

# Basic Life Skills Required by Girl-Children to Overcome Adversities of Polygamy in Etsako Nigeria

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## **Abstract**

*Polygamous adversity combined with factors like gender discrimination and early marriages results to lowered female literacy and quality of life. This phenomenon extensively impacts the population and societies throughout Etsako west Nigeria. Intent of this study was to explore skills that enabled girl-children overcome polygamous adversities and succeed to acquire higher education. Semi-structured interviews with 15 women of polygamous backgrounds who succeeded to acquire high education yielded research data. Data analysis revealed 3 critical skills that participants used to overcome polygamous adversity including: (a) Survival, (b) Resilience, and (c) Coping. These skills may become the basis for future interventions and support programs. Child care professionals, counselors, Organizational leaders, educational authorities, family and community heads can use findings for comprehensive framework in trainings and support programs. The training and support programs may help girl children who are currently experiencing polygamous challenges succeed against adversities and acquire high education.*

## **Keywords**

*adverse childhood experiences, girl-child, polygyny, valence*

## **1. Introduction**

Governments, legal scholars, feminists, and advocacy groups alike explicitly agree that polygamy has harmful impacts on women and children (Gaucher, 2016). Women represent a significant segment of Nigeria constituting approximately 50 percent of the national population (Arowoshegbe & Anthony, 2011). Women in Nigeria are responsible for up to 50% of Agricultural labor force and over 70% of the nation's food supply (Adeyeye, Akinbami, & Momodu, 2011). In addition, women contribute through unquantifiable domestic chores, petty trading and jobs as part or full time employees with either the public or private sectors in Nigeria (Malami, 2009). Ugboma (2014) posited that within some rural communities, women possess indigenous knowledge of traditional medicine, land use, and management.

In fact, up to 86% of the women in Tonkerere Village in South West Nigeria are herb sellers, with ability to detect the medicinal value and viability of local herbs (Ugboma, 2014). Therefore, women pivotal role in sustainable development of rural communities in Nigeria are evident in contributions to family and society in general both as wives and mothers.

Nevertheless, women contributions to the economy in Nigeria are rarely acknowledged (Adeyeye et al., 2011). Women are relegated to the background in terms of education, choices, and decision making. Only about 2 percent of women population attends higher education in Nigeria compared to 5.8 percent of men (Arowoshegbe & Anthony, 2011). In 2005, there were only 200 female professors compared to 2,315 male professors in Nigerian University systems (Ikpenuwa, 2005). The level of literacy of rural women is so low that majority cannot read nor write (Ugboma, 2014). Impact of the disparity in education includes women becoming vulnerable to poverty, low self-esteem, early-marriage, sexual exploitation, etc.

According to Ozkan, Altindag, Oto, and Sentunali (2006), the percentage of uneducated women is higher for polygamous families than monogamous ones. Polygamy also has adverse impact on children education, and access to a decent life (Khasawneh, Hijazi, & Salman, 2011). According to Brinkerhoff (2017) childhood exposure to adversity results to poorer educational attainment and lowered financial stability leading to a cyclical process of inequalities for the next generations. Cumulative exposure to adversity impacts the possibility for children success in life and negatively impacts their psych as adults (Bethell, Newacheck, Hawes, & Halfon, 2014; Center on the Developing Child (CODC), 2015; Teicher & Samson, 2016). Other factors militating against girl-children education include early marriage and economic condition (Arowoshegbe & Anthony, 2011).

Polygamous practices within some African communities come with adverse economic conditions that in turn facilitate high school dropout rate and early marriages of girl-children. Within polygamous settings, women and children struggle to sustain with the limited family resources thereby inhibiting children education and girl-children education nearly impossible in many instances. Girl-children are excluded from school by scale of real and opportunity costs. The male dominated power structure conflates religious and traditional injunctions with customary practices to justify marrying off girls before puberty (Walker, 2012). Nevertheless, giving the significant size, women represent a great potential necessary to evolve a new economic order, accelerate social and political development in Nigeria (Arowoshegbe & Anthony, 2011). Nigeria has a population estimation of about 148 million people with more than 50% being children and adolescents (Omigbodun et al., 2010). This study is with the intent to explore the skills required by girl-children and adolescents to succeed in education within Polygamous environments in Etsako West Edo State Nigeria.

### *1.1 Background of the Problem*

Women are impeded by various socio-economic barriers that place them in situations where their voices are often muffled by the level of gender segregation within the specific context of Nigeria (Obamuyi, 2011). In addition, due to adverse experiences during their formative years, many children in

today's society live in a chronic state of dysregulation (Brinkerhoff, 2017). In Eastern and Western Nigeria, discriminating tendency against girl-children education exist (Arowoshegbe & Anthony, 2011). Girls are generally not sent to school because they would eventually get married and leave their families (Awe, 1990). Parents regard money invested in education of girl-children as a waste while they regard male-children as heirs apparent who are valuable asset to the family and allow them access to education.

Productivity of women is inhibited for many reasons including lack of access to education. One reason for poor access to girl children education is the practices of polygamy within some African societies. In many parts of Africa, polygamy is not only a marriage of choice but a value system that inspires and shapes family relations (Jonas, 2012). However, polygamy has strong correlations with domestic violence, and life changes of the girl child (Walker, 2012). Polygamy has an impact on children's education, and access to a decent life (Khasawneh, Hijazi, & Salman, 2011). Polygamous family structured home environments are torn by conflict, marital discord, and lack of investment in children (Hamdan, Auerbach, & Apter, 2009).

Within the Sub-Sahara polygamous culture, limited resources are shared amongst multiple wives and numerous children leaving female children education in the lower cadre of opportunity costs scale. Women education suffers significant setbacks spanning from lack of willingness on the part of polygamous fathers to support girl-children education citing cultures and lack of resources. Adolescents and children in polygamous homes lack adequate coping strategies and access to external social support systems (Hamdan et al., 2009). This study is with intent to explore skills required by girl-children and adolescents for educational success in Etsako West Edo State Nigeria.

### *1.2 Problem Statement*

Polygamy is more prevalent in Africa than other places in the world (Thobejane, 2016). Over 10% of married women in many sub-Saharan countries are in a polygamous union and up to 50% of all marriages within some parts of Africa are polygamous (Thobejane & Flora, 2014). Child experts raise serious concerns about the development of children of polygamy (Witte, 2009). According to McMahon (2013) the practice of polygamy involves women's rivalry and vicious competition among children in power struggles or when the resultant large numbers of offspring create heavy financial burdens.

Polygamy has strong positive correlations with domestic violence, number of births and life changes of the girl child (Walker, 2012). Thobejane and Flora (2014) argued that children are adversely affected by polygamous marriages. The problem is that some children and adolescents develop mental health disorders, scholastic difficulties and social complications because of Polygamous adversities (Al-Sharfi, Pfeffer, & Miller, 2016). According to Brinkerhoff (2017), adversity during childhood is a significant public health problem. Adversities associated with polygamy include low self-esteem, anxiety, depression, hostility, behavioral problem and learning disorders of children (Al-Sharfi et al., 2016). The specific problem is that some girl-children and adolescents lack the basic life skills to overcome polygamous adversities and succeed to acquire high education in Etsako west.

### *1.3 Purpose Statement*

The purpose of this qualitative multiple-case study was to explore the basic life skills required by girl-children and adolescents in Etsako west to overcome polygamous adversities and succeed to acquire higher education. Only about 32.7% of women in Nigeria had secondary education while more than a third had no formal education (Olatoregun, Fagbamigbe, Akinyemi, Yusuf, & Bamgboye, 2014). In addition, approximately 2 percent of women population attends higher education compared to 5.8 percent of men (Arowoshegbe & Anthony, 2011). The glaring disparity results in vulnerability of women to poverty, low self-esteem early-marriage, sexual exploitation, etc. In some parts of Southern Nigeria, discriminating tendency against the girl-child education exist. Girls are generally not sent to school because parents regard money invested in education of girl-children as a waste. Therefore, population for this study were 15 women from Etsako west who were selected because they are scholars and business professionals who succeeded to obtain higher academic qualifications despite coming from polygamous homes. Findings may contribute to social change by increasing success of existing cultural values and relationships within some African communities. Information from this study may also provide insight into the knowledge and practices which contribute to success in life

### *1.4 Nature of the Study*

For this study, we used a qualitative method with an exploratory case study design. Qualitative method was more appropriate than the quantitative or mixed methods because this study did not involve numerical data or statistical extrapolations. The current study involved understanding and interpreting the actions and interactions of successful scholars from Etsako West in Edo State Nigeria. Qualitative methods require the use of smaller study samples, which are not random selection (Borrego, Douglas, & Amelink, 2009). Like for this study, data collection for qualitative studies is words rather than numbers, in contrast to quantitative or mixed method research. Clark (2009) suggested that qualitative study involves the use of non-numerical information to examine how humans react, experience, and comprehend. For this study data, collection was through qualitative face to face interviews with 15 participants. Data analysis for the study involved identifying patterns and themes. The final report of the study was qualitative using narratives with direct quotations from participants. The participants were women of diverse background who are scholars with doctorate degree and of Etsako West origin ages of 19 and 65 years. Additionally, qualitative method is appropriate for this study because of its flexibility in data collection.

We selected case study design because the design facilitates a researcher's observation of subjects objectively, while examining the meaning of a case. Case study involves direct observation and data collection in a natural setting where researchers consider contextual aspects of a phenomenon under study without experimental controls or manipulations (Alex, Näslund, & Jasmand, 2012). Yin (2009) suggested that case-study method is suitable for "how" and "why" questions. Case studies use contextually rich data to study a focused phenomenon in the real-life context, providing an in-depth understanding of nature and complexity of the phenomenon (Alex et al., 2012). Beneficial features of

case study evaluations includes flexible data collection which produces broader perspectives and increased assurance that what is important on the scene rather than centrally is examined (Walshe, 2011).

### *1.5 Research Question*

The overarching research question for this study was: How do some girl-children and adolescents from polygamous homes succeed to acquire high education despite the cultural adversities in Etsako?

### *1.6 Conceptual Framework*

Conceptual framework for this study was Goal-Setting theory (GS) and Expectancy Theory (ET). Expectancy theory and goal setting theory is use to clarify how expectancies influence goals, which then influence performance (Haden, 2012). According to Kini and Hobson (2002), the GS and ET, if properly deployed may bring success to quality initiatives. Yamnill and McLean (2001) suggested that GS and ET can explain fulfillment and may explain how and why behavior is facilitated or restrained in the pre-training, training, and post-training processes.

#### *1.6.1 Goal-Setting Theory*

The GS was proposed by Edwin Locke in 1968. The GS posits that goals directly impact behavior that the goals lead to higher performance (Kini & Hobson, 2002). The theory suggests that specific goals ought to be challenging in order to stimulate maximum performance (Niven & Healy, 2016). Edwin Locke found that people who set difficult but specific, goals surpassed those who set general, easy goals by achieving better. Locke proposed five basic principles of goal-setting: to include; clarity, challenge, commitment, feedback, and task complexity. It is difficult to self-evaluate where there is no clear goal and adopting a do-your-best attitude because of ambiguity as to what constitutes effectiveness (Martin, McNally, & Taggar, 2016). Locke and Latham (2002) suggested that the underlying proposition of the GS is that (a) goals function as immediate determinants of behavior, (b) specific and difficult goals lead to high levels of absolute performance, and (c) for this to happen individuals must be motivated by a perceived discrepancy between current performance and a desired goal.

Self-evaluation occurs when individuals compare their desired goal state with current performance levels (Martin et al., 2016). Moderators of the effect of goals on performance are ability, commitment, feedback, task complexity, and situational constraints (Latham, 2001). According to Latham (2001), findings of goal setting are that: (1) Specific high goals lead to higher performance than setting no goals or setting an abstract goal such as “do your best”; (2) There is a linear relationship between goal difficulty and performance. Thus the higher the goal the higher the performance; (3) Variables such as feedback, participation in decision making, and competition only affect performance to the extent that they lead to the setting of and commitment to specific high goals; (4) Three of the four mediators of the goal setting performance relationship are motivational, namely direction, effort, and persistence; the fourth is cognitive, namely, task strategies.

The GS proposes that conscious ideas regulate individuals' actions and therefore, setting goals motivates individuals (Locke & Latham 2002). The theory purports that specific goals increase performance; that difficult goals, when accepted result in higher performance than do easy goals; and, that feedback leads to higher performance than does no feedback (Kini & Hobson, 2002). In line with GS providing a specific high assigned performance goal leads to higher performance outcomes than setting no goals, vague goals or even "do your best" goals. Two factors, which affect goals, include importance of the goal to individuals involved and self-efficacy (Dishon-berkovits, 2014). According to GS, goal "specificity" and "difficulty" are the two primary goal attributes that will influence goal-related performance. Goals should be proximal and specific as opposed to vague "do your best" type goals, and should be difficult enough to challenge the person without taking them beyond the limits of their ability (Scobbie, Wyke, & Dixon, 2009).

One of the central tenets of GS is that individuals perform better when they have specific goals than when they have no goals or vague goals that lack a specific target, e.g., to "do your best" (Niven & Healy, 2016). The logic behind this proposition is that having no goal or a vague goal allows for a range of acceptable performance levels, whereas a specific goal focuses attention and concentrates effort toward attaining a specified performance level (Locke & Latham, 2002). An obstruction to the usual positive benefits of goal-setting is environmental uncertainty, as the information required to set goals may become unavailable or obsolete because of environmental changes (Latham & Pinder, 2005). According to Latham and Pinder (2005), high performance is due to cognitive understanding of tasks, strategies or plan necessary for completing a task and not always a result of high effort or persistence.

#### 1.6.2 Expectancy Theory

Victor Vroom first developed the ET in 1964. According to Bin Ramli and Jusoh (2015), Expectancy is the probability perceived by an individual that his or her effort will lead to a certain level of performance. Vroom (1964), proposed that an individual tend to act in a certain way based on the expectation that the act will be followed by a given outcome and on the attractiveness of the outcome to the individual. Expectancy theory is a process theory of motivation, according to which motivation is a function of individuals' perceptions of their environment and the expectations they form based on these perceptions (Fudge & Schlacter, 1999). The central theme of expectancy theory is that an individual's behavior is a function of the degree to which the behavior is instrumental in the attainment of some outcomes, and the evaluation of these outcomes (Bin Ramli & Jusoh, 2015).

The use of ET asserts the force toward a certain course of action (e.g., a choice, goal, a given level of effort) is based on the product of three variables: (1) the belief that a certain level of effort will lead to a certain performance level; (2) the belief that a certain performance level will lead to other valued outcomes; and (3) the anticipated satisfaction to be derived from these other valued outcomes (Locke, Motowidlo, & Bobko, 1986). Choice to perform at a high level will be the product of expectancy that one can attain that level, the belief that attaining high level will lead to various rewards, and the value of those rewards. With other factors held constant, ET clearly predicts that expectancy is positively

related to performance (Locke et al., 1986). Expectancy theory could predict people's motivation, and consequently relate to productivity (Bin Ramli & Jusoh, 2015). Expectancy theory identifies three factors, which play an interactive role in motivation. That is, Motivational force (M) for a behavior, action or task is a function of a three perceptions: Motivation = Expectancy  $\times$  Instrumentality  $\times$  Valence (Bin Ramli & Jusoh, 2015). In line with ET strength of a tendency to act in certain way depends on strength of an expectation that an act will be followed by given outcome and on attractiveness of that outcome to the individual (Kini & Hobson, 2002).

### 1.7 Operational Definitions

*Girl-child*: Girl children are the set of children who are disadvantaged in societies where sociocultural behavior such as female circumcision and arranged marriages are regarded as an acceptable norm (Doris, 2006).

*Instrumentality*: Instrumentality is perceived relationship between successful performance and obtaining the reward (Bin Ramli & Jusoh, 2015).

*Polygamy*: Polygamy is a marital relationship involving multiple spouses and occurs in several forms (Al-Sharfi, Pfeffer, & Miller, 2016).

*Polygyny*: Polygyny is the most common form of polygamy that occurs when a man has more than one wife at the same time (Al-Sharfi et al., 2016).

*Valence*: Valence is the importance which individuals place on achievable potential outcome (Bin Ramli & Jusoh, 2015).

### 1.8 Assumptions

To increase the believability of a case study the underlying assumptions must be revealed (Bachor, 2002). Assumptions are conditions in research, which researchers assume as truth and take for granted (Polit & Beck, 2004). The first assumption was that this study is valuable to Children and adolescents for developing skills required to succeed in education within polygamous family cultures in Etsako west Nigeria. Consequently, this study would contribute to lower girl-children drop outs rate in education and improve female productivity in Nigeria. Second, we assumed that participants would provide useful details and show deep understanding of research topic as prerequisite for the study.

The third assumption was that evaluation of conceptual framework would explain practices by females as girl-children towards achieving success in education. The fourth assumption was that participants would give honest, thoughtful, and comprehensive responses during the interviews. The fifth assumption was that the sample of participants in the study was representative of female population throughout Etsako-west for the purpose of saturation and sufficiency. We cautiously selected the research design and methodological procedures to reduce potential effect of these problems.

Additional assumption was that polygamy is detrimental to children. However, Elbedour, Bart, and Hektner (2000) determined that polygamy may not have a deleterious effect on children's development. According to Elbedour et al. (2000), overall acceptance of polygamy and the usually large family structure may benefit children by providing them with more caregivers. To some individuals, there is a

clear advantage of practicing of polygamy in some instances such as where there are more women of marriageable age than men. Polygamy is also common in societies where child mortality rates are high (Klomegah, 1997). Elbedour et al. (2000) found no link between polygamy and adolescent scholastic achievements. Nevertheless, Cherian (1990) and Al-Krenawi et al. (1997) provided evidence indicating the damaging consequences of polygamy on academic achievement.

### *1.9 Limitations*

According to Bloomberg and Volpe (2012), limitations are external conditions which control scope of a study and with the potential to impact the result. Limitations describe the potential weaknesses of a study (Patton, 2014). A limitation for this is inconsistency in application. Qualitative case study is a flexible approach to research with inconsistency in application (Hyett, Kenny, & Dickson-Swift, 2014). The open nature of case studies may discourage novice researchers (Thomas, 2011). However, we chose a well formed framework to improve consistency. Development of a well-(in)formed theoretical framework to guide a case study should improve consistency, rigor, and trust in research (Hyett et al., 2014). The sample size of women from Etsako west province who succeeded in education and volunteered to participate in the study was a potential limitation. This sample selection may not adequately represent the entire female population in Etsako west. Additionally, the probability existed that selected participants would not openly disclose their experiences truthfully because of some religious or cultural beliefs and would withhold information. However, in qualitative research the focus on is to form an understanding of events rather than to generalize results (Kolb, 2012).

### *1.10 Significance of the Study*

The proposition of this study is premised on the conception that the usually large polygamous households are associated with low resources per head, which adversely impact on children health and survival. Family structure has a substantial impact on the mental health of children (Haman, Auerbach, & Apter, 2009). Hamdan et al. (2009) suggested that children from nontraditional family structures exhibit antisocial behaviors and have high rates of school attrition. The culture of marrying out girl-children is further reinforced by polygamy practices particularly within some African societies with scarce family resources. There is also a positive relationship between level of education and adolescent marriage with female education as an important determinant of adolescent marriage (Ertem, Saka, Ceylan, Deger, & Çiftçi, 2008).

Polygamy contributes to early marriages of girl-children to older men. The polygamous family structure shares most of the characteristics of home environments torn by conflict, marital discord, and lack of investment in children (Hamdan et al., 2009). The results of this study provide new insights into skills and practices required by girl-children and adolescent to succeed in higher education despite polygamous adversities. Girl-children and adolescent may survive polygamous challenges and succeed in higher education by adopting new skills and practices from knowledge in this study. Willis and Schiller (2011) suggested that children need social and emotional skills for success in life.



Women are known to be very hardworking, highly intelligent, resilient, and industrious as creative entrepreneurs capable of pursuing their dreams and contributing to national economic well-being. Women play important roles in processing and marketing agricultural products thereby contributing to family incomes and nation's economy (Ojo, Anitsal, & Anitsal, 2015). Developing African women's potential will help developing countries both reduce poverty and take advantage of opportunities. Even though women constitute about 49.7 percent of Nigerian population, they also experience gender discrimination and low status in every many segments (Ojo et al., 2015). Some of this culture of discriminations is evident within the African Polygamy family setting where girl-children and adolescents are married out early than giving access to education. Keeping African women in the global economy's back seat is like burying precious treasures in mud (Ojo et al., 2015). Women should have the same access to opportunities and resources for success as male counterparts (Ojo et al., 2015). Women form bulk of the illiterate population in Nigeria even though higher education leads to greater awareness among women (Ige, 2013). In Etsako, Polygamous family structure contributes significantly to selective training caused by gender biased investment that furthers illiteracy among girl-children and women. Social change is changes people make in behaviors to collectively benefit society in general. It may occur as the result of a cultural shift, or change in public policy. Knowledge from this study is valuable to determine skills and practices for girl-children towards acquiring educational success despite adversities of polygamy in Etsako culture.

Educated girl-children and adolescents transform to women with higher education which ultimately benefits communities. Information from this study is useful for stakeholders within Nigeria, academia and civil society, who may influence policy and practice on social development and reduction of women illiteracy. Educated women are empowered to create social changes that collectively benefits families. Empowered women facilitate successful families with potentials for self-sustenance. In addition, successful families produce individuals with potentials to create economic empowerment in the communities. Economic empowerment enables individuals to fulfill dreams of financial security, thereby enhancing quality of life in society. Improvement in girl-children education may increase employment opportunities in communities' resultant of viable family structure consequence of inputs by educated women. Viable and successful families benefit communities and the nation economy in general.

### *1.11 A Review of the Professional and Academic Literature*

#### *1.11.1 Life Skills*

Life skills are abilities, which facilitate adaption and positive behaviors to deal effectively with challenges confronting individuals (Kaur & Sandhu, 2016). Life skills help young individuals gain control over behaviors and take informed decision, which may enhance positive values (Sreehari & Nair, 2015). Kaur and Sandhu (2016) suggested that Life skills are effective for empowering young people to act responsibly, take initiative and control. Overcoming adversities often requires reinforcement of life skills, including social skills such as communication, appropriate behavior, and teamwork. Others include personal skills like hygiene, nutrition, and self-control (Nelson, Gray, Maurice, & Shaffer, 2012).

Life skills education may facilitate the opportunity to practice and reinforce psychosocial skills. Life skills includes: Decision-making, goal setting, problem-solving, coping with stress and emotions, negotiating, friendship, interpersonal relationships, empathy, critical and creative thinking, resisting peer pressure, and assertiveness. Skill utilization refers to skill-use that is initiated by parent or children on a day-to-day basis including practices of assigned skills such as homework or practices (Lindhlem, Higa, Trentacosta, Herschell, & Kolko 2014). Willis and Schiller (2011) suggested that children need social and emotional skills for success in life. A child's cognitive and physical potential can only be optimized when the brain is wired adequately to support development in the areas of social and emotional intelligence (Sousa, 2005).

Social intelligence is an understanding and ability to manage oneself in group situations while emotional intelligence is the understanding of and ability to manage one's feelings and emotions (Schiller, 2009). Growing up from toddlerhood and continuing through adolescence, the essential skills children should master are emotional and social. Both social and emotional intelligence influence all other areas of development (Willis & Schiller, 2011). Willis and Schiller (2011) posited that a child must have self-control and an understanding of social cues in order to develop accurate and effective communication skills. Sawyer, Leonard, Sierocka-castaneda, Chan, and Thompson (2014) suggested that cognitive skills, technical skills and behavioral skills are the three intrinsic elements of human performance. Cognitive skills include what is in the brains and how brains work. Technical skills involve things that individuals do with their hands that require among other things manual ability. Behavioral skills are decision-making and team interaction processes which individuals use during activities that are not merely manual procedures requiring dexterity.

#### 1.11.2 Social Skills

Basic social skills include, Body posture, Voice quality (tone, speed, and clarity), Facial expression, Gesture, Listening skills, Verbal acknowledgements, Head movements and Eye contact (Spence, 2003). Other social skills includes: Listen to others, Follow the steps, Follow the rules, Ignore distractions; Ask for help, Take turns when you talk, Get along with others, Stay calm with others, Be responsible for your behavior, Do nice things for others, etc.

#### 1.11.3 Emotional Skills

Emotion skills refer to acting out relationally with skillful emotions. Adequate emotion skills are essential to the healthy functioning of intimate relationships (Mirgain & Cordova, 2007). Empathy is a behavioral skill that can help individuals keep own peace of mind and to grow. Empathetic people tend to put others at ease. Behaving with empathy involves the ability to step into someone else's world to understand their point of view and *why* they have that point of view. Emotional skills include self-reliance, responsibility, bonding, empathy, and self-control. Within the social and emotional skill developmental needs, children should Displays self-control Expresses feelings with words Listens and pays attention Pride in accomplishments Have a positive self-image Asks for help when needed Shows affection to familiar people Aware of other people's feelings. Ortese and Tor-Anyiin (2008) suggested

that emotionally intelligent people are skilled in Identifying emotions, using emotions, understanding emotions and regulating emotions.

#### 1.11.4 Cognitive Skills

Education and cognitive skills are positively correlated (Farkas, England, Vicknair, & Barbara, 1997). Cognitive skill is crucial to enable children process sensory information and eventually learn to evaluate, analyze, remember, make comparisons, and understand cause and effect. Some cognitive skills include;

- Attention—helps children to be more adept at ignoring distractions.
- Memory—equips a child to retain what he has learned and experienced and therefore build a future base of knowledge.
- Thinking—includes being able to reason out tasks and find solutions. This cognitive skill helps a child to know whether he’s accomplishing what he set out to do or whether he needs to ask for help.

#### 1.11.5 Technical Skills

Sawyer et al. (2014) posited that Technical skills involve things that we do with our hands that require manual dexterity. Technical skills involve abilities and knowledge needed to perform specific tasks and duties. Technical skills include knowledge about methods, processes, and equipment for specialized activities. The skills also include factual knowledge about rules and structure. Technical skills are useful for predicting perceptions (Seate, Poee, & Chinomona, 2016). Some technical skills include;

- Numeracy—a range of abilities used to understand and analyze information for making the right conclusions and decisions. Numeracy means being able to think clearly and intelligently about numbers in real life, not just on a test. Becoming numerate is an important part of critical thinking.
- Teamwork Skills—the ability to be an effective group member.
- Organization and Time Management Skills—include abilities to set goals, prioritize goals, create schedules, make lists, and break large tasks into smaller tasks.

#### 1.11.6 Behavioral Skills

Behavioral skills are positively associated with academic achievement (Jennings & DiPrete, 2010). Behavioral skills include;

- Reading Social Situations—involves the ability to read social situations, which is critical to help children avoid trouble and learn how to get along with others.
- Managing Emotions: Children need to learn how to manage their emotions appropriately as they mature. Children need to learn that just because they feel bad or angry does not give them the right to hurt others.
- Problem Solving Skills: as children develop, they have to continually adjust their problem-solving skills and learn new ones.

Other top behavioral skills include;

### 1.11.7 Communication

Communication is an essential element of quality care. The uses of verbal and nonverbal interaction behaviors facilitate synergistic relationship (Nilsen et al., 2014). Good communication actually consists of many different sub-skills, from appropriate patterns of body language and eye contact to the ability to write clearly and accurately. Accurate listening and the ability to follow instructions are especially important but are often ignored or taken for granted. Changes and environmental factors can contribute to communication breakdowns, misunderstandings, and difficulty recalling (Nilsen et al., 2014).

### 1.11.8 Goal-Setting and Planning

Specific goal-setting involves detailed planning of what a person wants to do, including a definition of the behavior (Borg, Oberg, Nilsson, Soderlund, & Back, 2017). Planning requires setting concrete goals, identifying workable action steps, and making a commitment to see the plan through. Effective planning requires arranging problems in order of importance that could involve delegation. It is impossible to do everything at same time therefore; focus should be on critical tasks and requesting assistance to facilitate accomplishments.

### 1.11.9 Motivation

Motive is a derivative term of motivation with different connotations. Motives for human acts are greatly affected by who they are, where they live, what they value, and what they want (Taylor, 2007). In turn motives affect choices in what as well as how humans act. In particular, motive is what prompts an individual to act in a certain way, or at least develop an inclination for specific behavior. Motivation is the theoretical construct used to explain behaviors. Motivation gives reasons for people's actions, desires, and needs and a critical psychological concept that involves an individual's tendency to behavior, or reasons for repeating a behavior and vice versa. Motivation also acts as a stimulus for action towards a desired goal, but could be limited in scope. Like the motivation for high monetary rewards, or more generally, as found with individuals who are driven to achieve in a multiplicity of fields (Mizuno et al., 2008).

Motivation is both intrinsic and extrinsic. Intrinsic motivation is internal to an individual and refers to doing something because it is inherently interesting or enjoyable (Mizuno, Tanaka, Fukuda, Imai-Matsumura, & Watanabe, 2011). Intrinsic motivation refers to doing something because it is inherently interesting or enjoyable, while extrinsic motivation refers to doing something because it leads to a separable outcome. Intrinsic motivators include satisfaction or pride from completing a task or personal desire to achieve a certain degree of competence. Extrinsic motivation refers to doing something because it leads to a separable outcome (Deci, Vallerand, Pelletier, & Ryan, 1991). Extrinsic motivators are those motivators affecting an individual's motivation level but are imposed on the individual from a person or experience other than said individual (Ellis, Arendt, Strohhahn, Meyer, & Paez, 2010). Extrinsic factors include communications, reward-punishment, and resources. External motivators include reminders from supervisors, praise from supervisors, rewards such as a cash incentive, or discipline in the event assignment or practices are not followed Ellis et al. (2010). Most

human beings are motivated to satisfy their internally and externally driven needs (Taylor, 2007). In intrinsic academic motivation (academic achievement motivation) results in better educational outcomes, such as higher academic performances, increased persistence and effort in studies, and better psychological adjustment of learners, in comparison to extrinsic motivation (Mizuno et al., 2008). In addition, academic achievement motivation is heightened by academic reward that induces a sense of competence and achievement (Mizuno et al., 2008).

Human motivation is sensitive to value of the outcomes of their actions (Eitam, Kennedy, & Tory Higgins, 2013). Individuals invest mental and physical resources to obtain desired results or stop and reverse undesired ones. Being harder working can be construed as reflecting motivation for learning in the school context (Gottfried, Adele, Cook, & Morris, 2005). Motivation to achieve is strongly determined by feelings of loyalty and obligation toward her parents and family (Verkuyten, Thijs, & Canatan, 2001). In general, factors of motivation include internal motivations, communication, reward-punishment, and resources. For the purpose of this study, motivation is the force which drives an individual to acquire education. Ellis et al. (2010) defined motivation as the force that moves an employee to follow safe food handling practices to study the varying influences of motivation factors on employees' likelihood to perform safe food handling practices because of demographic differences.

#### 1.11.10 Effects of Polygamy on Women, Children and Adolescents

Polygamy is a marital relationship occurs in several forms and involves multiple spouses (Al-Sharfi, Pfeffer, & Miller, 2016). Polygamous marriages is practiced as polygyny involving more than one wife, polyandry involving more than one husband, and polygynandry involving a group marriage where more than one wife is married to more than one husband (Yang, 2003). The most common form of polygamy is polygyny that occurs when a man has more than one wife at the same time. Factors affecting the occurrence of polygamy include social, economic, and religious factors (Al-Shamsi & Fulcher, 2005). In most parts of the United States, polygamy is illegal and against the law for one person to have more than one marriage license at the same time (Yang, 2003).

However, polygamy is legally practiced in various countries in the Middle East, Asia and Africa, even though not practiced by all (Al-Sharfi et al., 2016). When practices of polygamy are legal, the rights and well-being of many of the women, children suffer in polygamous relationships (Al-Krenawi & Jackson, 2015). Polygamy continues to be a significantly distinctive feature of African marriage practiced in the past by over a third of all men in the traditional Africa cultures (Jonas, 2012). In reality polygamy remains prevalent within the sub-Saharan African region with some 20 to 30 polygamists per 100 married men in contemporary African cites (Jonas, 2012). The basis of polygamy family life throughout Africa is both the culture and religion of its people (Jonas, 2012). Khasawneh, Hijazi, and Salman (2011) suggested that Islam limited polygamy for up to four wives. The Quran encourages polygamy for a restorative function for the protection of orphans and widows (Jonas, 2012). According to Jonas (2012) within several parts of Africa polygamy is not only a marriage of choice but a value system that inspires and shapes family relations.

Furthermore, in some African societies, there are incidences of arranged marriages, where parents decide who their daughters marry and the type of marriages. When this happens, the daughters consent is not sought and her views rarely matters. Polygamy is a harmful traditional practice which sometimes exposes girls and women to health risks (Jonas, 2012). Polygamy also has an impact on children's education, and access to a decent life (Khasawneh et al., 2011). Several children within the polygamous culture have no choice but to adapt to it even though they did not approve of such practices. The negative aspects of polygamy with respect to women and children range from consistent economic and educational marginalization, which adds to the weakness of community social systems and increase harmful psycho-social problems for women and children. In some cases women and children who act against traditional views of polygamy are threatened economically, socially, and physically (Al-Krenawi & Jackson, 2015).

Given the harmful effects on women population, rights-based approach is required to limit polygamy (Jonas, 2012). Sooryamoorthy and Chetty (2015) argued that the family both in Africa generally and specifically some African countries remains under researched. Although there studies on the effects of polygamy on women and children, however, studies with focus on the effects of polygamy on child development are limited. This study focus is on the knowledge required by girl-children and adolescents in Etsako west to overcome polygamous adversities and succeed in acquiring higher education.

#### 1.11.11 History of the Etsako People

Etsako is a part of the Afemai region comprising the entire geo-political division of the northern part of Edo state, Nigeria. With a population of about 264,509 in 49,768 households, the Etsakos are a border ethnic group, bounded to the north by Kogi and Benue States and to the east by Anambra State (Asekhauno & Inagbor, 2012). Historically, the entire Afemai including the Etsako people migrated from the old Benin kingdom around the eighteenth century (Asekhauno & Inagbor, 2012). According to Oseni (1999), the Etsako people are found principally in Auchi, Agbede, Agenebode, Iyakpi, Ekperi, Jattu, Okpella, and Okpekpe. Some additional groups within the Etsako division' includes Avianwu, Anwan, Ekperi, Aviele, Jagbe, Imiegba, Okpella, Weppa-Wanno, and Uzairue with common descent, history, custom, norms, and values. Etsako west is predominantly Agrarian communities who built their cultures around the Islamic religious faith tainted with some mix of Western cultures. Etsako west people practice predominantly Islamic religion while a portion of the population practice Christianity and indigenous forms of worship. Islam was gradually introduced to Etsako around middle of the nineteenth century through the activities of Hausa, Nupe, Yoruba, and Fulani itinerant mallams whose settlement in the area was facilitated by subjugation of Afenmai. Although, majority of the Etsako population have converted to and are practicing Muslims (Oseni, 1999), a significant number of the Etsakos in Nigeria continue to practice traditional religion and ancestral worship while a few are Christians. Etsako society is hierarchically organized around the monarchical leadership systems and patrilineal family arrangements, which are knitted into clans system based on kinship and groupings.

From the clan, Etsako societies further sub-divides into lineages where one lineage has a common ancestor that is traced back for multiple generations. Towns and villages within Etsako operate hierarchical system with each under a village head and multiple villages under a clan head (Asekhauno & Inagbor, 2012). Koltyk (1998) suggested that kinship ties are central in reflecting an individual's historical family alliances as well as the social, political, and economic status. In Etsako west, there is an extremely strong emphasis to maintaining a family's good name in line with religious tenets. In addition, hereditary, continued family lineage and clan is highly valued by the Etsako people. In line with cultural and religious beliefs, descent and clan leadership is passed down solely through male children while females are expected to get married and follow the male directives. The citizens are usually led by a monarch who goes by different title and crowned by leaders often because he is oldest male descendants of a reigning king of each clan. Early marriages are a commonality within the societies and up until they are married girls are considered members of their father's clan. Upon marriages, Etsako girl children become part of their husband's kinship and are expected to remain married throughout their lives. This belief is further supported in some families where a woman's deceased husband's younger brother marries their widows, so that she remains in the family.

In Etsako, children are viewed as the future and are necessary to provide for the future needs of both the older generation and the ancestors. However, only a son can continue the lineage, therefore male children are considered critical to maintaining the family name and status. The act of marriage and children, especially boys, are highly valued by the Etsako people. In particular, as dictated by culture and the Islamic faith, girl-children are married out early and sometimes under-aged. Girl-children are expected to get married and become part of another clan. In many cases, families make what they consider strategic decisions to spend the mostly scarce resources training the male children who they consider as heirs and successors. Some researchers suggested that within some cultures males are important because they are vital in continuing the family name or lineage (Dao, 1992; Cooper, 1998; Yang, 2003). According to Yang (2003), traditionally, because of the importance of children in agriculturally subsistence environments, as the number of children increases, so does status within communities. For same reason and in alignment with the Islamic religious practices that tend to favor multiple wives by one man, polygamy is common placed within the Etsako west communities.

#### 1.11.12 Polygamous Culture

Anthropologists use the term culture in referring to a society or group in which many people live and think in the same ways. Culture includes inherited ideas, beliefs, values, and knowledge, which constitute the shared bases of social action (Ssenyonjo, 2007). Culture affects women differently at different points in their lives (Potokri, 2015). In Africa, the persistence of deep-rooted adverse patriarchal attitudes and firmly entrenched stereotypical behavior with respect to the role of women and men in the family and society negatively impacts women (Ssenyonjo, 2007). According to Potokri (2015) cultural expectations and responsibilities of women within some societies change with changes in their status such as married, single mothers, aged or divorced. According to Thobejane (2016), in

most communities worldwide polygamy has been a prominent feature. In Africa, polygamy is still widely practiced by statesmen. Timaeus and Reynar (1998) posited that polygamy is exercised in communities of a number of West African countries. Polygamy is also prevalent within the Muslim communities where polygamous communities are related with a religious principle that supports it (Thobejane, 2016). Schreiter (1985) suggested that in the West, polygamy was primarily associated with male lust and the exploitation of women but in Africa, it is rooted in the economic area. Thobejane (2016) suggested that polygamy is more prevalent in Africa than other places in the world. A number of factors including religion, economics, and cultures motivate polygamy in Africa. The prevalence shows differences in tribes and religions, as well as the economic and social structures (Thobejane, 2016). In some cultures, polygamy is a mark of high social, economic, or political status (Lev-Wiesel & Al-Krenawi, 2000). Thobejane (2016), stressed that the economic factors which explains incidence of polygamy in a society includes labor in agriculture, trades, and crafts, preparation of food, in addition to the political and religious functions. In some cultures, it is a marker of economic success; the more wives a man has, the more successful he is seen to be (Klomegah, 1997).

Other factors influencing polygamy includes high infant mortality rates among males in some societies whereby, women outnumber men (Purcell, 2004). In such societies, without polygamy, many women would find themselves with no opportunity for marriage, and consequently no opportunity for economic or social security. In such instances, polygamy offers women who would otherwise not have partners the chance to be part of a family and to achieve such security (Purcell, 2004). Tertilt (2005) suggested that in several sub-Saharan countries, more than 10% of married women are in a polygamous union. According to Thobejane (2016), within the stretch between Senegal and Tanzania known as polygamous belt, it is common to find that more than one third of married women are in a polygamous marriage. In traditional societies, the family is the primary unit of production (Thobejane, 2016). Polygamy facilitates the birth of a larger number of children per family within a given period. The more hands they are, the easier the workload is (Thobejane, 2016). Clearly, in some families, children are being used as a source of labor. According to Low (1988), Polygamy is a marital relationship involving multiple wives. Most of the women who are practicing polygamy do practice agriculture as a form of sustenance (Thobejane, 2016). Thobejane (2016) posited that polygamy tends to occur more often in economic systems, which are based on simple agriculture or animal husbandry. Since polygamy is the most efficient means of producing a large family in a given time period, a large family consequently becomes an asset. Therefore, in traditional societies, polygamous cultural benefit includes that wives and children are chief labor force, children acts as social security in old age and the means of commanding extensive political power.

According to Lev-Wiesel and Al-Krenawi (2000) relationships within the family further complicates because of the presence of children of different mothers. Dorjahn (1988) suggested that the husband's perceived favoritism for one wife's children, coupled with efforts by each wife to secure more resources for her own children adds to the friction in polygamous settings. In addition, polygamous families have



significantly distinct internal problems, which usually stem from jealous competition between co-wives for the affections and resources of their husband (Adams & Mburugu, 1994; Al-Krenawi, 1998a, 1999a). Large size and diminished resources including economic and emotional, coincide with the risk factors for different patterns of child maladjustment within polygamous families (Elbedour, Bart, & Hektner, 2003). Children of large families exhibit higher levels of developmental and socialization problems (Maitra, 1996). Large families as well as lower economic resources are disadvantages and a reliable correlate of poor educational and cognitive performance (Elbedour et al., 2003). Polygamy is most common in social systems in which human resources are of primary importance (Lev-Wiesel & Al-Krenawi, 2000).

Etsako west is a collection of agrarian community landmass in Edo state of southern Nigeria. Over the years indigenes of Etsako west built a culture around the Islamic religious faith with a taint of western ideology. The Etsakos were originally part great Bini kingdom chiefly as makers of Bini artifacts. The relationship between some Etsakos leaders and the Binis fell apart when the bini leaders accused Etsako leaders of treason with consequential extermination plot against the Etsakos. Etsakos are part the Afemai people living in the Edo state of Nigeria. Asekhauno and Inabor (2012) found that the entire Afemai people migrated from the old Bini kingdom in the 18<sup>th</sup> century. History of Etsakos revealed that the first king (Onogie) of Agbede was known as Oba Momodu who was also the first to bring the Islamic faith to his people and also spoke multiple languages that he was not previously exposed to. Oseni (1999) suggested that Oba Momodu of Agbede and Otaru Momoh1 of Auchi championed the advent of islam in Etsako. According to Oseni (1999), Oba Momodu of Agbede kingdom later fortified Islam when he came in contact and became acquainted with the Nupe and Hausa Islamic clerics who migrated to his community in the nineteenth century. The people of Etsako west are largely Muslims with Islam ingrained as their indigenous religious practices. The engagement of Etsakos in farming activities for commerce and sustenance spans from the arable naturally fertile land alongside a reasonably good rainfall. Some individuals view polygamy as a reproductive strategy by which men maximize the number of their offspring but minimize investment in each child (White, 1988).

Polygamous family life weakens the parent-child bond, thus reducing the child's emotional satisfaction and psychological security (Elbedour, Bart, & Hektner, 2003). Polygamous characteristic tends to reduce the amount of supervision and parental attention received by each child, especially from the father (Elbedour, Onwuegbuzie, Caridine, & Abu-Saad, 2002). Another factor, which contributes to the difficulties faced by children in polygamous families, is a lack of parental role models because of the continuous conflicts between and among parents (Elbedour et al., 2003). Such parental role models are critical for the development of basic social skills (Amato & Keith, 1991). According to Downey (1995), large families may suffer from limited resources (time, energy, money per child), and these insufficiencies may directly undermine children's achievement in school. Since farming has been a major source of sustenance, traditionally the Etsakos practiced polygamy to enhance productivity and status before the advent of Islam. Polygamy is especially common in cultures where subsistence farming requires a large labor force (Elbedour et al., 2003). With the advent of Islam, polygamy became

culturally entrenched within the fabrics of the Etsako people.

## **2. Method**

### *2.1 Research Method*

According to Wahyuni (2012), qualitative research is an inquiry in a natural setting, an exploratory study of experience-as-lived and everyday life in the world. Qualitative research is an instrument for studying and comprehending the value that persons or communities attribute to a human or social issue (Patton, 2014). Unlike quantitative studies, qualitative studies allow researchers to explore or investigate a particular phenomenon in depth within the uncontrolled environment of the phenomenon (Onwuegbuzie et al., 2012). Qualitative studies are valuable in helping researchers to understand the social dynamics of societies as they focus on their traditions, principles, ethics, values, and philosophies, as well as behavioral patterns (Bloor, Sampson, Baker, & Dahlgren, 2013). With qualitative research, practitioners can simultaneously gather and modify all the collected data (Bloor et al., 2013). In addition, qualitative researchers collect and present rich data, particularly when they perform data collection through interviews (Seidman, 2012). The qualitative researchers use interviews, field notes, conversations, memos, and recordings to create a sequence of representations of the self (Flyvbjerg, 2011).

Qualitative researchers have a naturalistic, interpretative attitude towards life (Flyvbjerg, 2011). Qualitative researchers review topics in their usual surroundings, trying to understand the values that individuals bring to the phenomenon (Patton, 2014). Focus of this study was the exploration of how some Etsako west female indigenes from polygamous families manage to succeed in acquiring higher education. Qualitative format facilitates the identification of unofficial yet universal associations between different elements that influence structure and activities. Qualitative research format also allows practitioners to identify the fundamentals of all the choices, approaches, viewpoints, and logics of their target audience. This format also allows researchers to add new information that emerges from close contact with the participants (Bloor et al., 2013). Qualitative method relates to personal experience and knowledge of the participants but does not examine relationship between variables (Neuman, 2011). This study focus was on perceptions and individual experiences of female indigenes of Etsako who succeeded in education. Quantitative and mixed methods approaches involving both qualitative and quantitative data were not suitable.

### *2.2 Research Design*

For this study, we used a qualitative case study design. The method is most appropriate for researchers who want to conduct evaluations of a phenomenon, activity, program, or individual (Yin, 2014). Case study allows for naturalistic generalizations from personal experience such that researchers can understand participants' social experience. Case study designs are empirical enquiries, which researchers conduct to explore contemporary phenomena in a real-life contexts. The qualitative case study design approach involves analyzing the meaning and description of experiences of circumstances in a particular context (Moustakas, 1994). We used a case study design for this study to explore the how and why of the

research question: How do some girl-children and adolescents from polygamous homes succeed to acquire high education despite the adversities in Etsako west? Survival skills within polygamous environment are not adequately explored or well understood. Case study was most appropriate research design because the method allows data collection in natural settings rather than using the derived data available from survey questionnaires (Houghton, Casey, Shaw, & Murphy, 2013).

Case study research design was the appropriate design for this study involving exploration of the understanding, perceptions, and experiences of participants for success within polygamous adversarial environments. Researchers use case study research design to identify real-life decisions made in the context of a chosen phenomenon (Yin, 2014). The strength in using an exploratory case study lies in narrative description within the methodology. The power behind this research design is that the design allows researchers to view the actions within a given situation and collect a multitude of responses to help support the reasons behind the phenomenon as well as ensure data saturation. Using an exploratory case study provided insights into the survival strategies used by female indigenes of Etsako west to succeed in education.

#### *2.4 Data Collection Technique*

We started the interview process by obtaining signed informed consent letter from willing participants. All interviews took place at the participant's preferred locations for duration of approximately one hour as stated in the consent form letter. We started with introductions to establish relationship with research participants and created an atmosphere of comfort through in friendly conversations. We used the flexibility of semistructured interviews to ask open-ended questions, which furthered exploration of issues that arose during interview sessions. In line with Rubin and Rubin (2012) recommendations the interview questions were open-ended to facilitate participant's unique preference in addressing the questions. To alleviate this limitation, we listened carefully and skillfully asked participants for further explanation without pressuring or making participants uncomfortable.

We gathered data in the form of sentences and phrases which represented verbatim answers of participants to research questions. We continued interviews as long as participants were willing to disclose more information even though we set each session to last for approximately one hour. Data collection process continued until validation of data saturation. O'Reilly and Parker (2012) suggested that data saturation occurs when researchers observe repetitions in the data from interviews with qualified participant samples.

In alignment with Houghton, Casey, Shaw and Murphy (2013) we used member checking to verify accuracy and reliability of this qualitative research. According to Seidman (2012) researchers may allow participants to help with the interpretations of data during interviews, as well as the explanation of the transcribed information using member checking. After interviews, researchers may use member checking to give all participants the opportunity to validate accuracy of interpretations to the responses (Harper & Cole, 2012). In case study designs, researchers may use member checking and multiple data sources to improve credibility (Houghton et al., 2013). For the current study, member checking occurred

with each interview throughout the study. We also shared the transcription of interview responses with the participants, to confirm accuracy. In all cases, the participants confirmed the transcription as accurate and had nothing to add. Responses to the semi-structured interview and literature reviews yielded the underlying support to collect data for analysis that resulted to study conclusions.

### *2.5 Data Analysis Technique*

Data analysis is a crucial step in research process and includes (a) evaluating, (b) categorizing, (c) organizing, (d) analyzing, and (e) rearranging data to extract assumptions based on scrutiny (Yin, 2014). Onwuegbuzie, Leech, and Combs (2012) suggested that researchers may start data-analysis process with an explicit review of interview questions and subsequently transcribe interview recordings. Once we completed transcription and checked all of the research interviews, we began coding. The field notes compiled during the interviews were a useful source of complementary information, which facilitated the process. Following the collection and organization of data for this study, we read the information multiple times over and made notes of our interpretation of the true meaning of data. To triangulate, we collected data from different people, times, and different places (Bekhet & Zauszniewski, 2012). For this study, we used methodological triangulation and supported the analysis of interview data with field notes. The field note included information we gathered through personal interaction with participants and relevant observations. A combination of interview responses and secondary data showed methodological triangulation, which was useful as a framework for this study. Data analysis and findings focused distinctly on the research question. The focus of this analysis was identification of various themes relative to how girl-children from polygamous home in Etsako west acquire education despite the challenges and categorize accordingly. Methodological triangulation for this study was from supporting interview responses by participants with information from observation in field notes. We used Interview protocol consisting of open-ended questions to collect data from participants. Following the interviews, we reviewed data collection critically to establish findings and valid conclusion to study.

### *2.6 Reliability and Validity*

Internal validity is the quality or rigor of research methodology while external validity is the applicability, generalizability or transferability of research to other settings or contexts (Dobrow, Miller, Frank, & Brown, 2017). The standards of qualitative research should be trustworthiness, instead of internal and external reliability and validity (Gheondea-Eladi, 2014). Trustworthiness should be measured as credibility, transferability, dependability and confirmability (Gheondea-Eladi, 2014).

#### *2.6.1 Reliability*

The useful strategies for proving reliability in this study involved transcription from interviews, that are error free with correct definition of codes to reflect the research study using the Nvivo computer program. We used the live scribe note system to record interview discussions while taking interview notes on a notepad. To ensure consistency, we will save the raw data for 5 years to establish any inconsistency in the research before discarding the raw data. To demonstrate reliability, we ensured there was no variation from the research method selection for this study. To sustain reliability in the study, we did not use

leading questions throughout the interview sessions, and allowed participants the time to freely answer interview questions.

### 2.6.2 Validity

As suggested by Murphy and Yelder (2010) we used description of study findings, self-monitoring, and clarification of researcher's role to improve internal validity. In addition, to improve internal validity, we identified chain of proofs in the data collection stage using notes and journals. Therefore, to establish the transferability or external validity in this study, we defined the research scope, boundaries, and used purposive sampling. A number of useful viable strategies to establish trust include involvement of participants to guide the research, checking theoretical constructions against participant's explication of the phenomenon, and with participants' words in theory. Trustworthiness is the degree of confidence that qualitative researchers have in study and appraised through standards of originality, transferability, dependability, conformability, and credibility. According to Alqahtani (2011), participants' validation improves the credibility of a research study.

Participants' validation enhances the credibility of a study. To enhance credibility in this study, we persuaded participants to evaluate the interview transcript to substantiate the trustworthiness. Each participant reviewed the interview data for accuracy and provided corrections for suitable updates. Yin (2014) suggested that credibility of a case enhances when the patterns match. To validate the credibility and transferability in this study, we used (a) pattern matching, (b) methodological triangulation, (c) member checking, and (d) expert review. Walker (2012) suggested that dependability is substantiated if a researcher can repeat same result and other investigators can get the same results. According to Zohrabi (2013) consistency of interview questions supports the creditability and dependability of study results. In this study we used the same interview guide to collect data from all the participants.

For qualitative studies, researchers may use confirmability as the concept of neutrality, and auditing as a means to validate quality. Researchers may also accomplish confirmability through triangulation whereby they have a divergent view from challenging, validating, or extending existing findings. For this study we used Triangulation techniques and context of the study as methods to substantiate confirmability. As academic practitioners, with required educational and sufficient relevant research backgrounds with experience in Etsako cultural practices, we to address confirmability through evaluation of research questions for clarity, and alignment.

In qualitative research, transferability replaces the concept of external validity. Qualitative researchers may ensure transferability by providing as much contextual information as possible to help future researchers identify relevant characteristics that could be transferred to a different study (Gheondea-Eladi, 2014). As suggested by Nourian, Farahnaz, Kian, Rassouli, and Biglarian (2016) we provided a detailed and complete description of the process to facilitate the future assessment of the study to achieving transferability. To ensure quality, we thickly explained the settings and participants for this study. We gave a thorough description of the environments in which the inquiry took place. The thorough description should provide readers with adequate information for determining how relevant the finding is

to other settings. We also adequately described the original context of research using thick description so that other researchers can make judgments.

### **3. Result**

#### *3.1 Findings and Discussion of Study*

We identified three critical skills that girl-children with polygamous background use to overcome adversities for educational success in Etsako west Nigeria. The three major skills which participants identified as useful for girl-children educational success within polygamous cultural environment included (a) Survival skills, (b) Resilient/coping skills, and (c) Social skills. Data analysis aligned with GS and ET, the conceptual framework for this study. The analysis of data involved identifying and evaluating themes related to knowledge and skills used by successful women from Etsako west to acquire higher education.

#### *3.2 Presentation of Findings*

In line with ET, the choice to perform at a high level will be the product of expectancy that one can attain that level, the belief that attaining high level will lead to various rewards, and the value of those rewards. In line with GS people who set difficult but specific, goals surpassed those who set general, easy goals by achieving better. Haden (2012) suggested that Expectancy theory and goal setting theory can be applied to clarify how expectancies influence goals, which then influence performance. The research question was further broken into 21 open ended interview questions about skills to overcome polygamous adversities. Concept of GS and ET can explain fulfillment and may explain how and why behavior is facilitated or restrained (Yamhill & McLean, 2001). Analysis of data from interview questions indicated 22 themes, classed within four categories. The four major themes morphed into three critical skills significant to girl-children for overcoming polygamous adversity and acquiring higher educational success.

#### *3.3 Summary of Themes*

Guba (1978) suggested that some of the prominent themes in a data collection are those which occurred and recurred constantly. For this study, thorough analysis of interview data revealed three primary themes: (a) Survival Skills, (b) Resilience Skills, and (c) Coping Skills. According to Guba (1978), a concept is more likely to be a theme when it occur or reoccur multiple times in same text. Repetition was critical for identifying the three primary themes from a collection with 22 emergent themes. The primary themes were most occurring or recurrent repetitions in data collection. Components of Survival skills occurred 29% of the time while components of resilient skills occurred 27% of the times. Components of Coping skills occurred 25% of time while component of Social skills themes occurred 19% of the times. The result aligned with Finke et al. (2002) who posited that children in unsettled homes need to have coping skills to live and grow in such environments. The finding also supports views by Gresham and Elliott (1987) that children's social skills have relationship with children's academic competence and future success. Additionally, the finding supports Andrews (2013) view that resilient people are those

who possess ability to manipulate their environments in a way to protect themselves from negative consequences of adverse conditions. Anderson (1997) suggested that without creative survival skills, children mental health and will to live would be seriously jeopardized. Identifying children's survival skills is critical to establish power over adverse experiences they had no control over (Anderson, 1997). Results from this study's data and analysis explain the skills used by successful Etsako women as girl-children to overcome polygamous adversity and acquire higher educational goals. The conceptual framework underlying this study was the Goal-Setting theory (GS) and Expectancy Theory (ET). Ferguson (2007) found that young people commonly involve themselves with challenging survival behaviors including begging and some form of employment to meet their fundamental needs. According to participants, hawking and petty trading were critical skills, which they mastered for success towards acquiring higher education. The ability to get things when needed, dealing with authorities, avoiding people who hurt you and keeping people who positively impacts contributes to the success of girl-children from polygamous homes in Etsako west to acquire higher education.

#### *4.1 Recommendations for Action*

The current research explored success factors and skills that enabled girl-children overcome polygamous adversities and acquire high education. We recommend that NGOs, local authorities, family heads, and other care professionals receive training with focus on basic skills, actions and behaviors that enable girl-children overcome polygamous adversity for success in education. Development of basic life skills, services, and resources to help girl-children from polygamous homes overcome adversity may facilitate a reduction of illiteracy and joblessness, which affects local communities and society in general. Researchers may use results from this study to continue development of a comprehensive framework for identifying comprehensive solutions towards helping girl-children overcome polygamous adversity. Some of the participants in this study explained how they turned to panhandling outside of their immediate homes because of polygamous adversity.

When working with girl-children facing polygamous challenges organization, leaders, NGO's or individuals may focus on provision of financial support. Authorities may include extra help session to augment formal class sessions for affected children. Programs that focus on helping girl-children and adolescents facing polygamous adversity encourage them to live as productive members of society and gain skills with abilities in getting support for success in education. Care organizations, professionals, leaders, and community service providers that work with children and women facing polygamous adversity should incorporate training and mentoring programs on (a) Survival skills, (b) Resilient skills, (c) coping skills, (d) Social skills. Combination of the influences would enable child care administrators, providers, counselors, and NGO professionals working with girl-children from polygamous home understand the role of basic life skills towards overcoming polygamous adversity and succeed to acquire education.

#### *4.2 Recommendations for Further Study*

There is a need for more quantitative research in order to understand fully the phenomenon of how women overcame polygamous adversities as girl-children. Further research is necessary to explore how factors such as family size influence the skills used by successful women to overcome polygamous adversity. The advantages derivable from a quantitative approach includes that the results are easy to summarize and analyze by grouping comparisons. In addition, given that Etsako west is mainly homogeneous both culturally and religiously researchers may explore same issue using samples of girl-children from polygamous home within heterogeneous populations. This can potentially give a reliable indication of the views of a larger population. Another recommendation for further research includes qualitative researches that explore the influence of age on skills that enable girl-children to overcome polygamous adversity for success to acquire higher education. For this study, we explored four skills; survival, resilience, coping and social skills. Future research, which broadens the skills, may yield a different result.

#### *4.3 Study Conclusions*

In the current globalized climate, girl-children education should be of paramount concern to reduce illiteracy rate and improve quality of life of women in general. Overall this study confirmed that with needed skills and diligent effort girl-children have the ability to achieve educational success. Identifying and improving coping skills for promoting resilience, survival and success of girl-children merits the consideration of educators, researchers, practitioners, and policymakers. Data from this study revealed that participants developed and used survival, resilient, coping and social skills through childhood to overcome polygamous adversities. Children from polygamous families are indeed at greater risk of psychological and physical abuse (Elbedour, Bart, & Hektner, 2003).

According to Ismayilova, Gaveras, Blum, Tô-Camier, and Nanema (2016) children who experience adversities during early development are likely to have poor health in life than those raised in supportive environments. Polygamous family life weakens parent-child bond, reduces child's emotional satisfaction and psychological security and characteristically tends to reduce the amount of supervision and parental attention received by children (Elbedour, Bart, & Hektner, 2003). However, the conclusions reached in this study offer hope for girl-children, families, and community leaders. A significant conclusion from the study based on participants' responses is that girl-children and adolescents can overcome polygamous adversities to successfully acquire high education. In addition, despite the consequences of their adverse experiences, identified skills (i.e., Survival, Resilience, coping, and Social) helped the participants in this study overcome polygamous and acquire higher education for improved life styles.

#### *4.4 Literature Gaps*

Polygamy is a prominent feature of many societies in the sub-Saharan Africa (Matz, 2016). Polygamy is common practice in areas where subsistence farming requires a large labor force, serving as a means to ensure the family's socioeconomic stability (Hamdan et al., 2009). Compared to their counterparts



from monogamous families, children from nontraditional structures exhibit more conduct disorders, communication difficulties, and higher rates of school attrition (Hamdan et al., 2009). In addition, under the Islamic tradition women are married young leading some families to consider female education as an unwise investment not worth wasting scarce resources on (Whitsitt, 2002). Few studies exist that answers the question on how do some girl-children from Etsako west Nigeria overcome polygamous adversities to succeed in high education.

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