an early age. However, some were not fortunate for being unable to land a stable job that is suitable to sustain their family needs. In terms of their financial status, the researchers have also asked them several questions. For the first part is about their employment and their monthly salary and some of the male respondents said that: "Uway. Samana na penggalbek aku a tabas san sa DPWH Maguindanao. Nakaludep ako san kagina saki i nakasukli kanu bapa ko a san bun penggalbek nuget uged migretire den. Pakagkubla ako sa mga 5000 sawlan." "Yes. I am currently working as tabas in DPWH Maguindanao. I was able to work because I acted as the replacement for my uncle who used to work there before that has retired. My income is around 5000 monthly." "Saki na penggalebek aku sa lupa." "I am a farmer." "Saki na aden negusyu nami a manut." "We have a small business." One respondent answered: "Niya ku galebek na mikaniku na manga bagedan endu ebbamewilding." "I am working as car mechanic and wilder." Other respondents also answered: "Saki na operator na awang." "I am a boat operator," "Saki na pedtiakap sa manga sapi," "I am a cattle guard." Most of them have an average income ranging from 100 to 500 pesos per day. Meanwhile, majority of the female respondents answered that they were sari-sari store owner, working as barangay office worker, working as a house maid/saleslady and plain housewives and their average income ranging from 70 to 250 per day. One respondent replied: "*Dili kagina kalangan ku dili aku pan magaga samaya enggalebek ka amagingay aku pan. Basi kapasangan ako sa galbek amengka itegel ko pan.*" "Not yet because I don't think I'll be able to work especially now that I am still pregnant. I think it will be really difficult for me if I insist to work now."

The above data indicates that majority of the respondents were farmer, construction worker, car mechanic and wilder, boat operator, businessmen and women, barangay worker, house maid and plain housewives. This result support the opinion of Klasen & Pieters (2012), stated that child or early marriage may influence female labor force participation in a number of ways, including through a reduction in expected returns from participation in paid employment due to lower educational attainment and an increase in the relative value of unpaid household work stemming from higher lifetime fertility. A lack of engagement in the labor force may have long-term implications not only for women and their families, but in addition at the aggregate level it may significantly reduce economic growth in communities or societies (Chaaban & Cunningham 2011; Elborgh-Woytek et al. 2013; Smith & Haddad 2015).

The male and female respondents were also asked if their monthly salary could sustain their family needs, their common answers were: "*Uway uged na aden bun antu a manga timpu a malu kami bun gashort kagina bamegkapulu sa mga bamamasan labi labi den su b'gas endu a manga senda. Bali guma kami bun na krisis kagina di tanu ged gaukul su kangangula.*" "Yes, but there are also times where we get short with our money because of the sudden increase on the price of the essential needs such as the rice and fishes. So, we really experience crisis because we can't really predict the events." When they were asked if their partners are helping with their day to day living expenses, the male respondent have stated: "*Uway. Su misis ku na pendadagang sa halo-halo, aden antu na pendagang bun sekanin sa mga seda, mga kamu, kangkong apeg a mga babasal. Bali pakauman namin i mga gagkubla nin sa mga bamamasan nay.*" "Yes. My wife sells halo-halo, there also times where she sells fishes and vegetables such as kangkong and squash. We include the money that she earns to buy our essential needs. While the female respondent added: "Uway.

Sekanin i bamantyalì para salekami kagina penggalbek sekanin sa bapa nin sa kabanginseda.” “Yes. He is the one working for us any he’s working in his uncle’s group of fishermen.” When the male and female respondents asked if their parents are still supporting them financially, they both said “Yes”. As said by the male respondent: “*Kanu nuna bagu kami pan kinawing na bedtabangan kami nilan kagina wata kami pan sa tuba timpu endu dala pan gid pantialan nami. Ugaid saguna pedu den sabap sa aden den pantialan nami.*” “When we were a still newlywed couple, they used to support us because we were still young to make a living for ourselves. Later on, they stopped because we are already earning our income/salary and it is hard for them to support us since we already have our kids. They were also asked if they are planning to find a work or transfer to another, they have quite a different set of responses, as stated by the male respondent: “Dili den sabap penggalbek aku den sa DPWH Maguindanao.” “I am not planning to transfer to another work since I am already working at DPWH Maguindanao.”

The above data means respondents agreed that their partners were helping them but most of the time they experienced shortage of money or resources because of high cost of commodities like rice and fishes. The findings support the study of Grown et al (2005) stated that early marriage limits young women's access to education, which in turn affects employment opportunities and the nature and terms of their employment. Low education is a barrier to entry into formal, paid employment. Secondary and post-secondary education are strongly associated with labor force participation (Cameron, Dowling, & Worswick 2001; Mammen & Paxson 2000), but most girls who marry early do not reach that level. Young married girls whose schooling is cut short also lack the knowledge base and the marketable skills needed for formal work, and are confined to informal or home-based type work, typically characterized by inferior working conditions and lower (or nonexistent) incomes.

As last part of the question in their socioeconomic status, the researchers asked both the respondents whether the early marriage led them to a lower income where they both replied: “Uway.” “Yes.” The male respondent added: “*Madtalu ku a uway kagina sabap mambu sa mapanay gid i kinagkaluma name, dili kami pan gaid mataw embudget sa mga egkapantiali nami a kulta sa mga galbek endu kapendagan.*” “I could say, yes. Since we were still young when we got married, we are still not quite good in terms of budgeting the money that we gain from our salary and income.” The findings reveals that respondents justified that early marriage led to low income among their family. The data support the study conducted by Rufa Cagoco-Guiam cited by Villanueva (2012), which show in the Municipality of T’boli, South Cotabato, the barangays of Lambangan and Lamhaku, which are quite known for their early marriage practice, has shown that 20% of the respondents from Lambangan have incomes ranging from Php 5,000 to 6,000. At the same time, 15.4% of the respondents from Lamhaku generate incomes of more than Php 7,000. Female respondents have said that their families have skipped meals at least 1-2 over the past six months, while most male respondents have skipped five times. This shows that teenage parents still cannot protect their families from harm and violence because of their lack of experience.

Effects of Early Marriage in Terms of Health

The data expresses that majority of the participants who entered early marriage are young adults, because of it, the researchers could not be really sure about their health statuses, so the researchers inquired several questions to the respondents. The researchers asked the male and female respondents if they have any serious or alarming health conditions, the common illnesses they experience and where do they go whenever they feel some common illnesses. They have common answers such as: accident from work, hypertension or high

blood, elbow or leg injury, broken thumb due to work, wilding effect on my eyes, irregular menstruation, and dizziness. One respondent replied: *“Aden antu na bedsakit i ulu ku. Uman pakagedam aku sa masakit na baginem aku bu sa manga bulung endu aden antu bamasa aku bu sa gamut.”* *“There are times where I experience headaches. Whenever I feel sick, I just use some herbs or medicines.”* The male respondent expressed: *“Aden antu timpu a nadisgrasya aku sa galbekan ku kanu kabegtabas. Kagina da ged kailuti su bulu ku sabapan na natimbas ku su lima ko. Sabap sa tuba na napamanay i lima ku. Aden antu na bedsakit i lawas ku sabap den sa lugat sa kapenggalbek kagina aden pan antu a timpu pakapagvertime kami. Uged umengka pakagedam ako sa metuba na baginem aku bu sa mga alaxan.”* *“There was a time while I was working, I was not aware that my bolo wasn’t properly tightened, so when I struck the bushes, I accidentally hit my hand. That incident left me with several stitches on my hand. There are times where I experience body pain and fatigue since we are working overtime sometimes. Whenever I feel those, I just drink some pain reliever.”* The common illnesses they experiences are body pain and fatigue, headache, fever, cold and body pain, teary eyes and back pain. The result indicates that respondents admitted that they also they have any serious or alarming health conditions like accident from work, hypertension or high blood, elbow or leg injury, broken thumb due to work, wilding effect on my eyes, irregular menstruation, and dizziness. The common illnesses they experience are body pain and fatigue, headache, fever, cold and body pain, teary eyes, and back pain and instead of having a check-up or consulting the doctors they buy first aid medicines, rest and stay at home and sometimes they went to Barangay Health Center.

The above findings support the study of Miller et al. (2008) reveals that the children resulted from early marriage have shown to have health impairments, deficiency in good education, asocial character, and tend to fall on the same cycle of marriage as well, since their parents have raised them in the same type of environment. It also confirmed the idea of Nour (2009), stated that a girl's nutritional status can decline if she marries early. This could be linked to poverty within the household, or to traditional gender norms around women's role and place when it comes to meals, resulting in malnutrition. Both the mental and nutritional health effects are largely reflective of the social position young brides typically occupy in their households.

The female respondents also asked whether the birth deliveries were normal or not, majority of them delivered their babies in a normal delivery and there are some who were cesarean. One respondent who was a pregnant replied: *“Dala ku pan makambata kagina magingay aku pan samaya. Ugaid u saki i kaunutan na sia ku tema embata sa barangay health center.”* *“Not yet, because currently I am pregnant with my first child. But, if I have the right to choose, I’ll go to the barangay health center.”* She also expressed the health conditions and the interventions she did to settle those health conditions she felt during her pregnancy: *“Iganat sa kinagkagingay aku na malu aku gapasang bedtulug uman magabi. Kalangan ku na egkabagwan pen i lawas ku. Pabedtabang aku sa mga babu ku sa ngin i mapia penggulan sa mayaba.”* *“Ever since I got pregnant, I find it difficult to sleep at night. I think my body is still adjusting to pregnancy. I am asking and seeking advice from my aunts who have experienced the same. I’m asking them on what is the best thing to do.”* The data implies that pregnant women normally delivered their siblings and did not received proper medical care during and after pregnancy. The finding supports the idea of Xu et al. (2003), stated that child brides are also less likely to receive proper medical care during pregnancy and delivery than those who give birth later. The combination of girls being physically immature and the lack of proper medical care during pregnancy and childbirth puts adolescent mothers at higher risk for complications during gestation and delivery, including prolonged or obstructed labor, fistula and death. Moreover, UNFPA (2013) and

World Health Organization (2014), stated that complications of pregnancy and childbirth are the second leading causes of death among adolescent girls ages 15–19 globally, with nearly 70,000 dying each year.

The researchers asked the respondents if their growth has been hampered by early marriage, they responded “Uway.” “Yes.” One female respondent added: “*Uway. Kagina apya saki katawan ku bun sa ginawa ku a wata aku pan ged. Ugaid na bangelayan ku bun sa ukit para dili aku gid kapasangan.*” “*Yes, because I know to myself that I was not really ready for this either but I’m trying my best to cope up.*” When they were asked, if what are the common causes of stress and difficulties that they have experienced in their married life and how do they resolve it. The common answers are financial problem, sometimes financial shortage, misunderstanding of my wife, sometimes quarrel over simple things, taking care of children and stress due to work and health condition. They resolve such difficulties by just waiting it to pass, patience, working overtime and borrowing money, asking financial support from children abroad, asking help from my parents and relatives, saving a part of our income, looking for another sideline, praying is another way of getting out from difficulties and resolve misunderstanding peacefully or stay away from home. One male respondent answered: “*Kabegkalugat bu sabap sa kapenggalbek. Aden antu na bagukag kami kani Misis. Kalangan ku na dili den a benal inan eggawa sae gkalumaya. Pembityalan nami ngin i napunan na prublema taman sa magayun kami den sa telenan den i kabagukag kagina dala bun mapya makuwa sa kabagukag.*” “*Aside from tiredness due to work, sometimes we have a misunderstanding with my wife and I guess it is really inevitable in a married life. We talk about it and eventually resolve it because we both believe that quarrelling wouldn’t bring us anywhere.*” One female participant also added: “*Aden manga timpu dala ged kulta nami. Gabatalu kami subla a kakrisis kagina dala gid ebludep a kulta. Aden pan antu na mangagan aku ged galugat uged na ibendegka ku bu.*” “*There are times where we really don’t have any money. We are getting challenged by financial crisis. There are also times where I easily get tried, but the only way for me to relieve it is to just take rest.*”

The above finding implies that respondents admitted that their growth has been hampered by early marriage. They also justified that they faced difficulties in their married life like financial problem, sometimes financial shortage, misunderstanding of my wife, sometimes quarrel over simple things, taking care of children and stress due to work and health condition. They resolve such difficulties by just waiting it to pass, patience, working overtime and borrowing money, asking financial support from children abroad, asking help from my parents and relatives, saving a part of our income, looking for another sideline, praying is another way of getting out from difficulties and resolve misunderstanding peacefully or stay away from home. These findings support the studies made by United Nations Population Fund (2019), revealed that one out of six (16.5%) young women aged 20-24 have already married before reaching 18. Although several boys are affected by the issue, its impact on the girls is more significant in comparison, leading to decreased employment opportunities, poorer health, and increased risk of abuse and violence. In addition, as shown by the analysis of the Commission on Population and Development (POPCOM) of Region XII (UNPF, 2020), early marriage originated and is the outcome of a never-ending cycle of poverty.

CONCLUSION

Based on the findings of the study, the researcher concluded the following:

First, the respondents were young adult, the male respondents were 17 years old while female respondents were 16 years old got into early marriage, their years of marriage is 6.5 years for male and 7.7 years for female, the average number of children is 2 to 3. Majority

of respondents were in primary level, elementary graduates and high level and have very low income.

Second, early marriage is being practiced in accordance with the Shari'ah Law, complying with the essential requisites of marriage in Presidential Decree 1083 or PD 1083 since the respondents sexually potent or in period of *baligh* (mature) and has reached puberty stage, that the minimum criteria in Islam for those entering into marriage is that they should not only have reached puberty but have the comprehensive maturity to understand their rights and responsibilities in marriage and be able to fulfill them. It is also concluded that Islamic justification for marriage is informed by various injunctions from the Qur'an and Ahadith (traditions) of Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) based on his practical life experiences. The groom and bride should not be forced to get into marriage, not closely-related to each other and they like each other before they got married. There are disagreements that happened before the wedding but easily resolve and facilitated. Before the wedding ceremony the transaction between offer (*ijab*) and acceptance (*qabul*) duly witnessed by two competent persons after the guardian in marriage (*wali*) has given his/her consent. There was given before the wedding and the female respondents satisfied with the amount of the "mahr". It also concluded that early marriage is not the mean reasons why couple stop from schooling which the mean reasons were poverty, peace in order of the place and personal reason or lack of knowledge on the importance of education, personal perception on schooling and early marriage also lead to low income.

Third, some serious or alarming health conditions experienced in early marriage were accident from work, hypertension or high blood, elbow or leg injury, broken thumb due to work, wilding effect on my eyes, irregular menstruation and dizziness. Meanwhile, the common illnesses the experience are body pain and fatigue, headache, fever, cold and body pain, teary eyes and back pain. In addition, instead of having a check-up or consulting to doctors, early marriage persons buy first aid medicines, rest and stay at home and sometimes they went to Barangay Health Center as way of medication.

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