Antecedent of Family Conflict and Educational Challenges Among Married Female Students in Tertiary Institutions in Nigeria: Implications for Sustainable Peace and National Development

[1]**Danjuma, Hajara Senchi** & [2]**Aliyu, Kabiru**
[1&2]*Division of General Studies,*
Kebbi State University of Science and Technology, Aliero, Kebbi, Nigeria

Abstract

Women's involvement in continuing education or their interest in pursuing further education in their marital homes is not without challenges. These challenges probably arise from gender role as assigned by some cultural heritage or beliefs of the people. Women prove their mantle in maintenance of home, Feeding and preservation of family health among others. Married female students are expected to perform the duties of wife, mother, in addition to fulfilling their academic responsibilities. This may lead to quarrels within the family due to overbearing engagements. This paper investigated the antecedents of family conflict and Educational Challenges among Married Female Students in Tertiary Institutions in Nigeria and its implication for Sustainable Peace and National Development. The paper used published and unpublished articles, journals and books. Frustration–aggression theory was adopted as the theoretical framework. The paper further identified the causes of family conflicts and its challenges on married female students; the strategies to manage or control family conflict and the need for peace building in both the family and the society at large. The paper also highlighted the need of women education for sustainable peace and National Development. The paper recommends among others that women should not be distracted by any form of family conflicts; rather they should focus on their academic activities. The paper also gave suggestions for further studies.

Keywords: Family Conflict, Women Education, Sustainable Peace, Tertiary Institutions

Corresponding Author: Danjuma, Hajara Senchi

Background to the Study

Women's involvement in continuing education or their interest in pursuing further education in their marital homes is not without challenges. In spite of the problems encountered by women generally and married women in particular in educational pursuit, they have not relented to exhibit their desire and yearnings for higher education. However, their efforts have continued to be limited and truncated by family conflict (Aminu, 2010). Married women (students) are often faced with combine family responsibilities which include producing children, custody of children, maintenance of home, feeding and preservation of family health and domestic chores among others. However, the strains faced may likely lead to quarrels and misunderstanding between spouses. These categories of women feel overwhelmed by their numerous responsibilities which often take precedence over school work (Aminu, 2010). Consequently, this leads to irregularity in attending educational tasks such as coming late for lectures and test, late or non-submission of continuous assessment among others.

Lee and Myers (2005) observed that being a student and at the same time a mother is a delicate juggling act. According to the authors, it takes time, patience and bundles of energy, thus, due to incompatible expectations, demand for one's role makes the performance of the other more conflicting. Although men approved of the student role of their wives, but majority do not provide the needed help at home because more often than not their anxiety increases the longer the wives are in schools, in addition, husbands do not pick up the slack left when the wives have to attend to other responsibilities, this probably may arise from gender role as assigned by some cultural heritage or beliefs of the people.

Education is believed to provide knowledge and resources that hold potentials for economic empowerment, better livelihood and social development. Education is one of the most far-reaching requirements for development, alleviating poverty, improving health outcomes and quality of life, reducing gender and social disparities as well as enhancing economic productivity (Roges, 1997 in Amos and Manson,2015). Hence, the mounting interest and pressure of women generally and married women in particular to further education inform the establishment of continuing higher education in tertiary institutions nowadays are expected to be maintained. However, family conflict serves as a threat to achieving this goal, this is because family conflict is associated with high stress, depression and anxiety which may distort educational activities (Amos and Manson, 2015).

It should be noted however, that family conflict usually leads to broken lives, broken homes, shattered and divided communities, distrust, injury, killings and hatred among others. Dogo (2005) explain that family conflict can lead to psychological behaviour, emotional imbalance, mentality disturbance, trauma and poor retentive memory of its members. All these may have an adverse effect on pursuance of goals and objectives. Thus, it has become increasingly obvious that married women need to be given unique opportunity and advantages for peace to reign in the family this is because, support for the education of married women largely depends on the peaceful co-existence of the family. This can boost their interest in participating fully in educational activities.

Hence, the increasing interest in women's education nationally and internationally, coupled with its importance to sustainable peace and overall national development demands that family conflict and its challenges faced by married female students needs to be identified. This study therefore sets out to investigate the antecedents of family conflict and educational challenges facing married female students in tertiary institutions of learning in Nigeria. Specifically, this paper aimed at identifying the causes of conflict among married female students in tertiary institutions, the challenges and also the need for peace building in both family and the society as a whole.

Theoretical Framework
This paper adopted frustration–aggression theory to give explanation on family conflict and educational challenges facing married female students in tertiary institutions. The theory was first proposed by John Dollard, Neal Miller; Leonard Drob, Oral Mowrer and Robert Sears in 1939 and further developed by Neal Miller in 1941 and Leonard Berkowitz, Red Robert Gurr and Aubrey Yates in 1969.

The philosophical basis of frustration–aggression theory is that aggression is the outcome of frustration which arises from the inability to fulfil needs. These needs include among others social recognition and sense of belonging. The theory assumes that in a situation where legitimate desires of an individual are denied either overly or covert is consequence upon the way society is structured. The feeling of disappointment may lead such a person to express and manifest his anger through violence. This violence will be directed at those he holds responsible or people who are directly or indirectly related to them.

Opportunities and relationships are socially constructed in the society hence, the responsibilities assigned to a woman and the activities undertaking in the home arena are also socially constructed. Culturally, women are often burdened by traditionally assigned duties with the social, political and religious milieu they found themselves. No doubt combining family responsibilities and school obligation is very complex and tasking, ultimately, the struggling and juggling inherent in it may create tension and misunderstanding within the family leading expression of aggression. This consequently may lead to low concentration and low participation in academic activities. By and large, the adoption of frustration-aggression for the analysis of the precipitating forces of family conflict vis-à-vis their educational pursuit will greatly aid the understanding of their challenges.

Conceptual Exposition
The Concept of Conflict
Conflict is certainly an intrinsic and inevitable part of human existence. It exists in all countries and every level of society. The word conflict originated in the 15th century from the Latin word 'Conflicts' meaning to 'strike together' or 'fight' (Dogo, 2005). However, in modern usage, conflict have been broadened to assume a multi-disciplinary dimension cutting across the fields of English language, politics, military, psychology, sociology,

administration and literature (Miller,2003). Also, Wilson and Haruna (1990) define conflict as a struggle involving ideas, values and limited resources. Dogo (2005) asserted that conflict is the actions or beliefs of one or more members of a group which are restricted by one or more group members. Dogo added that conflict is incompatible behaviour between parties whose interest appeal to be incompatible or clashing. Conflict is also perceived as the pursuit of incompatible interest and goals by different groups which perhaps may resort to the use of force and violence, (Aminu, 2010). Having seen the variation of the concept of conflict, in the context of this write-up conflict is defined as the absence of peace, absence of tranquillity, absence of well-being, a state of instability and injustice which together produces anxiety, fear and tension among the incompatible groups. Also, it is referred to as a breakdown in the standard relation and interaction of people individuals and groups.

Family Conflict
Family conflict is any conflict that occurs within a family. It can be between husbands and wives, parents and children, between siblings or with extended families such as grandparents, aunties and uncles (Malek, 2013). Donald (2000) family conflict is a slight or sharp disagreement or clash of interest or ideas between the members of a family.

No matter how loving a family is, it experiences conflicts. Ministry, Benner, Tan and Kim (2009) confirmed that family conflict arises when family members have different views or beliefs that clash. It is normal to disagree with each other from time to time the occasional conflict is part of family life, this was confirmed by Malek (2013) who stated that members are highly emotionally attached, and these emotions can quickly intensify or ignite conflict. Undoubtedly, family members are involved in long term relationships and more often than not, they require to interact with each other on a daily basis since interaction is inevitable and no people can stay in isolation, these characteristics could lead to long, tangle and painful conflict. However, in the context of this paper, family conflict is defined as a state of misunderstanding and instability between family members either nuclear or extended which may arise when family members can no longer condone or tolerate others actions, inaction, behaviours or attitudes. In this connection, there is bound to be conflict in any interaction as every individual are indispensable to one another.

Women Education
Education generally is the total process of human learning by which knowledge is impacted, valuable skills developed and faculties trained (Abubakar, 2009 in Senchi and Danjuma 2016). Education is the way the individual acquires the physical, moral and social capacities demanded by the society (Swift, 1969 in Abdullahi, 2005). Education is also perceived as the inculcation of knowledge, skills and ideas that will make the recipient more acceptable and acknowledged in the society. Women education as accentuated by Abdullahi (2009) refers to any type of education given to females to prepare them adequately to meet up with socio-economic needs and enable the women to identify their places and roles in nation-building. Similarly, Ali (2010) affirmed women

education as the skills and competence acquired by women adapt to society positively towards striving optional socio-economic and cultural development. Thus, education is the greatest weapon that man had devised for peace, progress and overall national development and making it accessible to women should not be overemphasized.

Sustainable Peace

Peace generally is seen as the absence of war, crisis, upheavals, riot, anxiety, threat, fear, instability, injustice etc. (Aminu, 2010). Sustainable peace according to Tauri (2010) is seen as a goal and a process with activities aimed at the prevention of conflict, engaging in peace processes, politics, governance, institution building, and rules of law, security, social and economic recovery. Khalid and Muktar (2014) defined sustainable peace as a goal and process to build a common vision of a society ensuring that the need of all segment of the population is taken into consideration which encompasses activities aimed at preventing the outbreak, escalating, addressing root causes, assisting parties to conflict to end hostilities, ensuring national reconciliation and moving towards recovery, continuation and recurrence of conflict. This write-up, sustainable peace is perceived as the provision of long lasting peace and justice in the family.

Tertiary Institutions

According to Amoo (2018) tertiary institutions refers to an institution of higher education. They refer to institutions beyond secondary levels; these institutions include colleges of education, polytechnics and universities. Tertiary education also refers to a third level, a third stage or post-secondary education.

Perceived Need of Women Education for Sustainable Peace and National Development

Education is regarded worldwide as a veritable tool for human development physically, mentally and socially, hence, education is not a charity but rather a fundamental human right for all people irrespective of sex, race, or economic status. According to Momudu and Shu'ib (2009), no genuine development can be achieved when almost 50% of the World's population (women) does not have direct access to the wealth of the nation which could be guaranteed through the attainment of education. Consequently, Abdullahi (2009) cited in Danjuma (2017) asserted that countries that have raised the status of women educationally, socially, politically and economically enjoy a high standard of living whereas countries with a high number of illiterate women experience low standard of living. In this situation, women's education is bound to encourage peace and security that will lead to sustainable peace and national development.

In a related development, Offoma (2009) argued that educating females will yield far-reaching benefits for girls and women themselves, their families and the societies in which they live. Besides, Tauri (2010) asserted that education helps in the fulfillment of women's obligation in their marital homes. Tauri maintained that when women are educated, they can take care of their homes, husbands and children etc. Women are expected to use whatever knowledge and skills they acquired to cook, clean, and rear

children in her marital home which in subsequent will bring about blissful and peaceful family. It is obvious to note, however, that a woman who can read about health care, nutrition, body changes, and modern household equipment among others will perform creditably at home and in the society at large. Similarly, Chindo (2010) extols that an educated woman is likely to become competent and knowledgeable mother, a more productive and better paid-mother, an informed citizen, a self-confident individual and skilled decisions, maker. If the majority of women folk are educated, their personal development, children, husbands as well as overall national development can be enriched remarkably. Danjuma (2017) added that the education of girls and women generally will boost education and mitigate poverty for generations to come. Perhaps women, when educated, are likely to be confident of themselves with greater ability to contribute effectively to sustainable peace and national development.

Challenges Faced by Married Female Students in Tertiary Institutions
A study conducted by Amos and Manson (2015) aimed to identify the domestic and academic challenges confronting married women in tertiary institutions. A qualitative approach was adopted and a purposive sampling technique was used to select 30 respondents from a group of married women in the University of Wnneba in Ghana. The study illustrated that, respondents encountered various types of challenges as they combined education with their home responsibilities. The challenges include difficulties to have time to care for the members of the family, such as nurturing of children to become well-disciplined individuals and difficulty in catering for their needs among others. They further explained that the challenges encountered led to unstable home, low academic participation and performance. This was confirmed by lee and Myer (2005), the authors stated that an unstable family relationship always creates imbalance for married women students. Lee and Myer emphasized that the husband always threaten to divorce the wife as a result of poor marital performance on the part of the married student woman. For instance, such married women who are also students in tertiary institutions would have divided attention and their concentration impaired to both home and academic works.

Behol and Irfan (2017) also conducted a study on the problems of married women at higher education in Pakistan. The study major focus is the exploration of the socio-cultural, financial and academic problems of married women at higher education. Using descriptive research; the researchers employed a qualitative approach for collection of data with a semi- structured interview. The data were collected from 20 participants who are all married female students enrolled in private Universities of Rawal Pindi and Islamabad. The selection was made through a snowball sampling technique. The results of the study indicated that married female students face many challenges while pursuing their education. However, the most important factor revealed by the majority of the respondent was an unstable family relationship. Other issues include household activities, child-rearing, time management, and academic work-load among others. Khalid and Muktar (2014) avert that loaded academic work, inadequate time and loaded household or domestic chores are some of the challenges faced by married women students in tertiary institutions, this is in addition to childbearing, financial problems and

lack of support from the spouse and other family members. Aminu (2010) added that unstable family relationships have been identified as a significant negative factor affecting married women in tertiary institutions, they stressed that married women students are unmotivated in attending higher education due to either child-rearing factor or domestic chores. These categories of women they maintained often face low self-confidence and lack of encouragement from their husbands while pursuing their academic work. It is obvious to note that female married students have to perform the structural role of a wife, mother and daughter in- law as well as academic responsibilities. Hence, managing these tasks may ultimately lead to a dispute between spouses and other family members which consequently may influence academic participation negatively.

In a related development, Sarah (2012) conducted a study on the problems encountered by the married female of B.Ed part-time students of Usmanu Danfodiyo University Sokoto, Nigeria. The study investigated the challenges or constraints of women in continuing higher education programme. A simple survey research design was employed. The study used both questionnaire and interview session to elicit data. The data collected were analyzed using mean score, frequency count and simple percentages. A sample of 150 students was randomly selected using simple random sampling procedure. The findings of the study showed that the major constraints or challenges of married women particularly those enrolled in tertiary institution include family problems, lack of encouragement from the spouse, time constraints, increasing marital demand among others. Sarah (2012) pointed out that these problems aggravated to low participation and low concentration to academic activities. The finding of this study could have been better if both part-time and full time's married women students were captured thus, the researcher may likely find out if both part-time and full-time married women students face similar challenges arising from their families and the effect of these challenges on academic activities. Schooling for married women in higher institutions indeed is tedious and challenging. It is observed that managing multiple roles at home and participating in academic activities leads to unstable family relationships, most especially between spouses leading to low academic participation and low concentration on school.

Possible Causes of Family Conflicts
The causes of family conflict vary from one family to another however, they are generally attributed to certain factors, these factors include:

Financial Dissatisfaction
Owusu (2015); opined that the monster of financial stress among families is one of the most major causes of family conflicts. When the resources needed to meet the family needs and aspirations are not adequate especially when the expenditure is greater than the income, this condition can cause unwanted pressure on the couples or families. Owusu, (2015) opined that financial crisis more often than not cause physical and emotional stress on the couples most especially when the income is insufficient to pay up school fees and buy other schooling materials.

Aminu (2016) itemized increase in worry, poor concentration, lack of confidence, low self-esteem, lack of self-care, negative emotions, the use of alcohol and drugs among others as significant effects of financial stress. Other factor includes; poor timekeeping, frequent absence, feeling guilty, and letting people down.

Lack of Sexual Satisfaction
Sex is regarded as one of the major components of marriage. Some even see it as indispensable, while others regard it as a mere means of procreation. If sex is removed from the marriage relationship, then the relationship becomes boring and uninteresting and un-stimulating. Owusu (2015), opined that sexual activity should not be looked at as just an ordinary act, but also as something which connects the influence of customs. There should be an understanding of emotional reaction towards each other as a vital of survival of the relationship otherwise, the problem of inadequate sexual satisfaction which may likely arise as a result of overloaded domestic responsibilities and school work as the part of the female married student may probably lead to intense family conflict.

In another development, Pete (2008); cited that until one starts to look at family conflict and ask how to deal with the issue, otherwise the relationship will not improve much. He also listed ten common causes of conflict as;
1. Money: Most couples always argue over a financial issue.
2. Children's discipline and diet
3. Sex: Frequency, quantity and quality and infidelity.
4. Schedule: Time apart and lack of quality time together get a couple out of harmony
5. Chaos: Most couples argue over equitable distribution of household work and how to do it
6. Friends: Not all friends are helpful to relationships. Some of them are poisonous
7. Habit: some couples after marriage finds out to be unbearable which their partner has or undesirable habits and behaviour.
8. Family: In-laws, siblings, children and step-children can all create stress within a marriage.
9. Expectations: Judgment and unmet expectations are major causes of conflict.
10. Personality conflict: Inability to like a thing particular thing or behaviour about your spouse may likely lead to conflict.

Lack of trust from both spouses
Chindo (2010), explained that trust is an important element that sustains a good relationship between couples and family members. Chindo further, asserted that trust is part of the foundation for a healthy and peaceful family relationship broken trust.

Strategies to Manage or Resolve Family Conflict
Conflict is part of human life, it cannot be avoided but it can be managed, resolved, transformed and experienced as a gift from life to become deeper and wiser individual. Morin (2015) stated that families who peacefully resolve conflict may grow closer as they learn from one another and work hard to take one another's feelings into consideration. Morin (2015) further identified ways to resolve family conflict as follows:

1. Identify a problem. Family must acknowledge a problem, discuss it all together and a successful resolution occurs
2. Establish ground rules for resolving the problems before discussing ways of resolving the conflict
3. Allow everyone involved to offer input into a potential solution. Create a list of a potential solution
4. Evaluate the risk and benefit of each potential solution. Listen to each family members input about the 'proms' and 'cons' of the solution
5. Solve a solution as a team. Try to reach a consensus about which solution will best resolve the conflict.
6. Identify what each family member will do to work on the solution that is, each person should identify action steps he/she will take to work towards the solution

The Need for Peace Building in the Family
Peace building involves addressing the root causes of conflict both in the family and the society at large. According to Aminu (2016) peace building is a comprehensive peace process in addressing challenges at different levels of conflict. It enables the warring parties to continue to find a solution through negotiations for promotion of social and economic justice. Family relationships are undoubtedly important to individuals, family themselves and their respective communities. When we are born into the world, what constitutes our world is the family, in infancy, childhood and into adulthood hence it is pertinent to have a peaceful family with a relationship that is respected.

The strength of our communities depends on the peaceful coexistence of our families. Peaceful families do communicate and reinforce the values that parents and adults in the home think are important, thus increasing harmony, tolerance, understanding and respect to each other's values. Family peace reduces the impact of conflict and violence at home; evidently, this increases the interest of married female students to participate fully in educational activities.

Conclusion
It was realized from the study, that the major causes of conflict among married female students in tertiary institutions include lack of encouragement from the spouse, lack of financial support, loaded household and domestic chores, including inadequate time to care for the family, which adversely, leads to stress and tension among married female students. The consequences include unstable family relationships, low concentration and low participation in schooling activities. Henceforth, the need for peaceful coexistence, harmony, tolerance and understanding with a relationship that is respected in the family cannot be overemphasized, because, a peaceful family creates an enabling environment for married female students to participate and concentrate fully in the educational activities

Recommendations
1. Married Female Student should not be distracted by any form of family conflict, instead, they should focus on their academic work

2. Married Female Student who are experiencing family conflict should try to strike a balance between home activities, family issues and academic work
3. Married Female Student should be tutored on time management strategies; this can be incorporated in the school programme as a means to help them manage efficiently the time available to them
4. Reducing the number of programs that have to be covered at a tertiary institution can help married female students cope with family life and academic activities.

Suggestions for Further Studies
1. Influence of family conflict on the academic performance of married female students in tertiary institutions
2. Influence of family conflict on job performance of spouses in the workforce.

References

Abdullahi, A. (2005). *Influence of women education on academic performances of students in Pategi Local Government Area, Kwara State*. Unpublished MED project, Usmanu Danfodiyo University Sokoto, Nigeria.

Abdullahi, S. A. (2009). The challenges of gender-sensitive curriculum for sustainable development in Nigeria, *Farfaru Journal of Multi-Disciplinary Studies, Special Conference Edition Sokoto, Nigeria, 4* (2), 1-6.

Abubakar, H. S. (2009). Educating the girl-child for sustainable development, *Farfaru Journal of Multidisciplinary Studies, 4* (2) 34 - 41

Ali, B. A. (2010). Gender inequality in education in Nigeria: The way forward. *Bakatsine Journal of Education, 2* (1), 31 – 36.

Aminu, T. (2010). *Orthodox and contemporary approaches in conflict management in the three senatorial district of the Sokoto State*, Being a Workshop with Sokoto State Government. Unpublished

Aminu, T. A. (2016). *Reconsideration of Nigerian Women in conflict prevention and peace building for national development*, Unpublished paper Sokoto State Government.

Amoo, A. (2018). *Criteria for establishing tertiary institutions in Nigeria*

Amos, P. M. & Manson, E. (2015). Issues and challenges confronting married women in tertiary institutions, *International Journal of Education, Learning and Development. 3,* 19-27.

Behol, M. G. Irfan, N. (2016). Problem of married women at higher education in Pakistan; Academic, Social and Cultural Context, *International Journal of African and Asian Studies* 20 (5) 106 – 115

Chindo, M. G. (2010). *Influence of marital conflicts on academic performance of married students in State- owned Tertiary Institutions of Kaduna St*ate.

Danjuma, M. (2017). Influence of parents' education background on girl child education in Kebbi State. *Journal of Science, Technology and Education, 5 (3) 60 – 70*

Dogo, B. (2005). *Crisis and conflict management in Nigeria since 1980*: Governance and Conflict Management, Kaduna: NDA Press.

Donald, B. (2000). Ethnic groups in conflict, California: Berkeley University of California Press.

Khalid, H.S & Muktar, M. (2014). *The future of girl's education in Pakistan*

Lee, T. & Myer, W. (2005). *Modern woman student and family problem*, New York: Mc Millian Publishing Company.

Malek, U. (2013). *Challenges faced by married University undergraduate female students in Kebbi State University of Science and Technology, Aliero. Nigerian* (Unpublished)

Miller, C. A. (2003). Glossary of terms and concept in peace and conflict students University for Peace, Africa Programme Geneva

Ministry, R. S., Benner, A. D, Tan, C. S & Kim, S. Y. (2009). Family economic stress and academic well-being among Chinese-American Youth: Influence of adolescent perception economic strain. *Journal of Family Psychology*, 23, 279 – 290

Momodu, T. & Shuaib, A. S. (2009). Girl-child education as panacea for sustainable educational development, *Farfaru Journal of multidisciplinary studies, special conference edition, Sokoto, Nigeria 4*, 430 – 436.

Morin, A (2015). *How to resolve family conflict.* Retrieved from; https://www.psychology today.com on 15th May 2019.

Offoma, G. C (2009). *Girl child education in Africa*, Keynote Address Presented at the Conference of the Federation of the University Women in Africa Held in Lagos Nigeria (16 – 19th July).

Owusu, M. (2015). *Problems and challenges confronting married female students in Federal Polytechnic Birnin Kebbi*, Unpublished Project.

Pete, E. (2008). *Financial stress, family conflict and yacht successful transition to Adulthood,* New York, USA: Black World Publishers.

Rogers, J. (1997). *Matured women and higher education in West Africa*. New York USA: Black World Publishers.

Sarah, A. M. (2012). Problem Encountered by Married Female B.ED Part Time Students in Usman Danfodiyo University Sokoto.(Unpublished Project).

Senchi, H. & Danjuma, M. (2016). Effect of Parents' Educational Status on Girl Child Enrollment in Education in Kalgo Local Government Area of Kebbi State: Implication for Sustainable Development. *Journal of Sociology of Education 11, 41-48.*

Swift, D. (1969). *The Sociology of education: Introductory analytical perspectives*. London: Routledge and Kegan Paul.1

Tauri, A. A. (2010). Women education in Katsina State: Issues, Problems and Prospects. *Bakatsina Journal of Education Katsina, Nigeria* 1 (2) 16-2