

Socio-Economic and Cultural Values of Marriage among of Arsi Oromos, in Hethosa Woreda in Oromia Regional State, Ethiopia

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ABSTRACT

The rationale of this paper was to investigate the **Socio--Economic and Cultural Values Marriage among Arsi Oromos, in particular Hethosa Woreda in Oromia Regional State**. The study tried to examine the values of marriage in Arsi Oromo. Marriage is based on the truth that men and women are complementary, the biological fact that reproduction depends on a man and a woman, and the reality that children need a mother and a father. Redefining marriage does not simply expand the existing understanding of marriage; it rejects these truths. Marriage is society's least restrictive means of ensuring the well-being of children. By encouraging the norms of marriage—monogamy, sexual exclusivity, and permanence the state strengthens civil society and reduces its own role. The future of this country depends on the future of marriage. The future of marriage depends on citizens understanding what it is and why it matters and demanding that government policies support, not undermine, true marriage. The history of human society is nothing but the description of the evolution and diffusion of various institutions designed toward perpetuation, maintenance and survival of society. The institution of marriage occupies a unique place in the realm of institutions and it is this institution which is instrumental in perpetuating human society through regulations of conjugal and filial ties. The institution of marriage is as old as creation of the world. As a social institution, it has taken different forms in different societies from time immemorial. In this study an attempt is made to study the definitions of the term "marriage". The chief sources of our knowledge about the institution are the literary data which give us a glimpse of the picture regarding progress in this sphere. There were various definitions of the term "marriage" presented by various scholars. The research will be mainly based on secondary sources and wherever necessary material will also be obtained from limited primary sources

The researcher found that peoples of Arsi were strong in building values of marriage in culture. The researcher used both primary and secondary sources of data to explore the cultural values of marriage and the process in Anthropologists need to have a concern about the ethical consideration for the society under study (the host society). Everything about the society under study would be kept in secret or not exposed without the consent of these societies. The study also has its own methodology, study design, source of data, instruments of data collection, and qualitative methods of data analysis and interpretations. Lastly the researcher tried to conclude the finding with single paragraph.

Keywords: Socio-Economic, Cultural Values, Marriage, Arsi Oromos, Ethiopia Development.

INTRODUCTION

Marriage

Marriage is the fundamental building block of all human civilization. An essential characteristic of marriage is the biological fact that a man and a woman can join together as male and female in a union that is orientated to the generation of new life. The union of marriage provides for the continuation of the human race and the development of human society. It is precisely the difference between man and woman that makes possible this unique communion of persons, the

unique partnership of life and love which is marriage. Marriage as a physical as well as a moral union is recognized by society as the basis of a family (Stone, 1939: 21).

Marriage is based on the anthropological truth that men and women are complementary, the biological fact that reproduction depends on a man and a woman, and the social reality that children need a mother and a father. Marriage is a uniquely comprehensive union. It involves a union of hearts and minds, but also and distinctively a bodily union made possible by sexual complementarity. As the act by which a

husband and wife make marital love also makes new life, so marriage itself is inherently extended and enriched by family life and calls for all-encompassing commitment that is permanent and exclusive. Marriage unites a man and a woman holistically emotionally and bodily, in acts of conjugal love and in the children such love brings forth for the whole of life (James, E. O., 1952).

Marriage is a natural institution that society as a whole, not merely any given set of spouses, benefits from marriage. This is because marriage helps to channel procreative love into a stable institution that provides for the orderly bearing and rearing of the next generation (Russell, Bertran, 1959). Marriage is not merely a private institution. The well-being of the family and its place in society is not simply a matter for the husband and wife but for society as a whole. It is given special recognition by society because it is the place where children learn what it means to be members of their family and of society. Marriage involves the allocation of rights and obligations among the parties to the agreement. A number of anthropologists have attempted to classify the various rights which are known to be allocated at marriage in different societies (Harper, Robert A., 1949).

Edmund R. Leach suggests that in most cases the institution of marriage serves to allocate rights to either or both spouses; in some cases, it serves primarily to allocate rights to the husband and his wife's brothers (Leach, 1971: 107).

Marriage in Ethiopia

Ethiopia is an ideal site for studying marriage customs because it is characterized by extensive agroecological and ethnic diversity. Different religions, with widely divergent views regarding matrimonial issues and the status of women, are well represented and tend to dominate different parts of the country the Orthodox church of Ethiopia in the north, Sunni Muslims in the east and west, recently converted Protestants in the South, and animist believers in parts of the south (Fafchamps, M. and Quisumbing, 2004)..

The ethnic and cultural makeup of the country is also quite varied, with Semitic traditions in the north, Cushitic traditions in the south and east, and Nilotic traditions in the west. Though, marriage as institution with Common to all culture of the world, its function, its forms and its essence can vary from Culture to Culture (Quisumbing, A. R. and Hallman, 2003).

In Ethiopia there are many ethnic groups with their own distinct Culture and marriage system .in most of these societies marriage is embedded with their religion, norms and customs of the society play great role in forming and shaping marriage system in Ethiopia. Even with in the same culture there are patterns of variation in arranging the marriage process in preparing the wedding festivities in giving dowries or in deciding place of residence for the newly married couples, their rights and obligations as husband and wife. Christian marriages, mainly in Tigray and Amhara regions are often arranged by the parents of the bride and groom with a great deal of negotiations, according to the tradition and Culture the bride must be virgin when the marriage takes place because the bride virginity is highly valued and bride in Christians marriage with the whole family being shamed if the bride is not virgin at marriage rural woman in particular tend to marry at every young age than their husbands. In the post it used to be the custom for the bridegroom to be 30 years of age when getting marriage following the biblical example of Christ who waited until he was trinity years of age before beginning his public teaching traditionally the groom's patents search for abridge for their son. Before the make any contact with the bride's parents they investigate to make sure that the families are not related by blood. In the past they researched back seven generation but now five generations is acceptable once this has been done the boy's parents then make contacts the perspective bride separates through a mediator (Quisumbing, and Maluccio,, 2003).

When the parents have reached an agreement the man and the women get engaged the parents then set wedding date and they meet all the wedding expenses. The bride and groom first see each other on their wedding day. Both parents prepare food and drink for the wedding and invite guests the groom goes to the bride's house to take his future wife to be the wedding ceremony stands with dances and music and the bride's parents give the groom a dowry in most cases money and cattle. At the end of the groom a dowry in most cases money and cattle at the end of the ceremony the groom takes his bride to his parent's house. The groom takes the brides virginity during the first three days after the marriage the honeymoon. Wiliest between: one week to three months, depending on the groom's parent's house and often the best men or men present. During the honeymoon the bride is not all owed

to go out during the day she only allowed to go out after the sunset. In Muslim marriages husbands may have up to four wives and having large number of children is traditionally considered to be assign of status among Muslim communities if the husband of Muslim woman dies it is the husband's brother responsibility to look after the wife and the Children, the husband's brother may marry her.

Nowadays many men and women often those who live in urban areas as opposed to rural communities, do not follow this tradition and do not have arranged marriages but it is important but it is important to someone the family approves. According to tradition and culture the bride must be virgin when the marriage takes place. Because the bride virginity is highly valued and pride in Christian marriage, with the whole family being shamed if the bride is not virgin at marriage. Rural women in particular tend to marry at a very young age than their husbands. In the past it used to be the custom for the bridegroom to be 30 years of age when getting married following the biblical example of Christ who waited until he was 30 years of age before beginning his public ministry.

Marriage in Oromo Society

Marriage is one of the most important rituals in the Oromo culture. There are three things Oromos to be considered about in life in Oromo: birth, marriage, and death. These are the events that add to or take away from the family. The custom of marriage differs in various parts of the world and every civilization produces a marriage pattern appropriate to itself (Ludlow, 1965, cited in Gemechu & Assefa., 2006).

Among the Oromo society also the type, name and ceremonies differ to some degree from place to place. Generally, there are three types of marriage among the Oromo. Before the onset of foreign religions, namely Christianity and Islam, Oromo marriage rituals included exchange of gifts, mainly by the bride to be. Marriage for Oromo society is more than one institution their culture it is viewed as obey of what bond when cheats linkage and blood ties with the other family. Oromo society has different ethnic groups within then owns distinct marriage systems but most of them are a common acceptance among the many of the ethnic grouses (Aguilar, 2005).

Traditionally there are different forms in Oromo custom what is very important to Oromo

marriage institution is the existence of two terms for that express the two opposite sexes." *Fudnus*" is for the men that means the boy county or overtly engaged to amyl and at one time is off axially or unofficially acquainted or engaged to a boy and finally take by him as his wife *Gaila* is all unheated general term pertaining to marriage as institution it serves both sexes '*fudhaa*' and *herusmaa* as a marriage enable persons it has a deep social meaning signifying the establishment of the family and the continuity of nation in the societies (Asebe, 2007). Among the Oromo society the type and naming ceremonies differ to some degrees from place to place. Generally, there are three types marriage among the Oromo's. Marriage has different names in different parts of Oromia: '*kadhaa*' (Asebe, 2007), or *fuudha baal-tokkee* around Arsi, '*Cida*' (Badhaasoo, 2000) around Showa, and '*Naqataa*' (Gemetchu & Assefa, 2006) in Wallaga. '*Kadhaa*' or '*naqataa*' is the most typical and prevalent form of marriage where the ceremony starts at the moment when marriage is first thought of and even continues after the marriage is concluded.

The ritual of courting begins a long time before the marriage date. It may entail encounters at events, mainly at weddings, or the courting may stem from understanding between the families. Once the boy has demonstrated responsibilities, not only for his own livelihood but also for the society in which he lives, he picks the girl he is interested in. He will inform a family member, usually his father, who then contacts the family of the girl. Usually the girl knows of the boy's intent and, in many instances, she encourages him to pursue her in this way. There are mediators, such as the girl's best friends, who convey the girl's wishes to the boy (Bartels, 1983).

The first visit to the girl from the family of the groom-to-be involves other elders from his village. Special clothing is worn to underscore the importance of the meeting. A stick called "*siinqee*" is carried to the bride-to-be's house and left at the door to indicate to her parents that the process of courting their daughter has begun in earnest. On the second visit, the "*siinqee*" may come in with the groom's party indicating the girl's family has accepted the gesture. Visits by the groom's party may continue over the course of two years. The visits will prepare the way for acceptance of the young man, not only by the girl's immediate family, but by her relatives as well. It may also happen that the future son-in-

law must till the land of his future in-laws - the idea is to make parents' sure that their daughter is marrying into a family who can support their daughter and her needs (OSSERA. Kumsa, 1997).

In old days, Oromos never married within their immediate clans, and today some Oromos continue to abide by that restriction. Once the needs of all relatives are satisfied, the actual date for a marriage will be set. On the date of the wedding, gifts for the bride's family are brought by an assembly of well-respected elders who join the wedding party. Bringing home the new bride is an all-day process. Without the presence of knowledgeable elders, the marriage can be delayed. Once the groom is home with his new bride, the wedding party may take another three or more days to complete. This is a period when the groom's family and relatives bring presents. Traditional Oromo wedding rituals fostered understanding and interconnectedness between different clans (Bartels, 1994). There were/are three types marriage in Oromo mainly: -

Formal Marriage

The formal type marriage in Oromo is a type marriage when parents of two spouse talk to each other about what would be done. This type of marriage has different names in different part of Oromo *kadhaa fi fudha* around Arsi *Cidha* around Shewa and '*nagata*'. Traditionally it is arranged by family arranged by family and before the exact date of marriage many things took takes place, they make sure that the girl 's Family doesn't have members who are lepers *chawa* clan; crafts men such as tuner, potter etc. the grooms parents represent back seven generation to move that the families are not related by blood to avoid *Haraamu* or incant taboo finally after contain processes when the parents have reached an agreement, the man and woman get engage (betrothed) the parents than meet all the wedding expenses (Qashu, 2009).

Informal Marriage

Informal marriage is a form of marriage when the boy or the girl tend to remain at their parents' home. For instance, *Hawwii* form of marriage occurs where the boy happens to remain qeerro (bachelor for several reasons either because his not handsome one or his from family from low social status and there for can not to pay the dowry. The boy has no consent of the family of the girl to wait long and to meet the financial and social demands of the girl's parents. Sometimes, the girl's mother is involved in arranging

marriage of her daughter through *hawwii*. It is common among poor people. *Aseennaa* type of marriage employs peaceful, but cunning means. According to Oromo, when a girl could not get anybody who seeks her hand in marriage because she may be an ugly or her parent has an evil eye "as said to be" by the society, she chooses anyone whom she thinks would marry her. And she directly goes to his parent's house. *Qashu* also explained that, for a girl to remain unmarried into her twenties is incomprehensible, though, she must go beyond herself, called *Aseennaa*. Therefore, when a girl left unmarried or when her father wants to give her to someone whom she does not like, she chooses unmarried young man and runs a way to his house with ought the knowledge of the man mostly in the evening (*Qashu*, 2009).

Conditional Marriage

This type of marriage depends on the occurrence of contains incidents. For instance, *Dhala* (inheritance) marriage is the type of marriage between a woman and brother of deceased husband or levitate. Among such a patrilineal community where marriage secures children to continue the father's line, it is usual for widow to be inherited by a brother of a deceased husband (*Qashu*, 2009). Therefore, the incident occurred (happened) would make the society to look for another option.

METHODOLOGY

Research methodology is a way that systematically solve the research problem. It may be understood as a science of studying how research is done scientifically. In, it we study the choice and the steps that are generally approved by a researcher in studying his/her research problem along with the logic behind the problems. It is necessary for the researcher to know not only the research methods/techniques but also the methodology. Research is the process of correcting the existing problems in order to propose the possible practical solutions. (*Kothari*, 2004:8).

Thus, in this paper the researcher tried to show procedures that should be followed to tackle the proposed objectives in dealing with social and Cultural Values of Marriage among Arsi Oromos, in particular Hethosa Woreda in Oromia Regional State.

Research Design

The research design is the conceptual structure within which the research is conducted; it

constitutes the proposal for the collection, and analysis of data. The design includes a sketch of what the researcher will do from writing the suggestion and its operational implications to the final analysis of data (Kothari, 2004:32).

This research was designed which stands for advance planning of the methods to be adopted for collecting the relevant data and the techniques to be used in their analysis, keeping in view with the objective of the research and the availability of time and money. Therefore, the researcher used the qualitative descriptive method to analyze it. So, as to make more reliable, secure the validity and reliability of the study and increase the depth and of my study qualitative data types were used and qualitative type data analysis has been employed. Thus, the researcher has designed to undertake social and economic and Cultural Values of Marriage among Arsi Oromos, in particular Hethosa Woreda in Oromia Regional State.

Types of Data

The researcher used qualitative type of data. The qualitative type of data is obtained from interview, focus group discussion and from field observation. Interview question was generated by the researcher and interviewed some selected individuals who are elder in a society and who knows the social, economic cultural values of marriage in Arsi Oromo. Thus, primary data were collected through interview method, focus group discussion and field observations were directly collected from the field. Secondary data types were also used from different written sources.

Sources of Data

Two sources of data were used by the researcher, the primary and secondary sources. The primary data were obtained from field through interview, focus group discussion and field observation. Secondary data sources were obtained from published and unpublished sources. These secondary sources of data were used to relate the research problems of the past with situations on real ground which was obtained from primary sources of data, which was obtained from the field.

Instruments of Data Collection

The researcher employed different instruments to collect the necessary data, which include the following: Structured Interview as method of primary data collection was used that involves presentation of oral-verbal reply and response in terms of oral-verbal reaction. The structured

interviews are characterized by a flexibility of approach to questioning. In this structured interview method, the researcher used deep knowledge and greater skill on the part of the interviewer. The researcher also employed the focus group discussion and field observation. The field observation, which follows a system of pre-determined looking into the host society, to observe many things in natural settings.

Method Data Analysis

The data was analyzed using descriptive qualitative interpretations that were based on the qualitative data collected through field observations and interviews and, the focus group discussion, that describe the findings of the study. Once the qualitative data was collected via personal observation and interviews, and, the focus group discussion the researcher used secondary data to strengthen the ideas obtained from the qualitative analysis.

ETHICAL CONSIDERATION

Anthropologists are concerned with ethical issue connected with societal matters in the fieldwork. Fieldwork researchers seek permission, cooperation, and acknowledgments from governmental officials, scholars and most importantly from the society being studied. In this research, as a part of Anthropological fieldwork, the researcher had a responsibility to consider the ethical issue of the people under the study. Therefore, before proceeding to the data collection through different techniques the researcher had informed to the host society about the nature and the purpose of the research to gain consent and access to the field site (Trondheim. Russell, 2006).

A key question for the Anthropologist to investigate the problems of societies under study, they have to have permission, and they must have to consider the consent of the host community about the research whether the research had a risk to these community. The researcher has the responsibility to avoid the risks that these societies will face due to this study; the society have to continue their everyday activities of lives without the interference of the researcher work in to their social and economic affairs to investigate the issue under examination. That is why every Anthropologists need to have permission to study societies at their original setting in search of solution for problems that the societies have faced or bring negative impact to the communities under study. Everything about the

society under study would be kept in secret or not exposed without the consent of the host societies.

Therefore, the researcher will confirm these societies about this study in which the investigation will not affect any body negatively either communities in focus or the others who were in methods for realization of this paper. The researcher will give much attention for dignity, respect, privacy life and democratic thinking, for people under study and for the informants and discussants in data collection

FINDING AND DISCUSSION

Cultural Value of Marriage

Arsi Oromo, the largest in Bareentuu group of the Oromo confederacies, is divided into two main branches: Sikkoo and Mandoo. These groups have settled across they inhabit expansive settlement area larger territory. The Arsi are culturally rich in all-encompassing views

Marriage is one of the most essential rituals in Arsi Oromo culture. In Arsi Oromos marriage has important place in which the society consider the married man and women as an elder, no more youngsters. Culturally Arsi Oromos regard the married man as “Aba” or father, even if have no children at all.

Social Value of Marriage

The custom of marriage in Arsi is different in which they consider as the beginning of various and every socialization begin with the institution of a marriage pattern which is suitable to self-guiding. Marriage in Arsi Oromo is the beginning of man and woman to act as elder in a society, that is the beginning of self-rule.

Social life begins with marriage involvement in many social issues like dabboo, wadajja, Attee for woman and sometimes for rituals performed as husband and wife. In Arsi marriage has strong social value in which the couples involved in every aspect of societal activities.

The Social rituals provide an essential in insight to understanding Arsi culture because there are many elements in social activities that shape the Arsi. The ideas of Socialization for married man who began to practices as traditions such us the rite of passage to adulthood, knowing the history of the society and it’s a multiple star and the kinship links in the society.

Economic Value of Marriage

Marriage has important economic significance in Arsi Oromo where man is considered as

independent *Subboo* or adult. The husband and wife begin to get their right share that begins on the wedding day from the bride family (when a girl is left for marriage) and on the second day of wedding the married couples got another life earning from groom family. But the important part of economic value of marriage is, the two spouses are supported by both parents and relative of parents. This has strong tradition in Arsi Oromo, even if the two spouses have nothing at all their relatives (in blood) would make them strong economically by contributing all necessary materials of life for husband and wife. This Economic implication of marriage in the society contributing something for the continuity of life supported by themselves. Young man runs a way to his house without the knowledge of his parents since he is no more dependent on his family. Marriage made the two couples for future seedling and harvesting, no more dependence on their family.

Societal Value of Marriage

The cognitive content of marriage among the Arsi Oromos has strong practice in a society. It is marriage for boy to declare no more bachelor (qerroo) in a society, that the society also recognizes him as adult man. He joined the status of adulthood within society, which add values for respecting in a marriage structure. Husband wife holds the right place in a society to be respected with appropriate status. Marriage enables peaceful co-existence with whole society as husband and wife. This means both could participate in societal matters directly without the consent of any other body. They stand by themselves in a society by having a status of maturity. The boy joined the status of Suboo (adulthood) to participate in every aspect of societal activity. The girl too participates without the consent and knowledge of any body but sometimes consented her mother about the duties and responsibilities reside on her.

Among the Arsi Oromo society different type of ritual ceremonies would be made to major the married spouses to join the societal realm. There are different kinds of rituals performed at different times and places by the Arsi Oromo depending on Oromo ritual. Some of these rituals are Hulluuqqoo, practiced immediately on the third day of wedding, to mean transfer to adulthood. In the Ateetee ritual, the new spouses would be participated as house wife. Boorantichaa is also made by new spouses to show their solidarity to society to protect evils

from the surrounding. Wodaajaa ritual is also participated by new spouses to remember their ancestors or fore fathers.

The ritual takes place yearly at Malka (ford) through sacrifice and libation in the hope that Tajoo Arsi Oromo society can be divided in to three main groups of actors. That each has different social responsibilities repertoires men women and youth, wedding rituals are reflection of social structural but they are also the mean by when the different groups construct their identities and values.

CONCLUSION

This study highlights the high prevalence of adolescent marriage and the subsequent among Arsi Oromos and challenges that girls face, including their high fertility rates. Early marriage is strongly associated with poverty, low educational attainment, and rural residence. Increasing knowledge among families and communities about the benefits of delaying early marriage can lead to greater educational achievement for all, lower fertility, increased life expectancy for women, and benefits to children's health and education. Political will, aligned with effective programs and policies, will enable millions of adolescent females and their families to reach their potential.

The important symbols and values of the people of Arsi are used, provoked, communicated, or expressed in rituals. Tajoo ritual plays an important role in the peacemaking process, social integration and reintegration in marriage. It helps to link people to the past, present and future. Generally, according to Arsi Oromo elders through the performance of marriage ritual, harmony is established between all things in the universe. Overall, this study fairly argued that marriage is a ritual that has real significance in intercommunity peace building and sustaining social solidarity, integration and re-integration of the people of Arsi. Marriage as a ritual has broad concepts and meanings, which still need further investigation. For instance, the historical backgrounds of this ritual have the concept of Oromo of the continuity of the people on the land

Therefore, to illustrate, preserve and conserve the indigenous marriage culture and knowledge more and deep research and investigation is required. The *Qallu* cult is involved possessed spirit by spiritual leader ties the community of Arsi Oromo's in the *Woreda* in blessing the couples, to address they're in the society as

whole. *Qallu* cult possessed by sprit here was for the purposes of blessing the couples for their better future.

Marriage has strong ritual in the society of Arsi to manage the continuity of the society, and to make the couples to have children. Societal belief in the happening of marriage is the precondition for belief in existence of the next better future by having offspring of both spouses. Throughout the land occupied by Oromo's marriage is a big ritual celebrated in the natural phenomenon among all Oromo clans whether they are Christians or Muslims or *Waaqeffanna* believers.

The institution of marriage has a capability of Oromo adult to have their own offspring to continue in next generation. Thus, according to the Oromo in general and Arsi Oromo's in particular believe that generation continues with the happing of marriage. Therefore, in Oromo a boy can pass to adulthood when married, and believed that he/she passed to the next rank of development when married. There is a distinguished difference between married and unmarried male of the Oromo. Thus, he/she was crowned as an adult man hood when married.

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Citation: Shambel Tufa Telila, "Socio-Economic and Cultural Values of Marriage among of Arsi Oromos, in Hethosa Woreda in Oromia Regional State, Ethiopia", *Open Journal of Women's Studies*, 2(2), 2020, pp. 1-8.

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