

Public Perceptions of Changing Gender Roles and Relations in the Family: A Study of Kaduna Metropolis, Kaduna State, Nigeria

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Abstract

The study analysed public perceptions of the changing gender roles and relations in the family in Kaduna metropolis of Kaduna state, Nigeria. Multiple stage sampling technique was used to select 152 men and 145 women. Data was generated through the administration of well structured questionnaire. Analysis was done with descriptive statistics. The socio-economic characteristics showed that the mean age of men and women were 45 and 48 years respectively with a mean income of ₦132, 000 for men and ₦118, 000 for women. Furthermore, the conventionally expected roles of men were, providing for the family and women cooking for the family. Also, the major decision by men is the family budgeting while the women decide which school the children will attend. The mean score of 3.5 and 3.7 for men and women respectively indicated that both agreed and accepted the changed gender roles. The major factors influencing changing gender roles are modernization, economic factors, social media and campaign for gender equality. The study concluded that family budget is majorly decided by men and recommended that men and women should complement each other in deciding the family budget and there should be intensified campaign on gender equality in terms of roles played in the family.

Keywords: Family, Gender, Kaduna, Metropolis, Perception

Introduction

The family is often seen as the smallest social unit. The socialization of children into different roles, functions, religion, economic and political issues is rooted from the family. To properly expose the children to the norms, ethics, roles and obligations of the wider society and provide for the daily needs of the family, parents work hard assuming different roles to actualize these dreams.

The major trends in family structures have shifted overtime. Fertility rates have declined and childbearing occurs later and more often within marriage and couple relationships - both marital and non-marital ones - have become more fragile. These changes have led to increasingly complex family compositions and a growing diversity of family forms and relationships over the life course. The new family trends and patterns have been paralleled by changes in gender roles, especially an expansion of the female role to include economic provision for a family, and lately also transformation of the male role with more intense involvement in family responsibilities, especially care for children (Olah, *et al.*, 2014).

The family as a dynamic entity, with increasing complexity regarding decision-making processes and transitions overtime has to readjust in terms of gender roles to withstand the forces of externalities; economic, political, social and insecurity. The meaning of gender is learnt and internalized through everyday life. Children come to understand what masculinity and femininity means through seemingly inconsequential practices. The spatial organization of residences is one example of an ordinary practice that deeply affects how gender is learnt by young children. Gender roles of men and women are reflected in spatial distinctions of (the street) and (the home).

Men are able to leave the home freely, be it for work or leisure; because part of their gender role is to support the family, they are not required to ask for permission to be in the streets. Symbolically, the street represents men's space: it implies freedom for work and even for reprehensible behaviours such as drinking and infidelity.

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A blind eye is turned to these behaviours because men provide the financial support of a household. On the contrary, the home symbolizes a female space. The home tends to be a space of ordered and managed sexuality as opposed to the sexual danger and ferment of the street (Hirsch, 2003). Women are largely expected to be homemakers, ensuring that the home and children are adequately cared for while men work outside of the home. There are not many opportunities for women to work outside of the home, and women can be chastised if seen outside the home without a man.

As a result of these heavily gendered identities, marriages are often based on the concept of respect and have a hierarchal power structure in which a woman is often relegated to the demands and desires of her husband (Hirsch, 2003). Overtime, these roles and relations have changed succumbing to social, political and economic changes and influences in the society. This research work therefore makes an empirical contribution to this discuss with Kaduna metropolis as the case study.

Research Methodology

Kaduna was founded by the British in 1913 and became the capital of Nigeria's former Northern Region in 1917 (Fletcher and *Cruickshank, 1996*) and retained this status until 1967. It is the capital of Kaduna State in North-western region of Nigeria. It is a trade centre and a major transportation hub for the surrounding agricultural areas with its rail and road junctions. Kaduna state with 2.4% population growth rate has an estimated population of 8, 252, 400 million people as at 2016 (NPC, 2016). The State is home to the Nigerian Defense Academy, Kaduna Polytechnic, Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria, Kaduna State University, Nigerian College of Aviation Technology, Zaria, Nigerian Institute for Trypanosomiasis Research and the Nigerian Institute of Transport Technology. Kaduna is an industrial centre of Northern Nigeria, manufacturing products like textiles, machinery, steel, aluminum, petroleum products and bearings. Pottery is highly prized from Kaduna, especially from the Nok culture, which precedes Abuja and Minna. The state has 23 Local Government Areas and is politically classified as belonging to the North – West Zone of the current six (6) Geo - political zones of Nigeria. It is populated by about 59 to 63 different ethnic groups with the Hausa and Fulani as the dominant ethnic groups in the state.

Multi stage sampling technique was used in selecting the samples for the study. A total of 152 men and 145 women totaling 297 were sampled for the study. Primary data were generated through the administration of well structured questionnaire. Generated data were analyzed with descriptive statistics.

Weighted average score (WAS)

Weighted average is an average where each value is assigned a specific weight or frequency. A weighted average takes different scores, or grades, with assigned weights, or percentage. Weighted average score was used to determine the changed gender roles in the family and perceptions of changing gender roles in the study.

$$\text{Weighted Avg}_x = W_1X_1 + W_2X_2 + \dots W_nX_n \dots \dots \dots (1)$$

Where

W= Relative weight of the Likert Scale (Strongly Disagree (SD) = 1, Disagree (D) = 2, Undecided (U) = 3, Agree (A) = 4, Strong Agree (SA) = 5)

X= Nominal value of the changed roles

Results and Discussion

Table 1: Socio-economic characteristics of farm households in the study area

Characteristics	Men (N = 152)			Women (N = 145)		
	F	%	Mean	F	%	Mean
Age (Yrs)						
20 – 29	22	14		15	10	
30 – 39	30	20		28	20	
40 – 49	45	30	45	32	22	48
50 – 59	30	20		49	34	
> 59	25	16		21	14	
Educational Levels (Year)						
Primary	42	28		68	47	
Secondary	50	33		45	31	
Tertiary	60	39		32	22	
Marital Status						
Single	60	39		42	29	
Married	92	61		103	71	
Household Size (No.)						
1 – 5	92	61		83	57	
6 – 10	38	25	6	47	32	5
>10	22	14		15	10	
Level of Income (₦)						
50, 000 – 99, 999	32	21		75	52	
100, 000 – 149, 000	72	47	132, 000	45	31	118, 000
150, 000 – 199, 000	48	32		25	17	
Other Occupations (Type)						
Trading/Business	50	33		63	43	
Civil Service	62	40		50	35	
Professional Careers	40	27		32	22	

Table 1 shows that the mean ages of the respondents are 45 and 48 years for men and women respectively. Also, age of the respondents indicates that men (86%) and women (90%) are between the age ranges of 30 – 59 years. This suggests that the respondents are experienced to understand issues within their environment with regards to roles of men and women in the society. The finding is contrary to the findings of Mohammad (2011); Pathiraja *et al.* (2010) and Asadullah, (2005), who reported younger respondents in their studies. Levels of education show that both men and women attained various levels of education, though men attained higher levels of education as 39% attained tertiary education as against 22% of women. Exposure to education according to Otunaiye and Akinleye (2008) will increase individual's ability to acquire, process and use information. Furthermore, level of income shows that the mean income for men and women were ₦132, 000 and ₦118, 000 respectively. This finding agrees with Deji and Koledoye (2013) and Oladipo *et al.* (2011) who reported that men generate more income than women. This level of income will not be enough for men and women to take care of the roles in the family. According to Mohammed (2011), income is a driving force for running any activity and plays an important role in human activities.

Table 2: Conventional expected gender roles in the family

Roles	Men (N = 152)*			Women (N = 145)*		
	F	%	Rank	F	%	Rank
Providing for the family	152	100	1 st	119	82	4 th
Taking the car for repairs	141	97	2 nd	31	21	12 th
Doing repairs in the house	130	86	3 rd	42	29	11 th
Taking and picking the children from school	118	78	4 th	92	63	8 th
Cutting grass around the family house	110	72	5 th	97	69	7 th
Ironing cloths	95	63	6 th	68	47	9 th
Washing car	87	57	7 th	51	35	10 th
Fetching water	63	41	8 th	110	76	6 th
Cleaning the house	44	30	9 th	115	79	5 th
Washing cloths	40	26	10 th	122	84	3 rd
Cooking food	32	21	11 th	152	100	1 st
Washing kitchen utensils	28	18	12 th	138	95	2 nd

Table 2 reveals that conventionally men majorly play the roles of providing for the family, taking the car for repairs, doing repairs in the house and taking and picking the children from school. On the other hand, women majorly play the roles of cooking food, washing kitchen utensils, washing cloths and providing for the family. The table indicates that the respondents in the study area played conventional and social roles expected of them in the family. These roles are socially defined and vary from place to place responding to social changes in the society. The implication of these results is that if both men and women hold tenaciously to these conventionally expected roles in the family not considering the current happenings in the society and the changes therein, there may be conflict in the family.

Table 3: Percentage distribution of Decision making in the family

Decisions	Husband (N = 152)*			Women (N = 145)*		
	F	%	Rank	F	%	Rank
Family budget	132	87	1 st	128	88	2 nd
Course of study of the children	124	82	2 nd	111	77	4 th
Which school the children will attend	98	64	3 rd	138	91	1 st
Choice of life partners for the children	75	49	4 th	121	83	3 rd
% Average		56			68	

*** Multiple Responses**

Table 3 shows some of the decision making areas in the family. The result indicates that majority of men decide the family budget while women decide which school the children will attend. Men and women took varied decisions in the family and complimented each other decision. On the average, men (56%) and women (68%) took most of the decisions in the decision areas considered in the study area. Normally it is expected that men have more power of decision making in the family. However, the result that women took more decision in the considered decisions areas than men might be as a result of the mixed ethnics groups, migrants and foreigners within the Kaduna metropolis from where data were generated.

Table 4: Changed gender roles in the family

Changed Roles	Men (N = 152)		Women (N = 145)		Judgment Criteria for changed roles
	WAS	MS	WAS	MS	
Taking and picking the children at school	740	4.8	421	2.9	
Fetching water	710	4.6	310	2.1	
Cooking food	682	4.4	440	3.0	
Washing cloths	640	4.2	530	3.6	
Taking the car for repairs	625	4.1	598	4.1	SD = 1.00 – 1.49
Cutting grass around the family house	610	4.0	575	3.9	D = 1.50 – 2.49
Cleaning the house	470	3.0	560	3.8	U = 2.50 – 3.49
Doing repairs in the house	441	2.9	615	4.2	A = 3.50 – 4.49
Ironing cloths	432	2.8	662	4.5	SA = 4.50 – 5.00
Providing for the family	425	2.7	710	4.9	
Washing kitchen utensils	390	2.5	350	2.4	
Washing car	365	2.4	690	4.7	
Average Mean score		3.5		3.7	

WAS = Weighted Average Score; MS = Mean Score

Table 4 shows the changed gender roles in the family. The result shows that men responding to changes in the society now play the roles of taking and picking children from school, fetching water, cooking food and washing clothes. On the other hand, women now play the following roles; providing for the family, washing cars, ironing cloths and doing repairs in the house. The mean score of 3.5 and 3.7 for men and women respectively indicates that both agree that there have been changes in the roles of both men and women over the years. The changed roles of men and women in the family are in response to economic, social and political changes in the society.

Table 5: Perceptions of changing gender roles

Changing Gender Roles	Men		Women		Judgment Criteria for Changing Gender Role
	WAS	MS	WAS	MS	
Men should also be doing domestic work in the family	714	4.7	725	5.0	
Women should be involved in paid jobs	699	4.6	725	5.0	
Women should participate in politics	653	4.3	682	4.7	
Women should also be involved in artisan work	638	4.2	638	4.4	
I prefer a male hair dresser/barber	578	3.8	580	4.0	SD = 1.00 – 1.49
Choice of spouse for the children should be done by the parents	365	2.4	493	3.4	D = 1.50 – 2.49
Choice of course of study should be done by parents	350	2.3	464	3.2	U = 2.50 – 3.49
It is the duty of the woman to take care of domestic jobs	349	2.2	623	4.3	A = 3.50 – 4.49
Family decision is the rights of men	274	1.8	203	1.4	SA = 4.50 – 5.00
I prefer a female mechanic	243	1.6	348	2.3	
Women can be hunters	214	1.4	464	3.2	
Men alone should be in paid jobs	198	1.3	203	1.4	
Average Mean Score		2.9		3.5	

Table 5 reveals the perception of changing gender roles in the society. Men strongly agreed that males should also be doing domestic work in the family and women should be involved in paid jobs. They also agreed that women should participate in politics and should be involved in artisans' works. On the other hand, women strongly agreed that men should also be doing domestic work in the family, women should be involved in paid jobs and women should participate in politics. Both men and women strongly disagree that men alone should be in paid job. Men and women in the family recognize the changing roles in the family and strongly accept. This they believe will create harmony in the family. On the average, the mean score of 2.9 shows that men are undecided in the overall changed gender roles in the family while 3.5 mean score indicates that women agree with these changed gender roles in the family. This implies that men with the mean score are unresolved in accepting these changed gender roles as against women who with the mean score accepted the changed gender roles.

Table 6: Factors influencing changing gender roles

Factors	Men (N = 152)			Women (N = 145)		
	F	%	Rank	F	%	Rank
Influence of modernization	136	89	1 st	121	83	3 rd
Economic factors	128	84	2 nd	132	91	1 st
Influence by Social media	109	72	3 rd	98	68	4 th
Campaign for gender equality	82	54	4 th	127	88	2 nd
Influence of Urbanization	76	50	5 th	81	56	5 ⁶ th
Influence of technology	68	45	6 th	72	47	6 th
Family orientation	53	35	7 th	67	46	7 th
% Average		61			68	

Table 6 reveals the factors that insinuate changing gender roles in the family. The result shows that men agreed that influence of modernization, economic factors and influence of social media majorly influenced changing gender roles in the family. On the other hand, women agreed that economic factors, campaign for gender equality and influence of modernization majorly insinuated changing gender roles. On the average, 61% and 68% of men and women respectively agreed that all the factors influenced changing gender roles in the family.

Conclusion and Recommendations

The study concluded that the income levels of the respondents is not enough to cater for the family needs which mat affected their gender roles, the family budget is majorly decided by men in the study area, both men and women accepted the changed gender roles and changing gender roles were majorly influenced by modernization, social media and campaign for gender equity. The study recommended that men and women should complement each other in deciding the family budget and there should be intensified campaign on gender equality in terms of roles played in the family.

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