

DELAYED MARRIAGE AMONG SINGLE PARENTS IN
OYO NORTH BAPTIST ASSOCIATION

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ABSTRACT

The researcher investigated delayed marriage among single parents in Oyo North Baptist Association. Research design of survey typed was adopted for the study. The instrument used was researcher structured questionnaire validated by experts in the relevant field and the final draft was drawn in line with the recommendation of the supervisor. One hundred respondents were sampled for this study. Also, frequency count and simple percentage were used for demographic data and analysis of responses from the instrument respectively. In all, six questions were raised in this study and the following six variables were critically scrutinized thus: the stigma of child's presence, backwardness in education, church spiritual programmes for singles, faster aging/physical disfiguring, financing the home and caring for child (ren) born out of wedlock. The conclusions from the study include: marriageable mates, church and society discriminate and stigmatized single parents; few among the Church Pastors had plan for the early single parents; heavy financial burdens as a result of transferred responsibilities coupled with expected ones in new matrimonial home makes Christian Brother to litter single parents in-terms of marriage. Based on these findings, the study recommends that: the Church Pastor should be magnanimous enough to accomodate repentant single parents; church as a community of faith should be friendly enough to welcome these categories of people; parents or guardians of single parents are admonished not to terminate the academic pursuits of their children who fall victim; the Church Pastor should organize quarterly or twice in a year spiritual enrichment programmes for single parents; have time for counselling; organize a forum in the church that will combine all singles for orientation and re-orientation in-terms of marriage; early single parents should dress smartly, neatly and behave chastisly; and Christian brothers who desire to go with single parents should have their minds prepared to cater for children born out of wedlock as their own without discrimination; and financial strength ought to be considered.

5.2. CONCLUSION

Due to discrimination from marriageable mates, church, society and negative societal view, persistent delay in marriage among single parents still continues. Inability of early single parents to continue their academic pursuits grossly affects their chances of getting married to right Christian brothers, at the right time, right age and right places. This contributes to the large number of early Christian single parents lying fallow for marriage even with tears and untold agony within or without.

It was inferred that few among the Church Pastors had plan for the early single parents. It further shows that their cases seldomly concern the church because there is no spiritual plans or activities for the categories of these people. The study revealed that Christian brothers may unlikely go for single parents who appear older than their ages as their appearances remain unattractive. Moreover, sharing of expected conjugal love with the child/ren born out of wedlock will make many Christian brothers not to ever look at the side of single parents let alone marrying them.

Lastly, heavy financial burdens as a result of transferred responsibilities coupled with expected ones in new matrimonial home makes Christian brother to litter single

parents in-term of marriage. Generally speaking, going in line with these discoveries, there is high tendency for early single parents to continue experiencing delayed marriage.

5.3 RECOMMENDATIONS

- i. The Church Pastor should be magnanimous enough to accomodate repentant single parents to give them hope for their futures.
- ii. Church as a community of faith should be friendly enough to welcome these categories of people because when there is life, there is hope.
- iii. Parents or guardians of single parents are admonished not to terminate the academic pursuits of their young sisters who fall victim of this circumstance for their blurred future to become brightened once again. Not only that, it will equally gives opportunity of mixing with their colleagues to prevent stigma and discrimination.
- iv. The Church Pastor should try as much as possible to organize quarterly or twice in a year spiritual enrichment programmes for single parents as this will show that they are not neglected or vulnerable members of the Church.
- v. The Church Pastor is encouraged to have time for counselling of these people. It will serve as an avenue for spiritual interfeence in order to cope and adjust with the present situation.
- vi. The Church Pastor should organize a forum in church that will combine all singles (that is single parents and single brothers) for orientation and re-orientation of both parties in-terms of marriage.

- vii. Early single parents should dress smartly, neatly and behave chastisly as this will encourage single brothers to admire and develop kin interest to marry them peradventure God led them to do so.

- viii. Christian brothers who desire to go with single parents should have their minds prepared to cater for child/ren born out of wedlock as their own without discrimination. Again, financial strength ought to be considered as a reality in marrying single parent in-terms of home provision and care for all children if they are staying together.