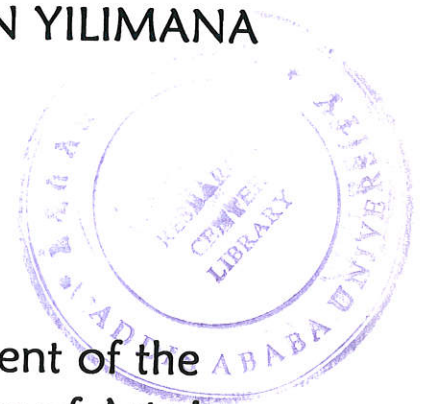


ADDIS ABABA UNIVERSITY
DEPARTMENT OF PSYCHOLOGY
SCHOOL OF GRADUATE STUDIES

THE PSYCHOLOGICAL EXPERIENCES OF EARLY
MARRIED GIRLS AMONG SELECTED CASES IN
MOSEBO PEASANT ASSOCIATION IN YILIMANA
DENSA WOREDA



A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of the
requirements for the degree of Master of Arts in
developmental psychology

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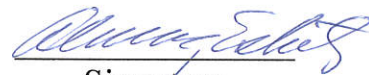
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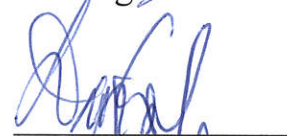
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ABSTRACT

Many researches have been done to determine the economic, social and legal aspect of early marriage. However, the psychosocial impact of this issue seems to be a neglected aspect.

This study is therefore carried out in an attempt to explore the existing psychological impact early marriage is causing on female adolescents' self-view and life-view and how it exposes them to stressful life events. It is assumed to disclose the female adolescents' view towards themselves as a mother and its negative implication for their psychological growth. The study took place in 'Mosebo' Peasant Association of 'Yilimana Densa Woreda' in West Gojam.

Initially, an attempt was made to describe the main sources of stress and how it hurts their self view, life view and self esteem on the adolescents' psychological functioning.

Accordingly, early childhood marriage, frightening sexual experience, leaving parents at tender age, household responsibility, and getting pregnant are identified as the major traumatic factors they pass through. To achieve the objectives, 6 female girls through convenient sampling have been chosen. Qualitative method was employed to collect the respondents view. Moreover, those stressors are categorized under three themes:- before marriage, during wedding and after wedding.

Finally, their stress by itself needs future research and the impact it may hold on the cognitive development of their children is recommended. Further, the results are presented with possible explanations. At last, conclusions and suggestions are made in the light of the finding.

CHAPTER ONE

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1. Background

General information

The Amhara Region is the second largest region in the country, covering 15% of the country. It has 144 Woredas, out of which 48.5% are located in drought-prone areas. The total population is approximately 18 million, with a growth rate of 2.86% out of which 52% are aged 15-64, 44% are below 15 years old and 4%, above 64 years. 89% of the population lives in the rural area. Health coverage is 42.3% and access to potable water is 23% in the rural areas and 90% in the urban areas, Amhara Regional Education Bureau (2004).

Location, weather, and economic activities of the people

West Gojam is found within Amhara regional state. “Mosebo” is one of the peasant associations found in this region. It is found within Yilimana Densa Woreda and is located 45 kilometers east of Bahirdar. It is a very fertile area and has a warm climate with two rainy seasons, ‘Belg’ (Autumn- in March and April) and ‘Kiremt’ (Winter – between June and September). The major means of income are farming and herding. Sometime other than farming they engage in selling crops especially sorghum to Bahirdar. The types of crops usually produced are sorghum, ‘teff’ and maize where the first two are major ones.

Wealth classification

Among the society wealth classification exists solely based on the number of oxen and land one has. These classifications were made by the society which had been stated by the informal key informant and the interviewees are very rich, rich, middle, and poor. The following table shows these classifications which can be categorized in three ways: High Class, Middle Class, and Low Class.

General classification	The People's classification	Measurement
High Class	Very Rich person	More than 3 oxen and land
	Rich Person	2 oxen and land
Middle Class	Middle income Person	1 oxen and land
Low Class	Poor Person	no oxen with or without land

Religions, beliefs, and conflict resolution

Yilimana Densa has a heterogeneous composition regarding religion. It is mainly composed of Orthodox and Muslim religions although the number of Muslims is much lower than the Orthodoxies. Among the society they have a belief that if two unmarried persons make love i.e. out of wedlock it is assumed that the couple gets cursed. It is believed that in one way or another they will die of the curse or they will live with it for there is no cure for it.

The other is, the 'shimagiles' or. elderly men are gathered if any conflict resolution is raised between two parties. What they usually do is that 3 selected elderly men lead the conflict resolution process to give judgment on the guilty party. Then the 'shimagiles' decide how

and when the guilty person should payback to the innocent. If he refuses to do what these men tell him he will be taken to the police and all the information will be given to them.

Get together ceremony

The Yilimana people have a get together program which they always do it exactly on Sunday every 4 weeks. They drink 'Tela' and eat 'Injera' on that day and also chat and discuss on many issues. The orthodoxies don't work on Saturday, Sunday and other holidays they commemorate.

Marriage

The Mosebo people practice a marriage which is done without the consent of the two couples. The parents decide who would marry their son or daughter. In most cases it is the role of the father. In the preparation of the marriage ceremony both families of the couple prepare 'Tela' and 'Injera' where 'Areqe' and cattle may also become part of the festive items if they can afford. Then the groom's parents send their son with 10 to 15 men who are of the groom's family, to the bride's parent's home to bring his bride to his family. When they reach at the bride's house they eat and drink what has been prepared for them and then they return to the groom's family where they spend the night. There after, for one week, the 15 men with the husband stay day and night with the bride. This is believed that it will protect the married couple from evil sprit. During the wedding week, whenever the wife goes out for the toilet the husband and some of his friends need to go with her. This is also believed to protect her from evil sprit. The next day, the bride's family again invites the newly wed couple and the groom's best men. But this time the best men have to be as few as

3 or 4. No family member of the groom goes with the newly weds to the invitation. Then after a month, both families of the newly wed couple make another celebration which is called "Kilito." It is at this ceremony that the two families eat together and the neighbors and relatives bring gifts to the families.

Practices regarding death

During death of a family member it is common to mourn for 40 days. Whether it is female or male who died, at the end of the 40 days a sheep is slaughtered and the blood is splashed on the grave which is taken as a cleansing process. Then the women take the slaughtered sheep to prepare a meal and give it to the Orthodox priest.

Levine (Cited in David, 1967) "In Amhara culture, adolescence scarcely exists as a concept, let alone as a problem, while there are Amharic words which signify "young person" there is no word in Amharic that specifically devotes a transitional stage between childhood and adulthood." pp 9,74

Adolescence is a transitional period where the child is passing to adulthood but is not yet an adult. It is the age when the individual becomes integrated into the society of adults. Kimmel and Wiener (1995) defined as a transitional period that serves as a link between one relatively stable point in life to another relatively stable but different point.

Adolescent development, however, is not simply a matter of physical change; more importantly it is a matter of intellectual, emotional and cultural development. It may be said

also that adolescence itself is in part at least a function of a particular culture, Alexander (1951).

Adolescents, just like other stages of life, pass through their own cultural systems. It is difficult to consider all parts of cultures' contribution for the well being of adolescents. Based on customs in Ethiopia early marriage is found in many ethnic groups, where girls are given away as early as seven years of age even though child bearing may not commence until 13-15 years.

Such practices lead to vesico-vaginal fistula which is a common occurrence after prolonged and obstructed labor. Early marriage is a violation of psychological rights, compromising the development of girls and often resulting in early pregnancy and local isolation. Young married girls face domestic burdens, constrained decision-making and reduced life choices.

1.2. Statement of the problem

An earlier study that has been done in Bahirdar shows early marriage is a kind of marriage by which a girl is given at the age of 7 and 8 for marriage. (Amhara Woman's Lawyer Association 1999) Childhood marriage and early child birth have very negative effects on the psychological, physical and social well being of young girls. The report further explains that traditional harmful practice leads to psycho-social problems. These problems are stated as feelings of shame and shunning friends as a result of these practices, Inter Africa Committee Regional Report (1987).

With this in mind the study tries to answer the following main research questions

1. What experiences do early married girls have before marriage affecting their later life?
2. What experiences do early married girls face during the wedding affecting their later life?
3. What experiences do early married girls face after marriage affecting their later life?
4. What are the possible psychosocial impacts associated with experiences of early married girls before, during and after wedding?

1.3. Objectives

1. To assess the experience of girls before marriage, during, and after wedding
2. To assess the psychosocial effects of marital experiences: possible stressors that occur as a result of early marriage and its implication on the self-esteem development of adolescent girls.

1.4. Operational Definition

Psychosocial: - refers to their relationship with parents, husband, mother-in-law, and friends. It also refers to how they view their life in terms of their education, future plan and feelings towards themselves i.e. whether they are proud of who they are and what they have accomplished so far.

Stress: - is the emotional state of early adolescent that put girls in disturbing situation due to adversities in their life.

Early marriage: - Based on the Universal Declaration of Human Right, National Committee on Traditional Practices of Ethiopia, and the new Ethiopian Family Code, marriage need to be done at full age of 18. In light of the above age restrictions for marriage, early marriage is taken by the

researcher from conception onward until they reach their full capacity to be independent that is at age 18.

Experiences before marriage- three issues are found that early married girls experience before marriage. These are marriage out of consent, hindrance from attending school and leaving parents at childhood.

Experiences during wedding: - refers to incidents during the wedding ceremony i.e. spending day and night for a week in a room full of men, and the sudden awareness of the death of the mother-in-law (this applies only for case 1, 4 and 6).

Experiences after wedding:- refers to sexual initiation, household responsibility, pregnancy and child birth, beginning of new home, living with the mother-in-law and relationship with the husband are some of the factors that are taken as causes of stress to the married girls after the wedding life.

1.5. Significance

The study is important in that it contributes valuable information for a better understanding of the psychosocial impacts of early marriage on female adolescents which can aid in the design and implementation of effective prevention programs.

1.6. Delimitation

The study focuses on early female adolescents who got married at young age and who lives in Amhara region in “Mosebo” Peasant’s Association in “Yilimana Densa Woreda.” This will make it difficult for generalization. Besides this, the study covers only certain psychosocial variables which are assumed to be related to early marriage’s effect.

1.7. Limitations

The full results in this case were obtained in one month including the time taken for the pilot study. However, if there was more budget and time it would have been possible to explore the research in detail and in a better manner.

CHAPTER TWO

2. REVIEW OF THE RELATED LITERATURE

In most Africa traditional societies, a child grows straight to adulthood rather than giving the landmarks being adolescent. As NCTPE (1998) pointed out, girls are wedded as early as 7-8 years of age and commonly given to the husbands at an early age where they are physically and psychologically not yet fit to conceive. In many instances, however, girls aged 12-15 years old are confronted with their first pregnancy and related maternal problems. Hence adolescence, it has been said, begins in biology and ends in cultures.

As one study done in Ethiopia shows, 137 Addis Ababa University students from different ethnicity were taken out of which 85% of these respondents stated that adults expected different standard of behavior from adolescents than they lived by themselves. In addition to this, 72% of them believed that they had often been treated as children when they should have been treated as adults. (David 1967).

2.1. Harmful Traditional Practice

Ethiopia is known to have long rooted history of diversified cultural and traditional practices. These social traditions that are an integral part of cultures are very helpful for adolescents, and such traditions deserve support to keep them from dying out. As there are many rich and dignified Ethiopian traditional customs, there are some unnecessary and seriously harmful

cultural practices. Among the harmful practices those that affect the health and psychological well being of young girls are circumcision, early marriage, tattooing and abduction.

2.1.1. Early Marriage

One of the traditional practices that have radical effects on the psychosocial aspect of females in Ethiopia is early marriage. According to (NCTPE 1998), “..parent-centered marriage arrangement made between two families of different lineage and without the knowledge and approval of the couple concerned.”

Early marriage is one of the harmful traditional practices imposed upon women in Ethiopia. Although Ethiopia is not the only country where such practices are common, it is however widely prevalent among the peasant communities of Christian dominated and crop producing highlands of central and northern parts of Ethiopia (Hillina, 1994).

Pankhurst as cited in (NCTPE, 2003), has stated that in the Amhara culture, marriage is most often perceived in economic terms and consent for marriage is not taken into consideration since those who get married usually do not know each other.

According to a baseline study by NCTPE (1998),

Early marriage is practiced to a large degree over 60% as reported by the sample population, in Amhara 82%, Tigray 79%, Benishangul/Gumuz 64%......Over 50% of girls were married under the age of 15 in Amahra 62%, Tigray 53%, and Benishagnul /Gumuz 50%.

An assessment study by the Amhara Woman Lawyers Association (1999) which involved 967 interviewees, 91.1% females have confirmed that a girl does not have the right to decide when and whom to marry. On the other hand, few of them (2.9%) have said that a girl can choose whom to marry. Besides this, the participants explained some of the reasons why a girl can't choose the husband she marries. 716 (74%) of them said that a girl is expected to fulfill her parents will. Moreover, out of these 74% 369 of them said it is a taboo for a girl to choose her husband. The rest 26% believe that a girl is not capable enough to think for herself, as a result it should be taken care by her parents.

Survey report of 10 regional states of the country including 57 zones 109 Woredas and 22 urban centers indicated that...

.... even if many opinion makers believe that there is a trend in the decline of some harmful traditional practices, particularly, early marriage and marriage by abduction, ... a good proportion of the general population still adheres to these age old traditions (NCTPE 2003).

As African center for women (1997) stated, a girl who gets married at early age may suffer from reduced self-identity and opportunities for receiving education or learning skills. Moreover according to (About, 1991), marriage during puberty is believed to ensure early fertility of the married couple and social isolation for the girl.

On the other hand, from the parents' point of view specifically, and from the community's in general early marriage is strongly supported and accepted since they assume it protects them

from many social incompetence. Reasons for parents to encourage early childhood marriage stated by (Amhara Woman Lawyers Association, 1999) are fear of pregnancy out of wedlock, unable to get daughters being virgin, running away to town, and inability to bear a child and get a husband if she stays for long.

Annable , Tekle, Negussie & Tsehai (2004) pointed out, boys appear to have more friends than girls, with boys reporting a mean number of 2.2 friends compared to girls' 1.9. Further, married and divorced girls had far fewer friends than their unmarried counterparts (mean 2 friends for unmarried girls and 1.6 friends for ever married girls). Most of the young people's closest friends were, in fact, family members (58 percent of boys and 61 percent of girls) with many adolescents naming aunts and uncles or other relatives as their closest friend.

As the above finding indicates, boys seem to have larger social networks and support within their communities. Significantly more boys reported having many friends, having a place in the area where they meet their friends. Adolescents are relatively isolated, have few friends, and have limited exposure to the outside world. This is especially true for girls and especially, married adolescent girls. (Annable *et.al* 2004).

Braungart (1998) explains that, at certain point, adolescents seek their friends' advice rather than their parents', on how to do things. Conformity to peers is higher during early & middle adolescence than during pre adolescence or late adolescence. As (Santrock, 1999) conformity to peer pressure during adolescence can be positive or negative. A great deal of peer conformity is not negative and consists of the wish to be involved in the peer world.

2.2. Early Pregnancy

According to Nancy, (1992) sexual maturation provides the biological basis for different developmental tasks such as preparation for marriage during early adolescence. Although sexual maturation usually takes place in early adolescence, most individuals do not achieve a fusing of genuine intimacy with sexual feelings until late adolescence or early adulthood. Thus girls who marry and conceive before their 16th birthday are not yet fully prepared for the demands of the childbearing period as well as taking responsibility to run a house.

Having reached puberty does not mean that the girl's body is in optimal condition developmentally to bear a child. Unfortunately by forcing female adolescents into early marriage, an already troublesome phase has become more complicated for many.

According to Taore (2005), an activist for women's right, early marriage deprives young girls of their adolescence. It forces them in to sexual relations and denies their freedom, and this has psychosocial and emotional consequences.

The junction of physical maturation with changing personal and social expectations confronts adolescents with new developmental tasks. Preparing for marriage and family life is one of the tasks. It is a stage of preparation than a stage of readiness to get married and start an independent life. This is true for adolescents in different cultures since their biological development is something universal.

NCTPE (2003) explained that, many girls in Amhara, become pregnant before they see their first menstrual blood. Many of these pregnancies end in miscarriages, mostly because of the

immaturity of the girl and her precarious nutritional status. Most of these girls have not yet completed their own growth and, therefore, not ready to pass nutrition for fetus. Normally, a girl who has her first menarche could expect additional 4-5 percent growth. Her pelvic girdle could continue to grow by 12-18 percent but this growth could be compromised by early pregnancy. Girls less than 15 years old are at 5-7 times greater risk of dying during pregnancy and delivery than those with in the range of 20-24. The child, if born alive, is often under- weight.

Psychological adjustment to pubertal change is dependent on the ways in which the social world attaches meaning and significance to particular physical changes. In like manner, “the norms and expectations of the social world are implicated in girls’ adjustment to other normative transitions of adolescence such as changing social roles and sexual status.” (Katz cited in Max, 1993)

2.3. Sexual Initiation

NCTPE (2003), sexuality is as in most societies, a taboo subject. There are very few and usually superficial studies on sexuality in Ethiopia which is mostly associated with HIV and sexually transmitted infections. There is a limited dialogue of sexuality between parents and children even in this time where HIV/AIDS is prevalent. Parent-child relationships in most of Ethiopia are formal and authoritarian and not likely to participate in discussion even of the most inoffensive subjects, talk much and ask too many questions. They are expected to be obedient and their opinions are rarely sought or not considered.

Girls who live in rural parents of the country face a sexual initiation that is totally out of their will and the act occurs accompanied with a forceful demand. Based on large-scale survey conducted by Annable *et.al* (2004) reported that

over 1, 800 young people aged 10 to 19 in rural Amhara Region sexual Initiation was often early, unwanted and forced. Among ever married girls, Eighty-two percent did not want to have sex when forced against their will to have sex.

The survey further explains from the population council indicates that, from sample taken 28% had married before age 10, 33% had married between the aged 13 to 15, and 12% are married after age 15.” ‘Within the relationship, most girls (85 percents) report that they are not able to refuse their husbands sex.

For 98 percent of girls in rural Amhara, sexual initiation occurred within marriage. Only 2 percent sexually experienced girls had sex pre-martially while many girls marry and move to their in-laws’ or husbands’ home although the marriage may not be consummated immediately. Fourteen percent of currently married girls have not had sex, with most of these being the youngest married girls. At the same time, sexual initiation among married girls is very early. Eight percent of married girls have had sex by age 10, 26 percent had sex by age 12, and 70 percent had sex by age 15. the majority of girls (69 percent)had not started menstruating when they had sex for the first time

As Brouce (1996) stated, communication about sex is often hampered when a couple is locked into stereotypic gender roles. Sexual interactions can be a source of frustration, disappointment, and anger in a relationship, but they can also be a source of happiness and great joy. A satisfying sexual relationship is a crucial ingredient in a healthy intimate relationship, let alone within a forceful marriage.

The health hazards of early sex include sexual trauma, increased incidence of cervical cancer, sexually transmitted diseases and teenage pregnancy. Varieties of injuries are possible and do happen when sex organs are not ready for sex in terms of full maturation. Some of these injuries have a long lasting effect. Cervical cancer has been thought to be related to sex at an early age and with multiple partners (Bruce and Carlo, 2000).

As Cohen, Lazarus and Kimble (as cited in Morgan,2003) have suggested, successful coping mechanisms are seeking information about how to deal with that specific problem and what other alternatives are available to reduce stressor impact. He further advises not to be impulsive to resolve the situation but to use thinking or ones cognition.

2.4. Exposure to workload

Stressors are stimuli that cause stress. These include all physical, environmental and social causes. Life change, pressure, frustration, and conflict of motives are types of stressors. (Morgan 2003) indicated that pressure occurs when one involves under expectations or demands to behave in a certain way. Pressure can be seen into subtypes, when a person is under pressure to perform and when expected to execute tasks and responsibilities quickly,

efficiently, and successfully. In addition, pressures to other's expectations are also common in our lives.

According to Santrock (1999), the contemporary life-events approach emphasizes that, "how life events influence the individual's development depends not only on the life event, but also on mediating factors (physical health, family supports, etc), and the individuals adaptation to the life event,."pp469

According to Grotevant & Cooper (1986) all adolescents face some transitions in common: puberty, a reordering of their social world and others. Having time to gradually get used to one change before having to cope up with another makes it easier to adjust to such transitions. The more changes adolescents must cope with simultaneously, the more likely they are to show the effects of related stress. Moreover, (Laurence, 1993) explains, working more than twenty hours a week may jeopardize, adolescent schooling and psychological well-being. Besides this free time plays an important role in helping young people develop a sense of themselves explore their relationships with each other, and learn about the society around them.

Simmons and Blyth (1987) defined that, self-esteem is the adolescents overall positive or negative evaluation of herself or himself. (Martinez, 1987) Primarily, relationships with parents provide the foundation for self-esteem. When parents love, children feel lovable and develop feelings of self-worth. These feelings become established early in infancy. This way they quickly learn whether the world in which they live will meet their needs; when those

around them are responsive, they develop a sense of trust. The establishment of trust in these first basic relationships permeates all later ones. Self-esteem among adolescents still reflects their interactions with parents

Adolescents' observations about themselves begin with specific events. Their ability to relate isolated events in terms of more general principle allows them to pull different experiences tighter into general assumptions about themselves. As (Nancy, 2000) stated, adolescents' self-esteem is a measure of how good one feels about set of beliefs that develops with in specific events.

In a longitudinal study of changes in self-esteem during the early adolescent years, sociologist (Simmon, 1979) found that, going through puberty may lead to modest declines in self-esteem among adolescent girls but only when accompanied by other changes that require adaptation on the part of the young person. The study further revealed that puberty may be a potential stressor that has temporary adverse psychological consequences for girls, but only when it is coupled with other changes that necessitate adjustment. By itself, however, puberty appears to have only modest effects on girls' and boy's' self-image. (Bolgonini, cited in Nancy, 2000) said, adolescents with authoritative parents, who stress self-reliance, shade decision making, and willingness to listen, have higher feeling of self-worth.

From Erickson's psychosocial stage of development point of view adolescence is the period of identity versus role confusion that implies potentialities of development towards the positive & negative directions depending on the nature of psychosocial factors in the social

environment. If they are trained to achieve their role this will develop their role where as if they get mistreated identity achievement will be difficult. Adolescents become disturbed and confused by new social conflicts establishing a new sense of age identity a feeling of who one is and ones place in the larger social order. (Erikson cited in William, 2000)

There are many psychological, social, cultural, and economical structures and pressures early marriage could cause on young females. The community in which these females live pushes them to get through different activities that require maturity as well as strength. Taking responsibility at early age can hinder the adolescent from developing confidence since there is no much help for mistakes they make but criticism.

2.5. Legal Age of Marriage

In Ethiopia, the legal age for marriage had been 15 years for girls, the family law of the civil code, customary, religious and pension law have articles which are discriminatory to women. The law had set minimum age of marriage for the girl to be 15 and for the man to be 18. The civil code in the rights and obligation of marriage discriminates against women. Articles a635 and 637 in civil code states that the husband is the head of the family and the wife is his

obedient, he has the right and obligation of guiding the normal and material position of the family and protects his wife and guides her conduct. But now this has been raised to 18 years. Thus currently, early marriage is marriage before majority, i.e. 18 years. According to the revised family code article 6 and 7

Art 6 “a valid marriage shall take place only when the spouses have given their free and full consent.” Art 7 says “Neither a man or a woman who has not attained the full age of eighteen years shall conclude marriage”

2.6. Theoretical background

2.6.1. Attachment theory

Attachment theory is relevant to this study because it offers a way of understanding human needs for connection with others. The attachment theory of love emphasizes that a primary motivation in life is to be connected with other people because it is the only security a person ever have.

As David and Caroline (2002) stated, maintaining closeness is a link and survival need. Marriage is a system of binding a man and a woman together for the reproduction care physical, emotional, and socialization of off spring .As adults, we seek close physical proximity to a partner and rely on their continuing affections and availability, because it is a survival of need. What satisfied the need in the young: eye contact, touching, stroking and holding a partner deliver the same security and comfort (pp 9, 74).

Those adolescent who leaves home at early age through marriage will tend to miss the time they can learn social competence from parents. As (Santrock, 1999) stated, Adolescents who

have secure relationships with their parents have higher self-esteem and better emotional well-being. (Allen and Kupperman cited in Santrock, 1999) they explained, attachment to parents in adolescence may facilitate the adolescent's social competence and well being, as reflected in such characteristics as self esteem, emotional adjustment, physical health, and positive peer relations.

Gilligan and Chodorow (cited in Santrock, 1999) stated that, females are highly concerned about their relationship than boys through out their life span, specifically since their adolescence. Based on Gilligan experiment ones she has tried to conduct an experiment on female and male adolescent while they are playing. She has found out that the boys play was been governed by rule of the play there for, as far as the rule is there they keep on playing together. On the other hand the girls play was not tied up by the rules of the play rather, by their good relationship. Ones conflict arises among them they were not interested to keep on playing together.

According to David and Caroline (2002), self esteem suggested in such a way that high self esteem is important for developing healthy love relationship because it enables an individual to feel worthy of being loved. Feeling good about one allow to believe that others are capable of loving. According to them self esteem provides benefits in making one to be open and honest with others, about both strengths and weaknesses, to feel generally equal to others, to take responsibility for ones own feelings, ideas, mistakes and failings. Generally such love relations allows separateness and independence, as opposed to union and dependence.

According to Stanley and Markman (cited in David and Caroline, 2002) the social, psychological and physiological and cognitive conditions are not the only factors important for the development of love feelings. The time must also be right. Many love pairings exist because each of the individuals is available to other at the right time. They further explained concerning the strongest prediction of getting divorced is getting married as an adolescent. Individuals who marry in their early adolescence have three times the divorce rate of those marrying in their 20's.

2.6.2. Ecological theory

This theory emphasizes the influence of multiple systems on a person's behavior in determining the behavior of the individual. Some of these systems are the microsystem, and macrosystem. It is in the microsystem that the most direct interactions with social agents take place with parents, peers, and neighborhood. In the general term as well the macrosystem involves the culture in which individuals live that encompasses the pattern of behavior, beliefs, and all other products of a group. As Bronfenbrenner (cited in Nancy, 2000).The specific culture, values, beliefs, attitudes, etc may positively or negatively affect the behavior of adolescents.

Unfortunately, by withholding the right to decide when and whom to marry, an already troublesome phase has become more complicated. Further, there are added stressors due to the culture and misconceptions that abound around early marriage. Here I would like to note that I am not going to deal with all stressors linked with early marriage but my focus will be on some psychosocial variable such as refers to self-view, view about life, and self-esteem of girls in relation to their psychosocial experiences that can potentially put them in to stressful life events.

CHAPTER THREE

3. METHOD

3.1. Method and Procedures

The major objective of the study is to investigate the psychosocial effects of early marriage on early female adolescent. Hence, in order to explore deeply how such incidences could affect the psychosocial functioning of the girls, qualitative research approach is considered to be appropriate. As Gall (1995) stated about case study, 'this approach helps the researcher to gain insights into what would otherwise be an amorphous event or phenomenon. It permits an in-depth search for meanings and reasons.....it also generates a large amount of information for further study.

Selection of participants was done through purposive method since it was difficult to get participants easily. It was difficult to convince husbands to send their wives for interview. Because of this reason the data gathering took place through purposive method. Based on this, the selection of participants has been applied in the following manner.

- First the site was selected with the help of Population Council Office located in Addis Ababa. The office offered a contact person who lives in the village. There was no transportation to the site which forced the researcher to walk long distances since the village is remotely placed between cities called Bahirdar and the town Adet.
- Selection of the participants was made by going door to door to get a willing participant for the study. The willingness of the married girls depended on decision of husband since they were doubtful of the researcher's motive. But this was fairly resolved since they were in good terms with the contact person. Six interviewees were successfully selected out of 16 attempts.
- Interview sessions were scheduled and place of interview was set after the selection of the participants. In fear that the husband will grow suspicions of the repeated visits of the researcher the interview was conducted in a near by school that is owned by Population Council Office.
- The participants had difficulty to understand questions that require expressing the feelings they have towards a certain issue and therefore questions had to be explained repeatedly. As a result it was understood that they don't get the chance to express their feelings towards certain issues.

3.2. Participants of the study

The selection of the respondents took place in Mosebo Peasant's Association in Yilimana Densa Woreda. The estimated population of these areas was 30,000. Informed consent was obtained from all the participants before the actual implementation of the data collection procedure. The participants were given an appropriate explanation about the objective of the research, explanation was made concerning confidentiality of the information they give and at last, their preferences and best interest were considered with regard to the place they chose to be interviewed.

Nancy (2000) mentioned, adolescents take time to develop trust and to be willing to share personal experiences. In light of this the present researcher had tried to create rapport with the adolescents taking different sessions.

The participants of this study were 6 early female adolescents who are married at tender age. The participants age estimation was confirmed by the population council office found in the village. For the purpose of confidentiality of participants who participated in this study, only an identification number (as Case One etc.) was used; the names of the participants were withheld.

Table 1: Illustrates the background of the participants briefly.

Case	Current age	Educational Background	Parents	Education of parents	Family Status	Number of years in marriage	Age for first birth	Number of children
1	15	Illiterate	Both alive	Illiterate	Middle class	2	14	1
2	15	Grade 3	Both alive	Illiterate	Middle class	1	14	2
3	15	Grade 4	Both alive	Illiterate	Middle class	2	-	none
4	14	Illiterate	Both alive	Illiterate	Middle class	1	-	none
5	15	Grade 3	Both alive	Illiterate	Middle class	3	14	1
6	15	Illiterate	Dead	-----	Low class	1	15	2 (twins)

Out of the 6 respondents 2 of them were school drop outs where as the rest never had a chance to join school. Except one who was from very poor family all members of the participants are from middle class categories as defined earlier (p.4). There are some factors that were taken in to consideration while selecting the participants of the study.

- The participant's age was to be between 13 and 18, since this implies the ideal age that has been stated earlier for early married girls.
- All participants were to be married but not divorced.

Based on the above-mentioned requirements the selection process was undertaken and few who fit to these categories were chosen.

3.3. Tools

In order to collect the data in-depth interview was used. To develop a 'structure' for conducting the interviews, a set of questions, (interview guide) was prepared with the help of pre-study interviews with 2 married girls who were living in the same area. These 2 participants were other than those who participated in the final study. Both are married with out their consent at age 11 and 13. The researcher met them with their current age of 14 and 15.

The interview guide consists of 47 questions under different titles. (Appendix II) The first section of the interview-guide had 9 questions related to the background characteristics of the interviewees. The other section of the interview-guide was prepared under three themes with specific related questions under each theme. The themes were before marriage, during

wedding and after wedding. Concerning the time taken with each interviewee, an hour was employed with each session for three consecutive weeks. At the beginning of the interview the research was done within the households of the interviewee where as after three days of data collection it was decided to conduct in a near by school that is owned by Population Council Office.

3.4. Procedure of Data Collection

The research was made in two stages- pre-study and main study. The data collected through in-depth interview were tape-recorded and hence it was transcribed after repeated listening. Finally, the general guideline that was prepared for the possible stressors and the questions generated from the pre-study was conducted with the following objectives.

- To make certain whether or not the relevant lines of questions are held appropriately in addressing the possible life threaten experiences they pass through.
- To make certain the appropriateness of data collection instrument.

CHAPTER FOUR

4. CASE PRESENTATION AND DISCUSSIONS

This chapter encompasses the presentation and discussion of the participants out look under three different but interdependent themes under before the wedding, during the wedding and after the wedding categories. To make the report readers familiar, each out look of the participant is presented briefly followed by its discussion. The point of view of the narration is made using first person singular with the intention of bringing the cases alive to the readers. The effects of early marriage on the early female adolescents were analyzed using the research questions as leads.

4.1. Before Marriage

Early marriage is a norm that separate life of children from their parents at a tender age in rural 'Mosebo'. It is a sharp transition and unfortunate incident of their life. Before the beginning of marriage they face three stressors: - marriage out of consent, hindrance from attending school and leaving parent at young age. According to the data gathered through interview all the participants had expressed their traumatic experience towards leaving their family for the first time such as at early age.

4.1.1. Leaving their family

The section focuses on the way the girls felt about leaving their parents. Based on the questionnaire the interviewees had shared their feelings.

" I felt so sad since they suddenly decided to give me away as simple as that, I started to think what it would be like to live with strange people I felt like getting lost. I still blame them for not teaching me. I used to hear the same thing happening to the village girls but I never thought it would happen to me that fast." (Case One age15)

Case Two has also put her bitter compliant saying,

"I was afraid fear of leaving my home. I still needed the love and care of my parents, I was just a 'gubil '(to say she was not old enough to leave parent). (Case Two age 15).

Case Five and Three also shares the same feeling. They expressed it as follows.

"It is very much frightening to be given away at an early age. At the moment, my school teachers tried to convince my parents but my parents gave them their deaf ears." (Case Five age 14)

"I was 13 when my parents gave me away. It is extremely frightening to be given away at an early age. I felt hopeless when they told me I should get married." (Case Three age 15)

The other two cases also tried to explain their traumatic experience helplessly as follows

“They listened to their interests. They considered my feelings. I followed their rules and orders.” (Case Four age 15)

“It was very difficult to get married at an early age but I had nobody to stay with since I was an orphan.” (Case six age 15)

“I lost my parents long ago. My parents were not the one who gave me away. It was my elder brother who sentenced my marriage because I felt I would be burden to him and his wife.” (Case six age 15)

4.1.2. Arrangement of marriage

Girls in the village have no right to choose their husband. The age of their husbands is unknown by most of the interviewees. No one was bothered to consider their consent. Six of the cases have witnessed the following about their marriage arrangement.

“By the time I got married my husband was in his early twenties. But I had no idea who my husband was.” (Case One age 15)

“In our culture when someone marries you take gifts to that family which my family had been doing repeatedly. In my family no one has ever been married, therefore, they had never got any gifts and my marriage was a means of returning these gifts back home. I was not sure of my husband’s exact age but I think he was much older than I was. ” (Case One age 15)

“I was not sure about my husband’s age but I think him to be much older than I was. Besides this, I had no idea of whom I was about to marry before marriage.” (Case Two age 15)

"I was not clear with my husband's age since I had no idea whom I was about to marry" (Case Three age 15)

"My husband was by then around 20. My parent did not give me the chance to know whom I was going to marry." (Case Four age 14)

"My husband's age was 20 years old by then, and I married a man I never knew." (Case Five age 15)

"There were times I saw friends dropping out of school and I never thought it would happen to me. My parents made me marry without my consent." (Case Three age 15)

More over, they also shared the way they heard the wedding news as follows

"I directly moved to my husband's house since his parents were not alive. I was told this a week before my wedding day, it was out of my will. I felt stifled since there was no one to show me how to do things. I still blame my parents for letting me worry by sending me, where there is no mother in-law." (Case Two age 15)

"I had no idea how old my husband was besides I did not know my husband before. My brother was the one who arranged the marriage." (Case six age 15)

"I felt very terrible when my parents gave me away before I was mature enough. I tried to convince them I was too young but they never gave me attention. I knew about my marriage before a week while my mother was trying to buy me a dress for the wedding." (Case Four age 14)

Case five explained the harsh experience she had with her father by the time she refused to return with her husband this way.

“The day I came back to my family for invitation, I refused to go back. As a result my father attempted to hit me with a knife.”(Case Five age 15)

Case six had strongly explained the wrong aspect of getting pushed to marry a person she did not know this way

“My marriage was out of my will. I was not happy to marry such kind of person because he had nothing. He didn’t even have enough food to take care of me. He is just a priest.”(Case six age 15)

4.1.3. Hindrance from Attending School

While preparing girls for marriage they were pushed to quit their education and run a house. In addition to this, as it has been understood from the key informant during informal discussion, many parents don’t accept the value of girl’s education. However the girls did not take being a drop out as an easy matter. Two of the case never got the chance to start education.

Case one complained as follows

“My parents said that they needed to see me married since none of my sisters got married. Whenever I see my sisters I really feel jealous of them since they are learning.”(Case One age 15)

The others explained what it feels like to be drop out of school and the expectation they had as follows,

"I never thought I would stop learning, I already had new friends in the class and I was happy, I felt so bad the day I knew I was getting married. I was afraid of losing my friends and my education I really tried to convince my parents so that I could continue my education but in vain" (Case Two age 15)

She said, "I had never imagined that I would stop my education and be given away for a husband like my other friends but it happened to me too" (Case Three age 15)

She said that, "I have never got a chance to go to school." (Case Four age 14)

"I learned up to grade three and I used to think I would be able to finish school. When I got the bad news, I begged my teacher to interfere. However, all my efforts failed." (Case Five age 15)

She complained that "I had never been in a school for we were very poor." (Case six age 15)

4.2. During Wedding

During the data gathering process informal discussions were done with one key informant (the key informant was a native who was giving guidance to the researcher).

As it has been understood from the key informant as well as from the interviewees, married girls don't get the chance to be aware of the absence of the mother-in-law before the wedding. To avoid their daughters fear parents keep this issue a secret. On parallel to this, there is a wedding ceremony by which girls stay in a room full of men for a week. The girl is expected to spend day and night with them. Until the best men leave the husband will not get a chance to have sex with the girl. Based on

the information obtained through the key informant the researcher was interested to check the girls view of this incident. Six of them have presented their view as follows

“I was very much afraid of the night I would be facing men since I had heard of my former friends who faced such circumstance and I had no idea what I was expected to do.” (Case One age 15)

“I was not comfortable to leave my parents and stay with strange people. It was so frightening to stay day and night with strange men,” (Case Four age 14)

“During the wedding I used to know the ceremony and I was afraid of passing through the same situation. I was there for a week in a room full of men. I wished to die.” In addition to this she said “I used to be afraid of male teachers let alone spending day and night in a room full of men. I was tensed and felt like dying. I did not sleep comfortably.”(Case Five age 15)

Case six had expressed her sad moment sorrowfully this way,

“During my wedding I was feeling deep sorrow. Because it was just 40 days since my father passed away. On my wedding day I was with 15 strange men (best men) and stayed with them for one week. Moreover, I found out that my husband was ‘jil’, (with no resource) and with no parent at all. My brother did not tell me all these. I knew after I went to my husband.” (Case six age 15)

“I found out the absence of my in-laws right at the day of my wedding. I felt like dying, I said ‘minew bemotkut’ (I wished to be dead). I had to spend the first night going directly to his house.” She explained how it was difficult to live in a room

full of men for seven days and night. *“However, I was happy since my husband had no chance to have sex with me in those days.”* (Case Two age 15)

“I used to hear a lot about my former friends’ experience during their wedding and it happened to me. During the wedding I spent a week with 15 best men of my husband. I was never been with men before.” During the wedding I was very much tensed for I have never been with many men at a time. And all the men were strangers. Besides this, I knew during the wedding that my husband has no parent” (Case Three age 15)

4.3. After wedding

After the wedding ceremony early married girls face 6 potential stressors: sexual initiation that takes place forcefully, workload with in the household and out side in the farm, being pregnant and giving birth, the confusion of the beginning a new home, living with sudden visits of the mother-in-law and dominance of their husbands in their marriage.

4.3.1. The new home

At the beginnings of their new life girls start to leave their former way of living.

They start to meet their friends less frequently than before. In addition to this, after developing household skills they will be expected to take care of their house and their husband properly. Mother-in-laws’ give a sudden visit to the newly weds after few months of stay; if they observe that the wife fails to take care of the household they will start to threaten about getting another wife for their son.

Concerning the above issues the participants gave their point of view as follows.

“I envy my friends who go to school whenever I see them in their school clothes I wish I had the same opportunity.” (Case One age 15)

“I don’t have many friends around but I have one friend who is divorced.” In addition to this, she said “I don’t have any time to spend with my friends, I see her once in a while because I don’t finish the housework on time” (Case Three age 15)

“I have three friends but they are not married. They are lucky, they dress up well, and go to school. They are more beautiful than I am. I don’t feel confident enough when I talk to them.”(Case Four age 14)

“This time I feel better but immediately after the wedding I was so confused, did not know what to do.” (Case Five age 15)

Case one also gave her remark as follows

“The sudden visit of my in-law was the incident I faced after I started to live as a married woman. This makes me nervous because, if I fail to do house chores properly she would tell her son to look for another wife. The visits became frequent after few months of our marriage. My mother- in- law used to call me “jill” (to mean hardly trainable).” (Case One age 15)

Once they start the new life tiresome activities are inevitable. They had expressed it as follows

“I extremely hate farming because it’s so tiresome and not fruitful enough to fulfill our basic needs.” (Case Three age 15)

“I hate farming. It is a very tiresome job. I prefer any kind of house chores to farming.”(Case Four age 14)

“I don’t have much time to spend with my friends since I got married. I have a lot to take care in our houses the whole day” (Case Four age 14)

“I hate farming. It is a very tiresome job .Our fore mothers might have enjoyed farming. However we get insignificant product compared to our labor.” (Case Five age 15)

“Farming is very difficult. It is very tiresome. I hate farming.”(Case six age 15)

Case six seems her view of friend with such low voice

“I don’t have any friend to talk to since my childhood. I used to take care of my sick father and then I continued to take care of my children. Thus I have never had any spare time to be with friends.”(Case six age 15)

4.3.2. Sexual initiation

Sexual initiation takes place while the girl is taken under ‘Madigo liji’ title.

Case one has confirmed this as follows.

“Once you are taken under the protection of your in-law there is no as such a husband who waits to have sex until they start living separately. He also gets encouragement from his family.” (Case One age 15)

“I used to be stifled every time my in-law leaves me alone, giving my husband a chance to sleep with me.” (Case One age 15)

They explained experience they had during the first sexual initiation as follows

“I used to sit the whole night in fear of a strange guy who pushed me to have sex with him; I even hated the very eye he laid on me for two month.” (Case One age 15)

“I had no information of sexual initiation. My first sexual experience was painful since it was done forcefully” (Case Two age 15)

“It was the most painful experience to have sexual intercourse with a stranger, I never got a time to know him and he was much older than I was.” (Case Three age 15)

“It is so frightening to share a bed with someone whom you don’t know. It was very difficult for me even to touch his cloths. I used to hate him too much.” (Case Four age 14)

They have narrated the difficulty they had as follows

“I felt so bad for almost three months, until I got used to him. During the daytime since he used to stay in the farm or other places I was t free unlike the night.” (Case Two age 15)

“I was afraid the day I knew I was getting married.” (Case Five age 15)

” I did not shout or refuse the first night I had sex with him even if it was painful. But the next day the pain was unbearable and I refused to open my legs and I got hit for not doing so.” (Case One age 15)

They have also expressed how dissatisfied they were as follows

“I am not interested to have sex since there are many things about my children that bother me.”(Case six age 15)

“I have never enjoyed my sex life with my husband because most of the time I get very tired when the request come form him. Besides, it is always painful whenever we have sex.” (Case Three age 15)

“If I have no interest of having sex I don’t tell my husband because he is not happy when I say so.” (Case Three age 15)

“I have never enjoyed sex. I always wish to go away because it is so painful and tiresome. I always get bored when the night comes.”(Case Four age 14)

“He used a stick and hit me hard, I hated him to death.”(Case Five age 15)

“I called for help the day his parents left me inside a house detached from the main house. I screamed and begged but they never came to rescue me.”(Case Five age 15)

“It was very painful to have sex with my husband .It was so painful. My husband was having sex with me regardless of my pain. I was in pain for a long period of time.”(Case six age 15)

Case five and six have explained about their sexual initiation as follows

“I had a painful experience. It was painful but since he is a priest, I used to be afraid of his ‘gizit’ (curse).” (Case Five age15)

“I can not say anything about sex because it is taboo to talk about it.”(Case six age 15)

4.3.3. Pregnancy and giving birth

Girls are not aware of how they get pregnant. They usually find out their pregnancy after it happens. Starting from house chores up to raising up a baby it is all the mothers' responsibility. It is a taboo for the husband to give help to his wife.

They had witnessed stories of girls in the village who got birth complications as follows.

*" I had information about two girls who had pain and consequently died due to complications during labor. These girls in the community were in labor for two or three days. I also learned that last year a 14 year old pregnant girl died because of labor. I used to be afraid of facing the same experience" (Case One age 15) **She has explained it more strongly this way,** "I passed the nine months of pregnancy in fear thinking I might die in any one of the days." (Case One age 15)*

"So far I never got pregnant" However, she said "I have heard many stories about my friends facing many problems during their pregnancy and when they gave birth. Many of them died when they gave birth." (Case Three age 15).

Moreover Case four has given recent information she knows of such incidents in the village as follows.

"Recently, I know three girls who died while they gave birth. For the time being, neither I nor my husband has a plan to have children. Specially, I am not interested to have children because I might die during labor."(Case Four age 14)

Case five explained her expected fear as follows.

"I have heard many stories related to child birth and I was afraid thinking that I would also die."(Case Five age 15)

Case two and six told a story that happened within their family. With such sad face they described it this way

“A girl needs to grow well before giving birth since I know friends who died of childbirth. Moreover, I know my aunt that died of a 2nd childbirth. Based on what I heard and know I used to be afraid of getting pregnant.” She continued, *“I knew my pregnancy when my menstrual cycle stopped, since I used to hear in the village mothers saying the moment we stop seeing blood then comes pregnancy.”*(Case Two age 15)

“I know many women who died during labor. My mother also died of labor complications.” (Case six age 15)

“Taking care of the child as well as the house chores is my headache. My husband doesn’t help me in anyway.” (Case Five age 15)

“Looking after a child is always the wives’ responsibility. It’s like a taboo if the husband takes care of the child.” (Case Three age 15)

“Mothers are always responsible to look after their babies. Even if the husband is at home, he is not in a position to look after children, because it is not our norm.”(Case Four age 14)

“Looking after children is fully my responsibility. I have never seen any man looking after children.”(Case six age 15)

“When I got pregnant I was extremely afraid that I would die.” (Case six age 15)

“Nobody helped me during my labor. I had a very tough time. I was in labor for 48 hours and finally gave birth to twins.”(Case six age 15)

4.3.4. Relationship with husband

Comments were given about the relationship they have with their husbands as follows

“There were days we got poor and felt like leaving my husband since I could not tolerate the lack of food in the house.” (Case One age 15)

“My husband expects me to wash his leg and provide tasty food. If I fail to do so he shouts at me, what's more, there is no help I get from my husband concerning house chores and child caring. At times he threatens to send me to my parents.” (Case One age 15)

She further stated the confusing behavior of her husband as follows

“At times I am not even sure which food pleases him since he shouts only when I make mistakes, I never heard him appreciating me but when I make mistakes he never fails to get it in to an argument.” (Case One age 15)

Helplessly the following case has revealed her heart felt doubt as follows

“It would have been better to learn before marriage but now I think there is no hope for me to go to town and live a better life. There is no hope of improving my current life. Whenever my husband is mad at me I just tolerate him. Usually he doesn't accept my suggestions but I do not complain, I just take it in. Even if I feel bad of what he says it is not the custom to talk back to your husband I just try to please him.” (Case Two age 15)

“I am not happy of my marriage. Marriage is like a bad luck to me. I think that God has cursed me through my marriage.” (Case Two age 15)

"I am very sensitive to my husband's criticisms; whenever he speaks, it is demoralizing." (Case Three age 15)

"My husband does not appreciate my good deeds." (Case Three age 15)

"I have no where to go. This is my destiny and my fate and the only means of survival." (Case Three age 15)

"Whenever I make any kind of mistake, my husband gets very harsh on me and this makes me more furious. (Case Three age 15)

"I get very upset when my husband criticizes me. He never tries to understand and bear my mistakes. However I never get angry with myself." (Case Four age 14)

"My husband is serious about the quality of my cooking. If I cook 'wot' that is not delicious, he yells at me." (Case Four age 14)

"He doesn't have the habit of appreciating. He just keeps quite when I perform well in the house." (Case Four age 14)

"My husband always wants me to be perfect in my deeds as well as in my speech. If I happened to appear otherwise he always gets upset." (Case Four age 14)

They have explained their work load this way.

"My husband has never participated in house chores, it is all my responsibility."

"I help my husband during farming season. He decides on financial matters alone." (Case Five age 15)

"After I started living with him he went to town to look for a job and I felt like getting lost leaving the kid aside but I had no idea how to go to Town." (Case Five age 15)

"I always wish to get a divorce and leave these children. However, since my husband is a priest I fear of his curse or 'gizit' ." (Case six age 15)

4.3.5. Living with in-law

Under the title of 'Yemadego Lij', the mother-in-law raises the girl after taking her from her parents. She promises to give the girl away to her son only when they move independently. However, husbands do not stop from demanding sexual intercourse while she is with his mother.

"My in-law was good in she taught me the house chores skill, however, I felt bad the day she allowed her son to touch me. I tried to call for help but no body helped me. Finally, I realized that she is not as thoughtful as my mother." (Case One age 15)

"I was comfortable with my mother in-law since I used to do the little things she ordered and the big burden of taking care of the whole household was up to her. I was shocked and terrified when she started to prepare a house and told me to start living with him; I was attached to her." (Case One age 15)

"I was living with my husband's step mother who was so kind and was a great help during my stay. Thus I was not as tensed as I was after I left her." (Case Four age 14)

"I was not happy to leave my in-laws house and live with my husband. My husband always threatens me that he would send me away if I make any mistake." (Case Four age 14)

“I thought of leaving my husband when his mother yelled at me and intimidated to take me back to my parents. However, I stayed with him since I knew I would be given to another person again” (Case Five age 15)

4.3.6. Household Chores and Other Responsibilities

Girls of the village are expected to be submissive to their husband. Whenever the husband has to work on the farm the wife goes with him to give a hand. However, after they get back home she continues with taking care of household activities while her husband rests. The handling of the house includes washing of the husband’s leg, preparing him food and satisfying his sexual needs.

“I hate farming activities most since it demands much energy, besides this, after coming back from farming I am expected to handle the household activities without my husband’s help.” (Case one age 15)

“My husband tolerated me for months considering that I was too young to do everything perfectly. After a year (at age 14) whenever he felt the food I prepared was not tasty he started to insult me. We used to have fight and I feel tensed when fighting starts. At times I begin working early in the morning in order to finish on time, but mostly I am unable to do so since I am young to handle the whole house chore responsibility by myself.” (Case one age 15)

“I felt worried thinking of the strange people I was going to live with. To make the matter worst, I found out that my husband’s parents were died. There are things

that are difficult. Checking whether food is there or not is my headache.” (Case One age 15)

“I especially prefer other activities than farming since it takes much energy. Nonetheless, there is no other alternative than farming. It is the only activity through which I get my day-to-day food consumption.” (Case Two age 15)

She said, “By the time I started to take care of house chores responsibility my mother-in-law was not alive thus, taking care of the house at once was extremely tough.” (Case Three age 15)

“Making coffee, cooking ‘wot’, washing clothes and the like are very simple for me. However, farming, weeding, fetching water are tasks that I hate most because they are very tough.” (Case Three age 15)

“I was very much tensed when I knew that I should take care of the house chores which are very difficult and tiresome. Still I am not able to effectively manage fetching water and washing clothes properly.” (Case Four age 14)

“I prefer staying at home and cook ‘wot’ and clearing rather than farming.” (Case Four age 15) “Whatever my husband used to say to encourage me I used to be tensed when I was unable to accomplish all the household chores” (Case Five age 15)

“I was afraid the day my mother-in-law died thinking how to start life from scratch again. I used to hate farming and baking ‘injera’ and preparing local drink since it is tough.” (Case Five age 15)

“Fetching water and embroidery were the only house chores I used to like and manage by the time I started living independently.”(Case Five age 15)

“I was not worried about responsibility because I was taking care of our house even before I got married.”(Case six age 15) “I am ok with house chores but I hate farming. My life is becoming unbearable. Especially after I gave birth I was tired of asking neighbors’ for babysitting whenever I go to the market.”(Case Six age 15)

Table 2: Summary of the common stressors under the three categories: before marriage, during and after wedding.

Cases	Before marriage	During wedding	After wedding
1	-marriage without consent - left parents at age 11 -illiterate	-spending a stressful week time with men during wedding - knowing sudden absence of mother-in-law	- forceful sexual intercourse - has workload - fear of child birth - weak relationship with husband
2	-marriage without consent - left parents at age 13 -drop out of school	-spending a stressful week time during wedding with men.	- forceful sexual intercourse - has workload - fear of child birth - weak relationship with husband
3	-marriage without consent - left parents at age 11 -illiterate	-spending a stressful week time during wedding with men.	- forceful sexual intercourse - has workload - fear of child birth - weak relationship with husband
4	-marriage without consent - left parents at age 5 -illiterate	-spending a stressful week time during wedding with men. - knowing sudden absence of mother-in-law	- forceful sexual intercourse - has workload - fear of child birth - weak relationship with husband
5	-marriage without consent - left parents at age 11 -illiterate	-spending a stressful week time during wedding with men.	- forceful sexual intercourse - has workload - fear of child birth - weak relationship with husband
6	-marriage without consent - left parents at age 14 -illiterate	-spending a stressful week time during wedding with men. - knowing sudden absence of in-laws	- forceful sexual intercourse - was load and twins - fear of child birth - weak relationship with husband

4.4. Discussion

4.4.1. Before marriage

As it is seen from the case studies, all of the respondents got married without their personal consent. The participants explained that they miss the happiness they used to have at home. They feel deprived of their family's love and affection. It was assumed that after leaving their

parents, they would first live with their mother-in-laws. These children prefer to be with their mother-in-laws since they get marriage-life experiences. However this does not always happen. As to the interviewees, some had the chance to live with their mother-in-laws, others with other members of the family and few with the extended family. On the other hand, some started living with husbands immediately.

The parents don't want to give solution to the cry of their children. They rather force their daughters to live with their in-laws. Pragmatically, parents are supposed to be immediate guardian and care givers at this early age to these children. When children are not offered the chance to lean on their parents, they are likely to develop mistrust and gradually feel hopeless. This feeling of hopelessness leads them to deep stress which they can not cope with. The culmination of such incidents gradually makes them view life as a matter of chance. They never imagine there is something to be done about their life. African Center for Women (1997) stated a girl who gets married at early age may suffer from reduced self-identity and opportunities for receiving education or developing learning skills.

The participants were denied of education, psychological right, and other rights which determine their future. It is surprising to see 14 and 15 years old girls with no vision for the future, and considering themselves as old person. Santrock (1999) supports this fact saying, adolescents who have secure relationships with their parents have higher self-esteem and better emotional well-being.

As Allen and Kupperman (cited in Santrock 1999) also explained, attachment to parents at adolescence may facilitate the adolescent's social competence and well being, as reflected in such characteristics as self esteem, emotional adjustment, physical health, and positive peer relations.

The participants were forced to marry a man much older than their age. As a result this puts them in life confusion; moreover, instead of going to school, they were forced to get married. Such and other life events they passed through could potentially make them socially incompetent within the society they live in.

4.4.2. During marriage

As the data shows, during the wedding these adolescents experienced fear for a week time they stayed in a room full of men who were celebrating the wedding. One of the girls expressed the severity of her hatred for the situation saying "*minew bemotkut*" which mean "I wish I could die." One can see that the pressure is much so that they would think of evil thoughts.

It is not difficult to imagine the difficulty for the married children to familiarize themselves with men very fast. (Bolgonini cited in Nancy, 2000) explains, adolescents with authoritative parents, who stress self-reliance and are willing to listen to their children have higher feeling of self-worth. Opposite to this, these adolescents were unlucky enough to grow in a family

who don't even tell the things that could happen to them, let alone being affectionate and understanding.

Adolescents' observations about themselves begin with specific events. Their ability to relate specific events in terms of more general principle allows them to pull different life experiences together to general assumptions. As Nancy (2000) stated, adolescents' self-esteem is a measure of how good one feels about set of beliefs that develops with in specific events. It could be inferred that these children had developed a belief from the events that started with the interactions they had at home. It was clear to see that they were short of events that cultivate self worth in adversity, to have a better adjustment and be alert for sudden threatening life events (such as, sudden news of the absence of mother-in-laws or keeping oneself with a room full of men). Usually parents promise to their daughters that they go to a home where there would be a mother-in-law, but sometimes it doesn't happen. As a result, the married children get confused, and had to handle the house independently. They felt ashamed when they were unable to accomplish their responsibility without anyone's support.

Abou (1991) stated that, marriage during puberty is believed to ensure early fertility of the married couple and social isolation for the girl. Those adolescent who leave home at early due to marriage are tend to miss the experience and social competence they gain from parents.

From Erickson's psychosocial stage of development point of view, adolescence is the period of identity versus role confusion. It implies potentialities of development towards the positive and negative directions depending on the nature of psychosocial factors in the social environment. If adolescents are trained to achieve their role, they are to develop taking responsibility. However, if they are ill treated, identity achievement becomes difficult. Adolescents become disturbed and confused by new social conflicts, establishing a new sense of age identity, (Erikson, cited in William, 2000).

4.4.3. After wedding

Braungart (1998) explains that, at certain point, adolescents seek their friends' advice rather than their parents' in every aspect. Conformity of peers is higher during early and middle adolescence than late adolescence. As the participants have complained they don't have much time to meet friends. The moment they get into their new home they are expected to carry out all house chores and help their husbands in farming activity. As they have witnessed, farming is one of the activity they hate most since it is very tiresome and demanding.

As Annable *et. al* (2004), who conducted research in two peasant associations including 'Mosebo' confirms adolescents are relatively isolated, have few friends, and have limited exposure to the outside world. This is especially true for girls and particularly married adolescent girls of this region. The entire respondents had emphasized how much they are jealous of girls who are learning, since those who are going to school don't have to worry

about anything but education. However, as the researcher tried to assess the situation, half of the students in that school were divorcee for many reasons and wait to remarry like the rest of the unmarried students.

According to Erikson, adolescents of this stage are not happy to imitate, rather they want to find new things by themselves. He also emphasized that they wish to be superior. However, in the case of those children, they have never been given the chance to experience their interests; instead they were suppressed and have developed inferiority as a result. They are always there to take commands of parents. They develop a tendency to accept others' order and to live up to others' demand. This shows that, they are always in extreme sense of inferiority which magnifies their level of stress. Besides, a girl who marries at an early age suffers from reduced self-identify. Santrock (1999) also magnifies this state of adolescents by saying that this is a stage in which they are industrious and creative. Abou (1991) adds that marriage during puberty is believed to ensure early fertility of the married couple and social isolation for the girl.

To take up another issue, experiencing frightening sexual intercourse was an act that is confirmed by all interviewees. The society believes that if a girl stays for a while without sex, she might go back to her family but once she starts having sex, she would stay accepting the person as a husband. Therefore, the act is encouraged by the society of this region.

All the respondents had expressed their fear of sexual intercourse in different manner. One of the respondents said, “Whenever dusk arrives I used to be tensed.” Ultimately their consent has no value in the eyes of the parent concerning the husband they marry. Thus, they face difficulty to get used to a person who is older than them. Thus, responding to the sexual requests is far from their interest. On the other hand, David and Carline (2002) explain how gentle physical proximity is important in marriage life, explaining, what satisfies the need in the young: eye contact, touching, stroking and holding deliver the same security for married couples.

Nancy (1992) approves this saying, sexual maturation provides the biological basis for this developmental task. Although sexual maturation usually takes place in early adolescence, most individuals do not achieve a fusing of genuine intimacy with sexual feelings until late adolescence or early adulthood.

The fact that the study participants understood the relationship was almost inexistent. It worsens their trust in keeping up the relationship. Gilligan and Chodorow (cited in Santrock 1999), has stated that females are highly concerned about their relationship than boys throughout their life span, specifically during adolescence. Unlike their husbands who don't focus on the emotional bond they have within their marital life. Men highly focus on the right they have as a husband. Men act as if they always deserve to get what they demand from their wives. If a wife is unable to be at the husband's disposal, he might plan to bring another one. This has an adverse effect for the wives' unstable life.

Despite the complex burden they were carrying, they still live with their husbands since they didn't know the way out, to the so called 'better life' (running away to town). As Cohen, Lazarus and Kimble (as cited in Morgan) have suggested, successful coping mechanisms are seeking information about how to deal with that specific problem, and what other alternatives are available to reduce stressor impact. He further advises not to be impulsive to resolve the situation but to use thinking or one's cognition. However, the life of the study participants was not fostered with enough education or care from parents. As a result they usually plan to avoid the situation deep in their hearts than attempting to change their cognition towards the situation. If they get the chance to leave their village it leads them to nowhere but complicated life, since they were not well equipped to live with in their own village, let alone to a place they have never been before.

Pragmatically speaking the existing system is not manageable and transparent enough to be influenced by the effort of these youngsters. The life of the community is highly interdependent and installed in a way those girls cannot challenge it.

For girls in rural Amhara, as sexual activity is almost universally confines marriage, so is childbirth. On the other hand, the adolescents are not ready to conceive at that early age. As a result they are living against nature; most of the cases they were willing to leave their children any time they get the chance, unlike of a common characteristics of mothers. Most of these girls became pregnant without even knowing. Starting from pregnancy till raising

their children is their full responsibility. Furthermore, they were unlucky enough to decide when they should have a baby.

On the other hand, experiencing puberty does not mean that the girls are in optimal condition developmentally to bear a child. They are afraid of what could happen to them through out the nine months; from what they see in other girls' life experience in the village they live. According to Taore (2005) an activist for women's right, early marriage deprives young girls of their adolescence, it forces them into sexual relations and denies their freedom, and this has psycho-social and emotional consequences.

As David and Caroline (2002) stated, maintaining closeness is a link and survival need. The respondents' life experience shows the weak link of communication with their husband they live. The communication they have seemed to be hampered with the stereotypic gender roles they have with in the community. Men are taken as a bread winner and authoritative within the community they live. Rather than giving the affection their wife deserves, they use harsh words to the extent of biting them. Their relation ship is more of a slave and landlord than a husband and a wife. As Brouce (1996) stated, communication about sex is often hampered when a couple is locked in to stereotypic gender roles.

Sexual interactions can be a source of frustration, disappointment, and anger in a relationship, but they can also be a source of happiness and great joy. A satisfying sexual need is a crucial ingredient in a healthy intimate relationship. On the contrary, their

relationship is circled with physical abuse, underestimation, and insensitive response that can hamper the development of love and a healthy relationship. Above all, the marriage should be based on the interests of both parties. Gilligan and Chodorow (cited in Santrock 1999), have stated that females are highly concerned about their relationship than males throughout their life span, specifically since their adolescence.

The life of the respondents implies that, they are judged on things they are not mature enough to handle by their mother-in-law and are abused by their husbands' harsh words. There are assumed stressors that can cause stress for those who get married at an early age when they are not yet able to bear all the burden that early marriage encompasses. The accumulation of the stressors also have direct link with the self-esteem of early adolescents who get married at tender age.

There are different stressors they face: physical, environmental and social. Although they are not entirely independent few principal types of stressors are identified. These causes are change of life style, pressure, frustration, and conflict of motives. As Morgan (2003) indicated, pressure involves expectations or demands that push one to behave unwillingly or beyond capacity in a certain way. Pressure exists when a person is in a context to perform and expected to execute tasks and responsibilities quickly, efficiently, and successfully. In addition, pressures to other's expectations are also common in their lives. They are living under pressure to please their parents, husbands' and mother-in-law will directly causes stress.

Based on the contexts of the participants, females are expected to participate within household they are unable to accomplish. The sudden visit of their in-law, their husbands warning to get another wife and death of mother-in-law are major factors that create pressure. Moreover they are expected to participate in all indoor and out door activities that takes much energy. They join their husband at an age they are not yet sure of their capacity to handle house chores. All the respondents have expressed their hatred for farming since it demands much energy.

As it is mentioned above adolescents need time to handle changes as well as tasks they are assigned to accomplish. The life of these female adolescents gets exposed to different life changes one after the other despite their capacity. They are not encouraged to come over their problem instead they are discouraged.

Unlike the male the females do not have time to play with their female friends. They meet at times when there is holiday or other occasions. To them a friend is a neighbor. There is no one as such they name as a best friend. All have said that they miss their friends but they are unable to meet as a result of the work load. Laurence (1993) explains, working more than twenty hours a week may jeopardize adolescent schooling and psychological well-being. Besides this leisure plays an important role in helping young people develop a sense of themselves to explore their relationships with each other, and learn about the society around them.

As a last remark on the difficulties of investigating the type of issue studied in this research, one should recognize that early married females are not free to express their conditions and

feelings to researchers. For example, their husbands were suspicious to the extent of preventing their spouses to be interviewed.

CHAPTER FIVE

5. SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This section of the thesis deals, primarily with a brief summary about the entire research. Next to this, the conclusions that are drawn in the light of the findings are presented. Finally recommendations are attempted to be forwarded as to how to protect early adolescents from getting married at a tender age and get exposed to stressful life events.

5.1. Summary

This study is aimed at investigating the psychosocial effects of early marriage on early female adolescents. The analysis has been classified under themes such as before, during and after wedding of the life stressors.

In Ethiopia “even if many opinion makers believe that there is a trend in the decline of some harmful traditional practices, particularly, early marriage, and marriage by abduction while a high majority cover 80% of opinion makers do not subscribe to harmful traditional practices. They believe that, a good proportion of the general population still adheres to these age old traditions” (NCTPE 2003).

Data were collected from six early female adolescents who are currently married as a child in Amhara region. In-depth-interviews were conducted with respondents using interview guide. The data was then analyzed qualitatively.

The result showed that, early female adolescents who live in this rural area are isolated. They spend most of their time giving helping to their parents on the family farm as well as at home. They don't seem to have a time to spend with friends or a chance to join school. For this community, early marriage is in the prior list for early adolescent girls. Getting married at childhood makes a child to worry much and lose weight; rising up a child is another headache along with the house hold responsibility.

In the other direction, of the problem sexual initiation and child birth are untimely. They are exposed to forceful sexual intercourse which keeps them in pain and frustration. This can be labeled as 'legal reap' from the researcher's point of view. In general, it is found that early marriage, encompasses different stressful events that can potentially put the life of these children under jeopardy.

5.2. Conclusion

Early married girls are forced to engage in sexual experiences for which they were not emotionally, psychologically or physically ready. Hence, it can be said that they have experienced traumatic sexual intercourse. The effect is manifested on the way they express

their attitude towards their sex life. Their sexual life is considered as one of the household duty they carry out than as a source of enjoyment.

They pass through deferent traumatic experience that enabled them to stay in the village they belong. As studies show these children will be at high risk if they leave their village and come to town where they don't have a skill to with. They will be exposed to HIV/ ADIS in order to survive.

One can conclude looking at what early marriage encompasses that it is more of gender structured abuse. They need their human as well as psychological rights to be implemented in the age they can't do anything to change their abuse. These female are not only a victim of human right they are more of psychological victims which later manifest in so many ways. They have limited life view that can hinder their productivity. Moreover it is believed by the victims as if that is end of their journey in life at age less than 18. This is the age they had to think of a bright future not an age they close their doors as if their life is over.

5.3. Recommendations

The research has attempted to identify the psychological effects of early marriage inflicted on young girls within their parents home, marriage and in the community within the existing realities of the selected site. Major findings of the study portrayed that there is early marriage practice in the community which is aggravated by the lack of protective environment and inadequate legal protection by law enforcing bodies. Early marriage inevitably denies

children their right to the education they need for their personal development, their preparation for adulthood, and their effective contribution to the future wellbeing of their family and society.

In general the study has confirmed that factors that precipitate the problem are very complex and multidimensional in nature that have to be addressed through a range of programs focusing on prevention. A range of policy and programmatic actions are needed to reduce early marriage and its impact. Actions to fulfill or restore the rights of those already married should go along with preventive actions aimed at wider society. While prevention measures are essential, efforts must be made to ensure that all of the following interventions are available to married, as well as unmarried girls. Based on the findings of the study and the above presented conclusions the following recommendations are suggested.

At National level

- The study has shown that there is still practice of early marriage at an early age. Husband and wife may grow up playing together in the house of his parents. In this case, the mother-in-law must protect the girl from any advances by her son. However, this protection may fail, especially where the husband is much older than the girl. Cases of forced intercourse by much older and physically mature husbands with wives as young as 11 have been reported. However, this doesn't indicate that the necessary laws that protect the rights of these young females are lacking. Although

the legal age for marriage is clearly articulated in the new Ethiopian family code it is not implemented accordingly. Thus, it is recommended that those who are observance of these legal rights need to give due attention to protect and guarantee the rights of these young girls at the national level.

- Intensive advocacy work should be carried out to raise awareness at the national level. This helps to give full picture to concerned government officials and enable them to understand the weak link between the legal articulations and the current practice of early marriage.
- According to the present government structure, regional governments are directly responsible for the practical implementation of program and policies. Through this structure Zone and Woreda administration can be sensitized to act with peasant association. This helps for implementation of policies and legal enforcements since prevention of early marriage should be undertaken in consideration of the contextual, and cultural. Prevention strategies for early marriage need to be locally developed and implemented.

At the community level

- As the study indicates the community still treasures the act of giving away girls. Therefore, there need to be a strategy in which the community members such as religious fathers, elderly people, peasant association leaders, and social networks of

the society need to work hand in hand to tackle the practice of early marriage.

Understanding the psychosocial problem of early married girls as the society's problem is the gateways for implementation, hence there need be awareness raising programs for the above community members on the legal, the physical, and psychological and health hazard consequences they are bringing on their children which deteriorates their own community.

At school level

- Girls should be sensitized as to their rights through informal school found in the village. Most importantly, the involvement of young girls in ways that are appropriate to their development and capacities must be given primary attention in formulating and promoting locally based prevention strategies.

At family level

- Early married girls of the study have explained that they are treated unfairly since they are given away by their family at young age and never get ears of their parents on anything they wish to do. An effort must be done in chancing the stereotypical attitude of parents towards their daughters' access to education and their human rights. The benefits they would get if their daughters are educated and treated equally to their sons' rather than being forced to marriage must be clearly understood.

Surely, the findings of this research can assist further quantitative research that helps to make better decisions with regards to the welfare of these girls and most importantly can serve as instruments to see the psychosocial impact of early marriage and for advocacy purposes in order to influence policy.

APPENDICIES

Appendix I – Cases

Case One

Religion	Orthodox
Age	15
Ethnicity	Amhara
Lives in	Mosebo Woreda

Case one is the youngest daughter of her family. She has two sisters and three brothers. She lives in a community where marriage is mostly considered as the only way of life for girls. Unfortunately, she was the only girl from her family who never got the chance to attend school. Her two elder sisters who are 15 and 18 attend school in a near by school. Here the merit of her sisters access for education goes to her father's priesthood (church education). Her mother is an illiterate house wife and as mentioned above her father was a priest and a farmer.

She said "my parents said that they needed to see me married since none of my sisters got married. Whenever I see my sisters I really feel jealous of their opportunity for education since I never got one."

She described her mother as being soft and light hearted. She was afraid of her father, not because he was physically abusive, but for he tormented her with bad words that were morally abusive. Her hand was given to marriage when she was thirteen for a person who was considered the best, just because he was a priest. After a year she gave birth with the help of a mid wife. Both parents usually decide when and who to marry, however, father's decision is considered significant and important. Therefore, when her father was to buy her a new cloth just three days earlier of the wedding day she new she was going to marry somebody of their (her parents) choice a complete

stranger. She complained as, *“I felt so sad since they suddenly decided to give me away just like that. I started to think what it would be like to live with in-laws.. I used to hear the same thing happening to some other village girls but I never thought it would happen to me that fast”*

She was betrothed to a man when she was just 13. She said that *“In our culture when someone marries, you give gifts to that family. My family had done it for so long. In my family no one has ever been married, therefore, they have never got any gifts and my marriage was a means of returning these gifts back home. They were not bothered of my consent.”*

As she described her first “marriage”, she said, *“The first day I left home I was afraid and cried a lot. I felt so lonely because I was going to someone’s house where I have never been before. Besides, it was scary to live with a person I have never seen before.”*

She said that *“By the time I got married my husband was in his early twenties and I had no idea who my husband was.”* She had no idea who her husband was before the wedding day. He was proven to be fit for his economical status i.e. he has four oxen.

As the culture of the community, during the wedding week at age 11 she moved in with her in-laws. She had to spend 15 days with the bridegroom and his best men. They even slept together in the same room. She said, *“I was very much afraid of the first night I spend with strange men since I had heard of my formal friends who faced such circumstances, all in all the seven days stay with strangers made me frightened, since I had to spend day and night with them.”* She feared to talk publicly and even became nervous especially when men are around because they are respected and feared in the community.

After this she stayed with her in-law till she was 13. She said, *“I used to be stiffed every time my in-law left me alone, giving my husband a chance to sleep with me.”* As she expected, her husband forced her to have sex with him before they left his parent’s home. She said, *“Once you are taken under the protection of your in-law there is no husband who waits to have sex until they start living separately. He also gets encouragement from his family.”*

His parents gave them a little house, which was separated from the main house which they use as a kitchen. This was done to keep their privacy. There is a common belief in the community that if a girl stays for a while with out having sex, she might go back to her family. However, according to the society, once she starts having sex, she will stay with her husband she will love him and accept him as her husband.

Needless to say, she doesn’t enjoy her sexual life. Sleeping with a stranger is frightening. She hates it because it took her a month to get used to him. She used to be tensed when night falls. She stopped fighting when she realized a female is not supposed to fight but provide her husbands request to remain as a married woman. *She said “I used to sit the whole night in fear of a strange person who pushed me to have sex with him; I even hated the very place he laid on me for two month.”* She added that *“there was no one who asked my consent concerning the guy I had to marry. As a result it was hard for me to get used to the person who is demanding sexual requests every time.”* She added that *“ I did not shout or refuse the first night I had sex with him even if it was painful. But the next day the pain was unbearable and I refused to have sex. I was hit for not doing so.”* She had a pain for one week after the first sexual experience. She believed that it was

wrong to get married at an early age. She would have been happier had she stayed until she reaches 17.

At the beginning, she was unable to cook 'wot' and 'injera', to fetch water and to weed in the farm. She said that *"I hate farming activities very much since it demands much energy, besides, after coming back from farming I am expected to handle the household activities without my husband's help."* She said *"My husband tolerated me for months considering that I was still too young to do everything perfectly. But after a year (at age 14) whenever he felt the food I prepared was not tasty he started to insult me. We have a fight and I felt tensed when fighting starts. At time goes by I began to wake up early in the morning in order to finish on time, but mostly I was unable to do so since I was too young to handle the whole house chore by myself."* The only chores that she enjoys doing are making coffee, and cooking 'wot'."

She reported that "I had information about two girls who had pain and consequently died due to complications during labor. These girls were in labor for two or three days. I also heard last year a 14 year old girl who died because of labor. I used to be afraid of facing the same experience." She said that *"I passed the nine months of pregnancy thinking I might die in any one of the days."*

She said that *"before I gave birth I used to think of leaving the village. Once, I even went to my family thinking they would help me to continue my education but they refused and forced me to go back to my husband."* Although she doesn't have any best friends, she sometimes considers her neighbors as friends. She said that *"I don't have time to chat with them except on holidays or Sundays."* She either goes to their house or invites them to come over to her house. She explained

that *“I envy my friends whenever I see them in their school clothes. I wish I had the same opportunity.”*

“The sudden visit of my in-law was the other incident I faced after I started to live as a married woman.” She said that *“this made me nervous because, whenever I fail to do house chores properly, she would tell her son to look for another wife. Her visit became frequent after few months of our marriage. Consequently, my mother-in-law used to call me ‘jil’, (to mean hardly trainable).”*

She visits her parents once or twice in a month. She usually doesn't take anything for them. Although her parents don't demand, she feels guilt for going bare hand. She complained that *“it is difficult to live a life like mine. Had I been educated, people could have given me respect believing I could handle things but now I am just a farmer. My life is upside down and if I had continued my education I would not have got married and have a baby; I could have been like my sisters.”* She said *“they made me marry thinking of having a child who is married and to be visited”*, and whenever she sees her sisters she gets very depressed and feels jealous. One of her sister is a teacher where as the other is still learning.

She was married at age 11 and stayed with her in-laws until 13. She said that *“My in-law was good since she taught me house chores activities. However, I felt bad the day she allowed her son to touch me. I tried to call for help but no body helped me. Finally, I realized that she was not as thoughtful as my mother.”* After three years passed she had to start to live as an independent girl. She said that *“I was comfortable with my mother in-law since I used to do things she ordered and*

took care of the whole household. I was shocked and terrified when she started to prepare a house for me and told me to start living with him; I was attached to her.”

She witnessed that “there were days we got poor and I felt like leaving my husband since I could not tolerate the lack of food in the house. I wished to be free of my husband and get another who is richer. If the second one, gets poorer then I would return to my parent’s house. I know I am better than those who are married because I am an independent person and can lead life by my self. But still I wish either to have a husband who is not “jill” or to have money.”

She complained that, “my husband expects me to wash his leg and provide tasty food. If I fail to do so he shouts at me, what's more, there is no help I get from my husband concerning house chores and child caring. At times he threatens to send me back to my parents.” She also said that “I never enjoyed sex with my husband.” She blames her luck since she considers her marriage as a bad fate from God. “At times I am not even sure which food pleases him since he shouts only when I make mistakes, I never heard him appreciating me but when I make a mistake he never fails to get it in to an argument.”

Case Two

Age	15
Religion	Orthodox
Ethnicity	Amhara
Lives in	Mosebo Woreda

She is 15 years old. Her parents are both alive and are farmers. She is from a middle class family. It has been two years since she got married and has one boy who is 5 months old. She lives in the same Woreda as her parents. She said that *"though my father had never punished me I was afraid of him. In our village children are not expected to interfere while adults are talking."*

Her parents gave her away at age 13 for marriage. She said *"When I knew of my marriage I was worried since I would no more live with my parents and play in the school. But there was nothing I could do and hence left home and lived with my in-laws for three and half years. After that I started living with him when I was at age thirteen and half."* As a result she had no chance to continue her education. She said that *"I was afraid of leaving my home. I still needed the love and care of my parents. I was just a 'gubil' (to say she was not old enough to leave parent)."*

She saw many of her friends marrying but she rather felt good about staying single and living with her parents. Her marriage was arranged without her consent. She said *"I directly moved to my husband's house since his parents were not alive. I felt stiffed since there was no one to show me how to do things. I still blame my parents for sending me to a house where there is no mother in-law."* She said that *"I had no idea of whom I was about to marry before my marriage day. Besides this, I was not sure of my husband's exact age but I think he was much older than I was."* She

went to a complete stranger. She said that *“the day I left my parents I felt so scared but no one had entertained my opinion. My family did nothing except sending me regardless of my feelings.”*

Even if some years passed without being acknowledged as a married person and no guy was selected, she never felt inferior. She was happy to get the chance to play and proceed her education. By then she used to be a grade two student. She said that, *“I never thought I would stop learning, I already had new friends in the class and I was happy. I felt so bad the day I knew I am getting married. I was afraid of losing my friends and my education I really tried to convince my parents so that I could continue my education but it was in vain.”*

She said, *“Since I was familiar with the experience of other girls’ first week of marriage which was very dreadful, I myself was tensed thinking how I was going to pass five days with the best men of my husband. I didn’t know what was expected of me. What was more is that, I found out the absence of my mother in-laws right at the day of my wedding. I felt like dying, I said “minew bemohtkut” (I wished to be dead).”*

“At the end of the marriage day my friends were told to go back and I had to spend the first night at his house. I spent a week with my husband and his 5 best men.” She said *“My first sexual experience was painful since it was done forcefully.”* She believed that a girl had to marry at a latter age because there is no use to have a child at an early age. She explained that *“From my own experience as well as my friends’, raising up a child along with household chores is very difficult.”* She said, *“Sleeping with a stranger was awkward but all the girls at my age were forced to do so and there was nothing to be done about it.”* She further explained, *“I felt so bad for almost three months until I got used to him. During the daytime he used to stay in the farm or*

other places so I felt free. On the other hand, when the night comes I used to feel so stifled thinking of his forceful demands especially during the first two months of marriage.” In addition to this, she replied “For a reason I didn’t know I couldn’t enjoy my sexual life with my husband. I sleep with him to satisfy his demands. I do not tell him this since it is not the culture to talk to a husband about such issues.”

She said that, *“I felt worried thinking of the strange people I was going to live with. To make the matter worst, I found out that my husband’s parents were not around. One of my headaches was making sure if enough food was available in the house.”* Preparation of local drink and baking ‘injera’ demands a special skill, which is tough. Weeding, baking ‘injera’, cooking ‘wot’ and fetching water were the toughest jobs that were described by her. She said, *“I especially prefer other activities than farming since it takes much energy. Nonetheless, there is no other alternative than farming. It is the only activity through which I get my day-to-day food consumption.”* Besides this, her husband is a farmer who forces her to take part in farming activities. She said that *“I especially hate farming since it is so tiresome and demanding.”*

She explains *“a girl needs to grow well before giving birth because I know friends who died of childbirth. Moreover, I know my aunt who died of a 2nd childbirth. Based on what I heard and know I used to be afraid of getting pregnant. I knew my pregnancy when my menstrual cycle stopped. I used to hear in the village mothers saying, “the moment we stop seeing blood then follows pregnancy.””* She gave birth with the help of a midwife after five hours of labor.

She remembers the difficult moments she had when she left her parent’s house. On top of that she said, *“During the wedding I knew that my mother and father in-law are not alive. It would have*

been better if his mother was around since she would have given me an advice in handling the house chores.” She further explained saying “It took me a while to learn the house chores compared to other girls who got a chance to learn from their mother-in-law.” She said “even though my husband has tolerated me, I used to feel stressed when the food I prepare was not as nice as I expected it would be.”

After she started her new life she couldn't be able to get her old friends since she is far from where she used to live. When ever she wants to talk she goes to her neighbors whom she has already taken as a friend.

There were days she wished to be someone else especially when she sees them living a happy and better life because of their education. She regrets that she is not learning. She said *“Girls who are learning live with their family. They wear new clothes and have no worries except performing properly in school.”* She said *“after one month of marriage I went back to my family hating my life and hoping they will understand my situation but what waited me was different. My parents told me that they will just buy me clothes and send me back to my husband. I felt hopeless and went back to him.”*

She said that *“it would have been better to learn before marriage but now I think there is no hope for me to go to town and live a better life. There is no hope of improving my current life. Whenever my husband is mad at me I just tolerate him. Usually he doesn't accept my suggestions but I do not complain I just take it in. Even if I feel bad of what he says it is not the custom to talk back to your husband I just try to please him.”* She believes that she is less than others. She said that *“I am not happy of my marriage. Marriage is like a bad luck to me. I think that God has cursed me through my marriage.”*

She said that *“if I am unable to understand some things I would say “minew babid elalehu, balnor.”* It is difficult to live like this since I am a dropout; it is difficult to live like this in general.”

She has said that *“I believe that my family and my husband are the one who have decided on my life so far. I believe there is nothing to be done. I am expected to abide with the culture. I know that I can't live my life independently without my husband's presence. I think that I am incapable to learn and move to a new way of life.”* She usually tries to get lessons out of something that annoys her. This happens since she views as if it is her duty as a woman to learn from her mistakes that she faces at home.

She said that *“if I get a chance or if someone who can show me the way out to town I really want to be free of my husband.”* Even if she has a son she said that *“I will just leave him to grow under his father's supervision since I want to go to town and lead a better life”*; she said this even if she had no idea what she might face in the town. She just believed that it would be better there.

She attributed her shyness to the fact that she never made a speech in front of her parents. As a result she fears making a speech. In particular talking in front of the opposite sex is unthinkable. Even when she was talking to me there was not eye contact, she talked looking down except for few last sessions. There is no hope that she sees through learning, in the future. She believes there is no one to teach her and she also does not see herself becoming a good student. She thinks she is too old for education. However, she said that she is better than those who are not married as well as not educated. She is better than single and uneducated girls since she owns animals and considered independent as well. Besides this, marriage is taken as a major right of passage.

In their society women are not given the chance to decide who and when to marry. This is up to the father in the family. The neighbors would advice and participate on the selection of a girl whom they think is beautiful and fits to be a good wife. They rather choose or suggest for the husband.

Case Three

Age	15
Religion	Orthodox
Ethnicity	Amhara
Lives in	Mosebo Woreda

She was 13 when she got married. Her mother is a house wife and her father is a farmer. Both are illiterate. The family is from middle class category. She came to know about her marriage just before a day. Mothers as well as fathers decide whom to marry as well as mothers but his decisions excel. Parents usually say, *“We don’t need to take care of her. She needs to live independently and let’s see our joy before we die.”* However, mothers can be easily refused by their daughters. It could be that she is a female. If a father is not alive then the mother will have a problem in setting her daughter for marriage.

She said *“I was 13 when my parents gave me away. It is extremely frightening to be given away at an early age. I felt hopeless when they told me I should get married.”* She continued, *“I started to think about my education and felt worried. I cried a lot and begged them to let me continue my education but they never listened to my demand. They instead promised to put me back to school and sent me to my mother-in-law. They explained to me that they might not afford to cover my school expenses. Additionally they said, “We only want to teach your brothers because it doesn’t take you anywhere as a female.” They never listened to me, they always order me and I am expected to keep that order.”*

She said *“There were times I saw friends dropping out of school and I never thought it would happen to me. My parents made me marry without my consent.”* She was learning in grade three

while she was given for marriage which her parents did not ask her consent. She said that *"They didn't ask for my consent at all when they gave me for marriage."* She stayed with her mother and father-in-law for a year at the age of fourteen. She said that *"I was not clear with my husband's age since I had no idea whom I was about to marry."*

She said that, *"I have learned up to grade 3. I have never imagined that I would stop my education and be given away for a husband like my other friends but it happened to me too."* She added *"I felt very bad when I knew that I would stop my schooling and never meet my friends again."*

Six days after her marriage day she got sick because of malaria and went to her parents' house for another year, she was happy by then. During the wedding night his best men, 15 of them, were sleeping over which made her feel safe since her husband had no chance to demand sexual intercourse. She said that *"I have heard a lot about my former friends' experience during their wedding and it happened to me. During the wedding I spent a week with 15 best men of my husband. I have never been with men before."* The day she left her house she felt bad that she missed her education. "During the wedding", she said, *"I was very much tensed for I have never been with many men at a time. All men were strangers. Besides this, I knew during the wedding that my husband had no parents"*

She had her first sexual experience when she was just 14 years old. It happened when her in-law went to market. She was left alone with her husband and then he forced her to have sex with him. She said *"It was the most painful experience to have sexual intercourse with a stranger, I never got a time to know him and he was much older than I was."* She added, *"I have never enjoyed my sex life with my husband because most of the time I am very tired when he is in need of sex."*

Besides, it is always painful whenever we have sex.” Moreover, she said “If I have no interest of having sex I don’t tell my husband because he is not happy when I say so.”

She stayed with his uncle for a while because his parents were not alive by then. His uncle used to hate her since he knew once her husband gets a cottage of his own he will stop farming for him. She said *“His uncle needed his labor and took me as a curse for his family; he used to insult me and hate me.”* She added *“by the time I started to take care of house chores responsibility my mother-in-law was not alive thus it was extremely tough got me to take care of the house at once.”* However, her husband is not a type of husband who argues a lot. She said that she completes mostly the house chore activities in time since she has no child to look after.

She said *“making coffee, cooking ‘wot’, washing clothes and the like are very simple for me. However, farming, weeding, fetching water are tasks that I hate most because they are very tough.”* It is her responsibility to take care of these activities alone without her husband’s help. She thinks life for the wife is some how better when the farming season is over.

She said *“so far I never got pregnant”* However, she added, *“I have heard many stories about my friends facing many problems during their pregnancy and delivery. Many girls died when they gave birth.”* She knows of her cousin who died after delivery. The cousin gave birth peacefully then got blind and died after a while. Her cousin was 18 when she gave birth to her last and third child.

She said *“looking after a child is always the wives’ responsibility. It’s like a taboo if the husband takes care of the child.”* Currently she is taking contraceptive which the government provides for

free since her husband is not interested to have a child currently. He believes he should save money first. However, if her husband wants a child at any time his interest excels her preference. .

She misses her friends badly. Once she is married she never played as free as she used to and stopped wearing new clothes as often as she did at her parents' house. Now she thinks of house chores, and what is needed for the house. As a result, unlike the unmarried, she gets thinner and thinner. Some of her friends took off to the city in fear of their husband because they knew there is no one who will welcome them at their parents' home after marriage. She said *"I was 15 when I started to live with my husband independently."* After she started living with her husband she hated farming, she said *"I extremely hate farming because it's so tiresome and not fruitful enough to fulfill our basic needs."* Furthermore, she said *"I don't have many friends around but I have one friend who is divorced."* In addition to this, she said *"I don't have any time to spend with my friend, I see her once in a while because I have never finished the housework on time."*

She usually frustrates easily thinking of herself as a farmer for the rest of her life. There is no playtime now. It is really hard to live the life am leading. Farming is my life and it is difficult. She even said, if a student fails to pass a lesson, making full preparation for the next exam won't be like farming. Farming takes much energy. She feels her life turned upside down; there is no uniform pattern in farming, you get now and lose the next year besides the process takes one full year.

She explained that her friends had a good relationship with her, they used to meet often but now they are separated. She used to miss them even for the night let alone in such distance because of marriage. In addition, the fact that they are in school and she is at home breaks her heart.

She doubts her convincing power; she thinks she has never tried even to convince her husband. As she has explained it, she gets easily mad when she makes a mistake. She doesn't want her husband to insult her, and she said *"every time he speaks, it demoralizes me."* She said *"I am very sensitive to my husband's criticism; whenever he speaks, it is very demoralizing."*

Comparing her self to other wives, she doesn't help her husband as they do in farming activity such as weeding because she has a very bad headache. As a result she envies looking at those who can. Her husband is pushed to hire an employee who can help him and she feels guilt for that even if he doesn't say anything to her. She thinks that God has given her a bad fate through marriage, she blames her fate whenever she sees a student. She said *"I have no where to go. This is my destiny and my fate and only means of survival. I have never wished going away from my husband."*

She said *"My husband doesn't appreciate my good deeds."* She added, *"Whenever I make any kind of mistake, my husband gets very harsh and this makes me more furious."* She also believes that her husband's relatives hate her for taking their brother while he could be a help for them. She usually quarrels with her husband relatives when they try to take the fire wood she prepared for their own use. She wishes for the day she could be free of her husband. If she stays with him she knows that she will remain as a farmer.

After the day she stopped her education, she envies her friends a lot who are in grade four and five. She is afraid of speaking in front of people she doesn't know, especially where men are around. She said she feared all male teachers at school and felt free to learn when the teacher is

female. She believed she was playful and sociable. However, she needs time to get along with new person. She feels free to talk and have fun with new acquaintances after repeated meeting.

Her father never punishes using stick but he speaks strongly and so does her mother. However, she is afraid of her father more than her mother. She further explained that, the words of her father are respected by her mother. While her parents are discussing issues we children don't interfere with their ideas. They usually say "*you are children, keep quiet.*"

The community loves those who get married. They think a student is naughty and rather trust a girl who is running a house. For her it is preferable to run a house than sit on the shoulder of parents without learning. This girl can lend to people in need, can be visited by family, and give food to beggars, which is a privilege she gets than those neither at school nor married. However, there is no comparison with those who are learning because they will have a better future.

She doesn't believe that she is better than others. She thinks there are many who are better than her. She thinks she is not sociable. She has no friend. She only has one friend who is divorced at the age of 16. She meets her friend once in a while. She wishes to have more time with her friend but unable to finish the workload she has at home. There were days she felt bad and wanted to leave the house.

Case Four

Religion	Orthodox
Age	14
Ethnicity	Amhara
Lives in	Mosebo Woreda

She said *"I was just 13 when I was given away to live with my in-laws."* Both her parents are alive. They are farmers. They are from middle class category. The marriage took place without her knowledge. She narrated that *"They always listen to their interests. They have never considered my feelings. I always followed their rules and orders."* She is adorable, cheerful with beautiful hair and fair color and playful girl. She is 14 years old. First she lived with her in-law together in the same house then she started to live independently with her husband.

She lived with her father in-law since the mother in-law was dead. However, her husband had a stepmother who is so kind; she thought her many things. It was difficult for her to proceed with what was going on. It was not easy at all to get used to someone she never knew before. She said that she has not yet finished her love with her mother. She replied that, *"I felt very terrible when my parents gave me away before I was matured enough. I tried to convince them I was too young but they never paid attention. I knew about my marriage before a week while my mother was trying to buy me a dress for the wedding."* She revealed that *"I was very sad when I got married because I used to enjoy living with my parents and playing with my friends. I wish my parents would listened to my feelings and let me not get married."* Furthermore she explained that, *"I lived for one year with my mother-in-law who was extremely good to be with."* She added *"My husband was by then around 20. My parent did not give me the chance to know who I was going to married."* She responded *"I have never been in school in my life because my parents preferred*

marriage to education.” As she has explained before the marriage she was preparing for school. After school Books were ready, she was told to marry. By then she tried hard to convince her parent that she was too young but no one gave her attention. *She said that “I have never got a chance to go to school.”*

She doesn't want her children to be a farmer like her. She decided to teach them with all the power she has. She narrated that *“I was not comfortable to leave my parents and stay with strange people. It was so frightening to stay day and night with strange men.”*

She replied that *“I was 14 when I started to live with my husband independently.”* However, she said that by the time she was with her in-law her husband has pushed her to have sex with him which was difficult. She added that, *“It was so frightening to share a bed with someone whom you didn't know. It was very difficult for me even to touch his cloths. I used to hate him too much.”* She wishes a lot about the day she could be free of her husband. Once she is free she wants to settle her life, get educated, and find a job at last. Her husband prefers to speak whenever mistakes happen. This usually happens when food is not prepared. He would say that he will send her to her family with a loud voice or say *“take all your properly and get out of my house.”*

She complained that *“It was difficult to sleep with someone whom I was not sure whether he was good or not.”* The day she had her first sexual experience was difficult even if she refused to have. He forced her though she cried hard. This happened for the whole week continuously despite her cry and refusal. She hated him as well as her in-law for not stopping the situation. She explained that she doesn't enjoy sex but she assumes that if she refuses her husband might bit her. She responded that *“I always wish to refuse but I fear that he would bit me.”*

She said *“I was very much tensed when I knew that I should take care of the house chores which are very difficult and tiresome. Still I am not able to effectively manage fetching water and washing clothes properly.”* She revealed that *“I prefer staying at home and cook ‘wot’ and clearing rather than farming.”* She said *“I stayed with my mother-in-law for a year.”*

There are jobs that she is still unable to manage. These are fetching water, washing cloths. However compared to local drink preparation and baking “injera” the formers are better. She explained that it makes her easily tired as well as it needs skill to do so. *She confirmed that “I hate farming. It is a very tiresome job. I prefer any kind of house chores to farming.”*

This year I am 14 and my husband some how expects me to perform better than before but when I make mistake he might say, *“Go back to your family. Let me get another who performs better.”* He might tolerate me for one or two years depending on my age. She only has this year as a chance. This makes her worry a lot fear of becoming divorced. This is the only way she can get a status in the community since it is taken as right of passage.

She said that young girls don't get a chance to choose whom and when to marry it is all up to the parent to decide that. Ones a young girl is ripe enough the decision of marriage pass to her husband. She said that during farming season she participates in every way her husband wants her assistance but when the product is ready it is up to him to decide on the selling of the seed. There is no part of the product that gets moved with out his knowledge.

At times, her mother gives her a visit and shows her how to do some house chore activities which she is unable to perform. She sometimes help her husbands step mother after she finishes the

house chore since they are neighbors. Her mother in-law usually visits her and check how she is taking care of her husband through the cleanness of the house, the way she cooks the food has to fit somehow up to her expectation if not she would decide to send her back to her parents.

She even said if she gets the chance to learn she is ready to divorce. "inket adrege ifetaw" (which means undoubtedly I would divorce him). She already has the knowledge how ladies suffer of childbirth. She mentioned cases of three girls in the village who died of the same incidents. As a result of this she has neither plan of giving birth nor interest of having a baby. However this depends highly on her husband's interest. Currently her husband doesn't want a baby and hence she is using birth control. Her husband has the same fear since he heard of the incident after he got married. He seems to protect her from dying. She confessed that *"So far I have never been pregnant."*

She narrated that "Recently, I know three girls who died while they give birth. For the time being neither I nor my husband has a plan to have children. Specially, I am not interested to have children because I might die during labor." She added that *"Mothers are always responsible to look after their babies. Even if the husband is at home, he is not in a position to look after children, because it is not our norm."*

She explained that "I have three friends but they are not married. They are lucky, they dress up well, and they go to school. They are more beautiful than I am. I don't feel confident enough when I talk to them." She complained, *"I don't have much time to spend with my friends since I got married. I and my neighbors have a lot to take care in our houses the whole day."* She added *"I was living with my husband's step mother who is so kind and was a great help during my stay."*

Thus, I was not as tensed as I am now.” She confessed that *“I was not happy to leave my in-laws house and live with my husband. My husband always threatens me that he would send me away if I make any mistake.”* She blamed that *“I get very upset when my husband criticizes me. He never tries to understand and bear my mistakes. But I never get angry with myself.”* She responded that *“My husband is serious about the quality of my cooking. If I cook ‘wot’ that is not delicious, he yells at me.”* She is confused that *“He doesn’t have the habit of appreciating. He just keeps quite when I perform well in the house.”* She added that *“My husband always wants me to be perfect in my deeds as well as in my speech. If I happened to appear otherwise he always gets upset.”*

She believes things in her life are up side down. She also believes that no one believes her except her family members. At times she wishes to get lost and go to town to continue her education since farming needs more energy. But she said that what ever she says her parent doesn’t listen to her since they believe she is young.

She has three friends. There are times she wished to be like her friends who are able to learn. The way they dress, they read and write make her wish to be like them. She believes since she is married at early age she feels that her friends who are educated see her down even if they never said any thing to her. She needs frequent meeting. Her parents say to her that she never passes wrong doing but confront it right there. She has a father who is not interested to use sticks to punish his children but her mother use hard words in order to stop them from making a mistake.

She believes she is not happy like other girls since she did not continue her education but a farmer who cannot read and write. She believes that God has cursed her with marriage since she knew that she couldn't get a chance to learn. She doesn't afraid of leaving her husband immediately

when he says uncomfortable words but if she does he will beg her again to come back to her again so she hates the process. Her family has not got any benefit for handling their daughter for marriage but they did it to get the eating ceremony called 'Kilito' to eat foods neighbors brings just like they did in different time for different households. Neighbors play a great role in selecting a wife together with the parent.

Case Five

Age	15
Religion	Orthodox
Ethnicity	Amhara
Lives in	Mosebo Woreda

She is 15 years old. She has a 4 months old little baby. She grew up in a family of 6, three brothers and two elder married sisters. She got married at age 11 with out her single consent. She said that *“I was 11 when my parents gave me away.”* She revealed that *“At age 12 I became an independent married girl. Since I was a child my in-law was suppose to be there for me.”* Her teachers tried to stop them but it was impossible. She cried when she was first given away. She cried and begged them not to go but they explained that it is a must to them to see their daughter getting married before they die.

The in-law was asked to have a child at this tender age. She was given to her in-law who died after a year. She felt so bad and blamed her life, when they told her that it is her turn to take care of her husband. She explained that *“It was very much frightening to be given away at an early age. At the moment, my school teachers tried to convince my parents but my parents gave them their deaf ears.”*

It was his mother who took care of him till now. However it happens to be her turn afterwards. She was sad by the time her in-law died. She had fear of the responsibility which was waiting ahead. During the wedding she left her parents’ house for few days and came back to her family being invited. At night when they get prepared to go to her in-law she refused but her father attempted to bit her with a knife. By then she used to be in grade three and was told to quit her education three days before the wedding.

She said that *"I have learned up to grade three and I used to think I would be able to finish school. When I got the bad news, I begged my teacher to interfere. However, all my efforts failed."* She further said *"I felt so sad since I knew I won't see my teachers as well as my friends again."* Then she left her home crying. By the time she married at age 11, her husband was away to learn the Bible and came back after a year at his mother's funeral. *"I preferred to stay with my mother but I was not given a chance. However, rather than moving directly to an independent house staying in a house where my mother-in-law was much better."*

She said that *"My marriage was with out my consent."* She complained that *"I cried and begged my parents but they explained that it was necessary for them to see their daughter getting married before they die. I was up to learning but my family has chosen marriage. She said that "The day I came back to my family for invitation, I refused to go back. As a result my father attempted to hit me with a knife."* They made her marry a man much older than her. She said that *"My husband's age was 20 years old by then, and I married a man I never knew."*

During the wedding night she was stiffed and remembers it with unpleasant. She explained this saying *"During the wedding I used to know the ceremony and I was afraid of passing through the same situation."* She additionally said that *"I was there for a week in a room full of men. I wished to die."* She has expressed her fear to men saying *"I used to be afraid of male teachers let alone spending day and night in a room full of men. I was tensed and felt like dying. I did not sleep comfortably."* She said that *"It was difficult to be in a house full of men. I was really tensed."*

She is still mad at her parents since they gave her away for marriage. Even while being interviewed, her face was frowned. Fetching water and embroidery were the only house chore she

used to manage by the time her in-law died. But afterwards she was able to take care of all house chores. She believes that a female should marry after she is grown up. Currently She involve in house chores such as baking 'injera', cooking, washing clothes, woven cotton for local clothes such as Gabi, and farming activities such as weeding and owing. She said that *"I was afraid the day my mother-in-law died thinking how to start life from scratch again. I used to hate farming and baking 'injera' and preparing local drink since it was though."*

She revealed that "Fetching water and embroidery were the only house chores I used to like and manage by the time I started living independently." Since I was a kid I could not manage the house chore within the daytime and my husband says *"it is ok you will get used to it. It is until you grow up well."* But whatever he says she used to feel bad. She believes she does everything with all the speed she has but never finishes within the daytime. She said that *"Whatever my husband used to say to encourage me I used to be tensed when I was unable to accomplish all the household chores. He doesn't value my comments concerning farming since he perceives me as a child"* (and yet she was married as an adult). What ever the case, it may be her husband's superiority that exceeds in every aspect of her life. If he wants a child or not it is only up to him to decide. She narrated *"He used a stick and hit me hard, I hated him to death."*

Running a house at this age is tough let alone at 11 and 12. She sometimes envies her parents home the days she played without worrying about house chores responsibility. Farming takes all your energy. She wishes to go to the town and work what so ever it may be. She believes that there is no job as tiresome as farming and other related activities. The moment she was given as a wife she did not experience menstruation. Her in-law died and her husband made love to her right

after she moved into his house. It was a painful experience and she was sick afterwards. The following consecutive days he struggled with her and pushed her to have sex with him.

Her husband is a priest and a farmer. She said that *"I called for help the day his parents left me inside a house detached from the main house. I screamed and begged but they never came to rescue me."* That night he used stick and bit her hard. She said *"I hated him to death, he did it hard the following few days .I don't feel pain now but I am not happy to have sex. I just do it not to disappoint him. When I was newly wedded I used to feel so bad when dusk comes. I used to feel stiffed and hated every thing. I wished and I still wish to proceed my education like other girls in the village. "* She first cried and was afraid to death. It has taken her two month to get used to him. She used to be panic whenever night falls. She said that *"I had a painful experience. It was painful but since he is a priest, I used to be afraid of his 'gizit' (curse)."* She said that *"I gave birth with a help of a midwife."*

For 20 days she stayed in bed to give birth. She had no idea about what labor was. She was in labor for five hours and by the help of midwife she gave birth. She explained that *"I have heard many stories related to child birth and I was afraid thinking that I would also die."* Some labor stays for three days. My elder sister labored for three days and they told her that it is dangerous to have another child again. She narrated that *"taking care of the child as well as the house chores is my headache. My husband doesn't help me in anyway."* She said that *"I remember one girl in our village. She was under age. She had sex and got a severe gynecologic problem. Finally she died. The girl was only fifteen."*

She said *"This time I feel better but immediately after the wedding I was so confused, did not know what to do. I thought of leaving my husband when his mother yelled at me and intimidated to*

take me back to my parent. However, I stayed with him since I know I would be given to another person again.” She said that “My husband has never participated in house chores, it is all my responsibility.” She complained that “I help my husband during farming season. But he decides on financial matters alone.” She confessed “After I started living with him he went to town to look for a job and I felt like getting lost leaving the kid aside but I had no idea how to go to town.” She can visit her parents twice or once in a month. They don't expect much, they are only happy to have coffee in her house, that's all.

“It is difficult for someone to be like me. Whenever my educated best friends get me they wish my past could have been like them. It is tiresome to be a farmer. Our parents might like it, but since we are children, we can't work diligently like them. I hate farming. It is a very tiresome job. Our fore mothers might have enjoyed farming. However we get insignificant product compared to our labor.”

She said *“My life is not an easy one.”* She usually passes through ups and downs. There is no comfort at all. *“These days my family seem to accept what I say, but three years back they didn't listen to me. It was the same with my husband. I am so unlucky. I feel sorry for myself.”* She wishes to be educated but not get married. Since her husband is a priest he doesn't bit her. However, he insults her in a very bad way as if she belongs to evil sprit worshipers.

She wishes the day she could be free of him since she couldn't learn and go to town. At times she blames God and her self for being female since she is always up to her husband's words. Whenever I see my friends who are not married but educated I feel inferior. They look beautiful but my face has got burnt with the sun. She still blamed her family. A girl has never chosen her own husband nor chooses the date of marriage. She compares her friends look with her and wishes

to have the same unburned face like them and their educational success. She usually feels sad when their life gets poorer and poorer. She is not happy since her life is not uniform. Her husband is the one who earns money. She only uses the amount of money he gives her.

Case Six

Religion	Orthodox
Age	15
Ethnicity	Amhara
Lives in	Mosebo Woreda

She got married at age 14 .She has two brothers, one is her elder and the other her younger. She replied that *“When my parents were alive, they were good to me. However my brother was so mean. He never listened to me.”* She also has one elder sister who is married at age 12. She has lost both parents currently. *She said that “It was very difficult to get married at an early age but I had nobody to stay with since I was an orphan.”* She is married to a priest whose age is 22. *She complained that “I have never been in a school for we were very poor.”* She was given away by her elder brother since their parents died at childhood. This has made it more difficult for her to join school and learn. She explained that *“I lost my parents long ago. My parents were not the one who gave me away. It was my elder brother who sentenced my marriage because I felt I would be burden to him and his wife.”*

Her husband had only a land by the time she was married. She heard about her marriage when a month was left. She said that *“I was 14 when I got married and have never been with my in-laws.”* She also said that *“My marriage was out of my will. I was not happy to marry such kind of person because he had nothing. He didn’t even have enough food to take care of me. He was just a priest.”* She narrated that *“I was happy to get married because it was the only solution I had not to be my brother’s burden.”* She said that *“I did not get a chance to stay with my in-laws. Both are dead. I directly started living with my husband independently.”* She said that *“I had no idea how old my husband is besides I did not know my husband before. My brother was the one who arranged the marriage.”* During my wedding I was feeling deep sorrow. Because it was just 40

days since my father passed away.” Besides, “on my wedding day I was with 15 strange men (best men) and stayed with them for one week. Moreover I found out that my husband was ‘jil’ (with no resource) and with no parents at all. My brother did not tell me all these. I knew after I went to my husband.”

While giving birth she was sick because of malnutrition. She was treated in the hospital for one month with the help of an institution called Population Council Office. Then she had twins at age 15. She replied that *“nobody helped me during my labor. I had a very tough time. I was in labor for 48 hours and finally gave birth for twins.”* She narrated that *“When I got pregnant I was extremely afraid that I would die.”* She was afraid the day she was married since she had no parents and it hurts because they didn't see her leaving. By the time she had no choice. By then her brother was married and his wife was at her parent's house. After her brother's marriage she thought living with him would be a burden and therefore obeyed her brother's offer and left.

Besides, her brother already had a child. That pushed her much. She deeply cried when she knew that she gave birth for twins. She said that *“I know many women who died during labor. My mother also died of labor complications.”* She labored for 48 hours. She had no idea about having amniotic fluid before having a baby. She gave birth with the help of her aunt. She knows girls within the village who died of childbirth. Most of all, her mother died of childbirth. She died while giving birth to her youngest sister who is married as well.

She replied that *“I didn't have any friend to talk to since my childhood. I used to take care of my sick father and then I continued to take care of my children. Thus I never had any spare time to be with friends.”* She said, *“Farming is very difficult. It is very tiresome. I hate farming.”* She

explained that *“Looking after children is fully my responsibility. I have never seen any man looking after children.”*

She was responsible at childhood in taking care of her sick father. This has given her a skill in managing the households She married 40 days after her father's death.. However, she used to get help from her brother's wife since it was difficult for her to take care of a house independently. *She said that “I am ok with house chores but I hate farming. Especially after I gave birth I was tired of asking of neighbors' for babysitting whenever I go to the market. My life is becoming unbearable.”* She didn't deny the fact that her husband has tolerated her whenever she makes mistake in the house but it didn't last for long. She said that *“I was not worried about responsibility because I was taking care of our house even before I got married.”*

Her husband has no parents and relative he can count on. She said *“My husband is not as such a nagging person. Thus I am not much worried about his criticism. However, I always wish to get divorced and leave these children but since my husband is a priest I fear of his curse or ‘gizit’.”*

She is not happy at all for having two children at the same time. She was severely sick and lost much weight. She got help through Population Council to be in a hospital and got food supply for her children for a while.

Her brother didn't give her a chance to choose a husband that she is going to marry. She didn't refuse since she has no choice. She was sad since he didn't have any asset and her brother got furious about her compliant. Currently her husband doesn't send her to school since there is no one to cook and take care of the kid. Since they don't have oxen they live giving their land to those with oxen through rental bases. Her husband sometimes fetches water but not always. Both

outdoor as well as indoor activities are supposed to be carried out by her. There are times when the activities do not get over though she starts early in the morning.

Farming is one of the activities she hates most since it is a difficult task. Having twins has made it more difficult for her. Although she plans divorce she has no one to turn to. She is also afraid of her husband's curse since her husband is a priest. She regrets for marrying a priest since there is no way out.

For one full week his best men were around as a result he didn't touch her. After they left he made her suffer from sex without her will. He did it for a week. She said that, it is a taboo to tell her discomfort. She just had to take it any way. Even if she complains there is no one to call for help. She said that *"I was 14 years old when I started to live with my husband independently."* She is not interested to have sex since there are many things about her children that bothers her but he keeps on demanding. *She said that "I can not say anything about sex because it is a taboo to talk about it."*

She complained that *"It was very painful to have sex with my husband .It was so painful. My husband was having sex with me regardless of my pain. It was paining for a long period of time."* Since her husband was a stranger she was afraid what he might do to her on her first night. She was afraid of him a lot. She hated him for almost a month until she get used to him. She said that she is used to him now but she is not still interested to have sex. She does it just to fulfill his needs. She revealed this by saying *"I am not interested to have sex since there are many things about my children bothering me."* Besides all the responsibilities she is highly worried about her children's food consumption. Those weeks of marriage were very tough times for me. Especially

when night comes, thinking of the demand that follows she used to be stiffed. Her husband spends the day in near by town to look for a job and come at night.

There are times she wished to be like her friends. Especially, she envies who have wealth and eat properly. Whenever she sees her friends she feels so bad since she envies their education. She said she wishes her parents were alive. However, she immediately said "*it is all the same; they would have made me marry someone than teaching me.*" She believes it is difficult to be her. It is such a difficult task to have twins and 'jill bal gar' (lazy husband) ."

She gets mad because of her children especially when they cry out. She also feels bad every time she plans to go to the market and has to beg the neighbors to look after one of her child. She also said, at times she feels like fleeing and disappearing from this life. When she lives with her family her life was somehow better. Currently her husband works on a farm in corporation with another man who owns oxen and a farm.

Appendix II – Questionnaire

Addis Ababa University
Graduate Studies
Department of Psychology

Questionnaire for female adolescents who got married early, it encompasses those who got married at early age.

Dear respondents

This questionnaire is designed for a research work to be conducted in partial fulfillment of a master's degree in developmental psychology. Thus, I ask your cooperation and giving appropriate information as to each of the following questions. I really need your help and honest responses for questions in order to make complete the research work.

You are not expected to tell your name in any of the interview unless other wise you feel like telling .This information is completely confidential.

The investigator

February, 2006

I. Background Characteristics

1. Age _____
2. Sex _____
3. Religion _____
4. Ethnicity _____
5. Father's educational level
6. Mother's educational level
7. Father's occupation
8. Mother's occupation
9. How do you perceive your family's social-economic status?

II .Early marriage related question

Questions that examine their stress

Before Wedding

Leaving Parents

1. How old were you when you were given away to live with your in-laws?
2. How do you feel about your parent for letting you marry at early age?
3. What do you feel about your parents for making you stop learning and get married?
4. Have you ever thought that you will get married and stop your education?

Marriage arrangement

1. Was your marriage done with your consent?
2. What did you feel when you knew you are getting married?
3. Did you know your husband?
4. How old was your husband when you first got married?

5. When did you know the arrangement of your marriage?

School attendance

1. Did you ever learn?
2. If yes, what grade are you?
3. Did you ever think you would stop learning?
4. What did you feel when you knew you have to stop your education?
5. Have you ever thought quieting your education will happen because of marriage?

During wedding

1. Was there any expectation about what can happen to you during wedding?
2. Is there any thing that happened that you don't forget during your wedding?
3. Did you expect that you will get married?

After wedding

Sexual experience

1. How old were you when you started to live alone with your husband?
2. What does it look like to have sexual experience with a stranger?
3. Do you enjoy sexual intercourse with your husband?
4. Do you tell your husband if you don't want sex?

Household responsibility

1. What did you feel when you knew you have to handle the house chores independently?
2. Which type of work do you like to do?

Pregnancy and child birth

1. What did you feel when you knew that you are pregnant?
2. Do you know any birth related problem in the village before?
3. Who has helped you during child birth process?

4. Whose responsibility is looking after a child?

New Home

1. What is your perception for farming?
2. Do you have any friend whom you talk to?
3. Do you have time to spend with your friends after marriage?

Living with in-law

1. What do you feel when your mother in-law come home for a sudden visit?
2. What did you feel the day you left your mother in-law?
3. For how long did you stay with your in-law?

Relationship with your husbands

1. Are you sensitive to your husband's criticism?
2. Do you wish for the day you will be free of your husband's intimidation?
3. How does your husband respond to your cook?
4. Does you husband always appreciate your good deeds?
5. Does your husband pressure you in any way?
6. How does your husband react when you make any kind of mistake?
7. Does your husband help you in any way on the things you do at home

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Declaration

I, the undersigned, declare that this is my original work and has not been presented for a degree in any other university and that all sources of material used for the thesis have been duly acknowledged.

Name: Julyata Shibru

Signature _____



This thesis has been submitted for examination with my approval as university advisor

Name: Dr. Mohan Raju

Signature _____

