



SOCIAL AND LIVELIHOOD IMPLICATION OF COVID-19 LOCKDOWN ON THE PEOPLE OF SOUTHERN KADUNA STATE OF NIGERIA

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ABSTRACT: *This study assesses the social and livelihood implication of Covid-19 lockdown in Southern Kaduna State of Nigeria, with a view to providing information for sustainable living of the human population. Data for this study was collected through questionnaire survey, in-depth interview and direct field observation. The result shows that Covid-19 lockdown prevented many prospective couples from having their marriages/marriage ceremonies, forced many couples to have unwanted pregnancies, breaking away of many relationships, caused conflicts due to short supply of family needs, and forced many parents to have more time for the family. The result also indicated that the pandemic increased the level of rape cases, teenage pregnancies and prostitution among women in the study area. As such, it is recommended that proper education be given to people on the effects of any pandemic on women, young and adolescent children through their worship centers and schools, and finally, marriage counseling should involve issues related to the effects of any disease pandemic and how to maintain their livelihood sources.*

KEYWORDS: Covid-19 pandemic, Livelihood, Marriages, Adolescent-child, Prostitution and Rape.



INTRODUCTION

Peoples' lives have been disrupted and negatively impacted by Covid-19 related suffering and lockdowns at community and household levels in the world. The crisis has touched all segments of the population, all sectors of the economy and all areas of the world. It affected the world's poorest and most vulnerable people the most and has exposed harsh and profound inequalities in our societies and further exacerbating existing disparities within and among countries (United Nation, 2020).

The pandemic severely damaged the economies of most developed countries and has become a major threat for low and middle-income countries (Lone & Ahmad, 2020). Africa with the most vulnerable populations to infectious disease due to poverty was predicted to be significantly affected by the Covid-19 outbreak (Lone & Ahmad, 2020). The lockdown curfews, self-isolation, social distancing and quarantine have affected the overall physical, mental, spiritual and social wellbeing of people worldwide (Poudel & Subedi, 2020). The concentrated time spent in lockdown shows that vulnerable people were more exposed to abuse and this was more difficult for them to seek help (Nicola et al., 2020). For example, the Covid-19 pandemic affected adolescent girls and young women across multiple outcomes, including education, livelihoods, sexual and reproductive health, sexual and gender-based violence, the burden of unpaid care, and early and forced marriages (Briggs et al., 2020; World Vision, 2020). These heightened barriers to economic and social opportunities and the resulting loss of human capital have the potential to derail progress toward gender equality unless recognized and addressed (Briggs et al., 2020; Plan International, 2020).

Although medical literature shows that children are minimally susceptible to Covid-19, they are hit the hardest by this pandemic (Ghosh et al., 2020). Incidences of domestic violence, child abuse, adulterated online contents are on the rise. For example, closure of schools, resulted in weeks of lost education, which exposed children to several types of child abuse (including sexual exploitation and violence against girls) with long-term effects such as emotional trauma and unwanted pregnancies (Evans, 2020; Ghosh et al., 2020; Department for International Development (DFID), 2020; UN, 2020). Children of single parents and frontline workers suffer unique problems. The children from marginalized communities are particularly susceptible to the infection and may suffer from extended ill-consequences of this pandemic, such as child labour, child trafficking, child marriage, sexual exploitation and death (Ghosh et al., 2020). As such, adolescent girls and women are among the most marginalized and at-risk populations when outbreaks and emergencies such as Covid-19 occur (DFID, 2020).

The most significant short, medium and long-term impacts of the pandemic in Nigeria may be beyond the health sphere, and be most stark when it comes to livelihoods, levels of violence against women and girls (VAWG), conflict dynamics, and social relations (World Bank/Traore, 2020). For example, the pandemic affected the livelihood of 71% of women and 51% of men in Borno State, Nigeria (World Bank/Traore, 2020). Covid-19 and related government responses affect people differently and magnify already high levels of inequality along age, class, disability, gender, income and other lines (World Bank/Traore, 2020). The current situation has a more severe and sustained impact on people who experience multiple and intersecting discriminations, such as girls and women with disabilities, adolescent girls, or men subjected to poverty from minority ethno-linguistic backgrounds (World/Traore, 2020). In times of crisis, due to school closures, loss of livelihood, significant stress on



families and lack of access to safe spaces and services, girls and women face great risks (DIFD, 2020).

The pandemic forced the government of Kaduna state to spend over \$5 million in support of Covid-19 responses across the State (Umeh & Madubu, 2022). For example, during the pandemic, activities of enterprises in the lateral, midstream and downstream of the study value chains were severely disrupted despite their crucial role in the processing and distribution of food in the state (Ibrahim et al., 2020). It caused an increase in the prices of seedlings, farm inputs, cost of farm labor, losses in farm produce, depreciated the cost of poultry and dairy products, and difficulties accessing veterinary services and animal feed affecting means of revenue generation (Zankan et al., 2020).

There are different studies which have been documented in Kaduna state about the effects of the Covid-19 pandemic. These studies include: the environmental effects of Covid-19 (Mshelia et al., 2020); the effects of Covid-19 on agriculture (Zankan et al., 2020); impact of Covid-19 pandemic lockdown on distribution of inorganic pollutants (Fuwape et al., 2020); impact of Covid-19 pandemic on transportation in southern Kaduna (Zankan et al., 2021); how Covid-19 affected financing for essential health services (Agbola et al., 2021); and willingness to accept Covid-19 vaccine in a rural community in Kaduna state, Northwest Nigeria (Abubakar et al., 2021). Unfortunately, these studies dwelled much more on the effects of Covid-19 on agriculture, transportation and environment, and acceptability of Covid-19 vaccine leaving out its effects on marriages, women and adolescent children and their education including livelihood in the study area. As such, this study assesses the social and livelihood implication of Covid-19 lockdown in Southern Kaduna state of Nigeria such as marriages, women and adolescent children, so as to provide information for sustainable living.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Study Area

Southern Kaduna is located between latitudes 10° 0' 00" to 10° 39' 00"N and longitudes 6° 40' 00" to 8° 27' 00" east of the Greenwich Meridian (figure 1). It shares boundary with Kano State, Kubau, Soba, Igabi, Kaduna North/South local governments to the North, Birnin Gwari local government and Niger State to the West, FCT and Nasarawa State to the South and Plateau State to the East. The population is culturally diverse with differences in religion, ethnicity, traditions and social norms. They are predominantly Christians of a variety of ethnic groups such as the Atyap, Adara, Bajju, Ham, Akurmi, Nindem, Ninkyop, Gwong, Kanufi, Numana, Gbagi and Chawai. The dominant economic activities are farming, mining and commerce, rearing of animals and hunting.

Type and Sources of Data

The primary data for this study was collected through the questionnaire, in-depth interview and direct field observation. The targeted population for the study includes residents and health officials across the study area that had knowledge about the impact of the Covid-19 lockdown on their life. The questionnaire consisted of close and open-ended questions. The



documentary source was obtained from journals, newspapers, unpublished dissertations and theses.

Sampling Technique

A field survey was carried out in the study area to obtain the primary data for the study. The study area has eleven local governments that include Sanga, Jema'a, Jaba, Zangon-Kataf, Kaura, Kauru, Kachia, Lere, Kajuru, Kagarko and Chikun. To collect the data for the study, 60% (seven) local government areas were selected at random. They include Kajuru, Kachia, Zangon-Kataf, Kagarko, Jema'a, Jabba and Kauru. Self-administered questionnaire to 384 respondents was carried out across the study area using systematic sampling procedure. In-depth interviews were done with health officials and couples that were not included in the survey. Direct field observation was also carried out to have first-hand information on the effects of Covid-19 on the populace. The in-depth interview and direct field observation were carried out in order to complement the result obtained from the questionnaire survey.

Data Analysis

The data obtained from the field survey were in two categories: qualitative and quantitative data. The quantitative data collected through the questionnaire was analyzed using descriptive statistics such as, tables and percentage, while the qualitative data obtained through in-depth interview was subjected into transcription and represented in narrative format to further strengthen the quantitative data.

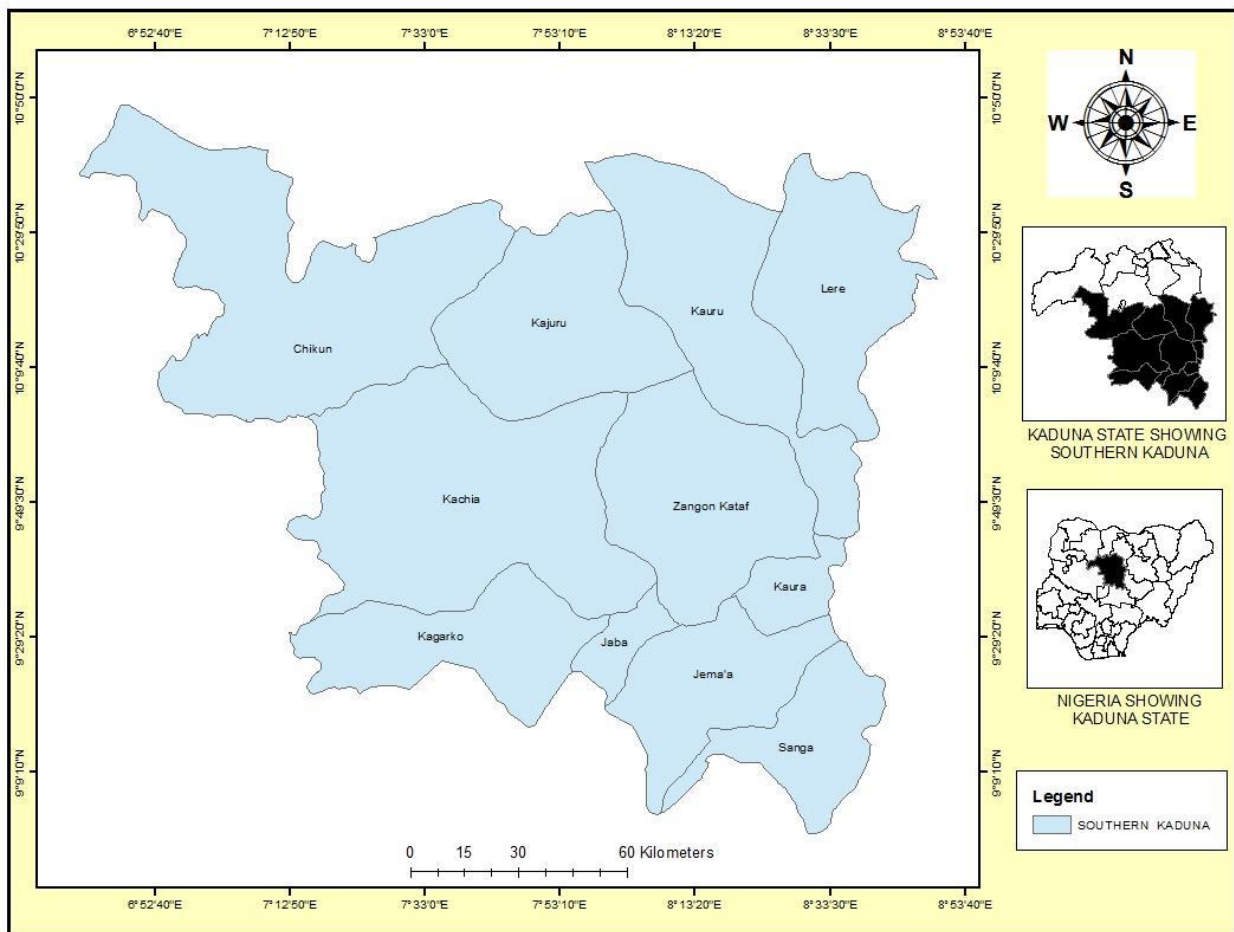


Figure 1: The study area

Source: Gis Lab Buk

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This section presents and discusses the results of the data obtained from the field survey. This was presented in tables and percentages.

Demographic Characteristics of the Respondents

In this study, about 21.4% of the study population combined farming and civil service, 36.2% farmers, 1.2% artisan, 1.5% traders, 14.0% students and 25.7% civil servants. Most of those who claimed not to be farmers also engage in little agricultural activities such as keeping livestock and cultivation of crops around their homes to provide food for the family. About 53.2% are males and 46.8% females. 67.0% are married, 30.5% single, 2.5% widows. 19.8% fall below 20 years, 51.3% fall between 30 to 39 years, 24.7% fall between the age of 40 to 59 years, while 4.2% fall between the age of 50 years and above. In terms of education, 14.5% have had primary education, 52.4% secondary education and 28.4% tertiary education



while 4.7% have had different kinds of education and knowledge such as Quranic education and blacksmithing.

Table 1: Covid-19 prevented many prospectus couples to have their marriages/marriage ceremonies in Southern Kaduna

SA	A	SD	D	Total
238	73	18	55	384
62%	19%	4.7%	14.3%	100%

About the effects of the Covid-19 pandemic on marital affairs, majority of the respondents agreed that Covid-19 pandemic prevented many prospective couples from having their marriages/marriage ceremonies in Southern Kaduna (table 1). There are seasons for marriages among the people of Southern Kaduna state of Nigeria. It occurs between the months of February to May and October to December every year. Most of the marriages that were scheduled for the period between March and June did not hold due to the lockdown and restriction on movement caused by the Covid-19 pandemic in the study area. Couples that held their marriages did it secretly without ceremonies to avoid harassment and evade arrest by the security personnel. Some of the couples decided to have it with few people at present such as their clergy men, representatives of the two families (families of the brides and groom). But some couples sought the attention of security personnel working within their areas to allow them to hold their marriages. Because of this reason, conditions were given to them by the security personnel to fulfill before the marriage ceremonies. This was well illustrated by a man at Zankan-Nindem Village:

“We had our marriage ceremony based on conditions given by the security personnel working within our area. It was until when we met those conditions that the ceremony was allowed to hold”.

In addition to that, most of the sources of livelihood for these couples were shut down. They could not have money to continue with their marriage processes. Shops, mechanic and carpentry workshops, markets and even transportation systems in which people depended on were shut down. This affected these couples a lot, forcing many of them to stop their marriages for another time/period. This finding is in line with that of Zankan et al. (2021) that Covid-19 lockdown led to increase in the cost of transportation, restriction on movement, loss of jobs, loss of revenue by the government, loss of income and loss of farm produce in Southern Kaduna.

Table 2: Covid-19 led to unwanted pregnancies among couples in Southern Kaduna

SA	A	SD	D	Total
128	170	50	36	384
33.3%	44.3%	13%	9.4%	100%

Higher number of the respondents agreed that Covid-19 led to several unplanned pregnancies (table 2). The lockdown imposed by the government of Nigeria prevented many couples from going out for their daily jobs. Many couples engage in different activities such as trading,



teaching, banking and carpentry to solve their family needs of food, clothes and health. But with the Covid-19 lockdown, most of the areas where these couples work were shut down. This forced some of them to engage in sexual relationship that led to many unwanted pregnancies, most especially to women who were not on family planning. Average frequency of sexual intercourse was significantly increased during the pandemic compare to before the lockdown (Yusel & Ozgor, 2020). For example, the clinical record for women who attended antenatal care in Jema'a local government between January-June 2020 was 18,718. The result decreased from 6,450 in January to 2,677 in February and 2,651, 2,329, 1,939 and 2,672 in the months of March, April, May and June respectively. The rationale behind the high number of pregnancies recorded in January was as a result of people who traveled home for Christmas and New Year Festivals. But the result began to decrease in the months of February to May when the news about the pandemic spread across the world and secondly, the lockdown and movement restriction which occurred between the months of March to May also prevented many women from attending antenatal care in the various clinics or hospitals across the study area. But immediately after the lockdown, the pregnancy record increased by 27.4% from 1,939 in May to 2,672 in June. This shows that the lockdown gave many couples the opportunity to have sexual intercourse that led to having high number of pregnancies recorded among women during the month of June in the study area.

Table 3: Covid-19 led to the break of several relationships in Southern Kaduna

SA	A	SD	D	Total
165	91	55	73	384
43%	23.7%	14.3%	19%	100%

Majority of the respondents agreed that Covid-19 lockdown led to the break of many relationships among some prospective couples in Southern Kaduna state of Nigeria (table 3). In Nigeria, more especially the northern region, parents or relations play a vital role in selection of husbands or wives for their children during marriages. For example, some prospective couples have done their pre-marriage ceremonies (introduction) by bringing parents of the two families together before the pandemic in order to collect the lists of items for the marriages, but failed to hold their wedding ceremonies due to the influence of parents or relations. This was because some relations of the prospective couples, who did not want the relationship to continue, used the opportunity of the lockdown to separate them by discouraging them from continuing in the relationship. Some of these couples also broke up due to lack of trust or distance that affected them since the restriction on movement was so high in Kaduna state that people could not travel (Zankan et al., 2021). Many relationships failed due to the lack of trust between couples in different parts of the world (Maiti et al., 2020). This problem was recorded in different parts of the world including Nigeria, where many couples lost their relationships due to the lockdown. But some of the respondents attributed the break up to lack of love and respect for each other. They noted that if there is love and respect for each other, the relationship which they have built for many years cannot just end in one day because of Covid-19 lockdown. Another cause of the break in the relationships was the loss of jobs which resulted in the inability of the prospective husbands to provide the items demanded from them during the pre-marriage ceremonies (introductions), since some families demand a lot of items from groom families for their daughters when they are to marry.



Table 4: Covid-19 caused conflicts due to short supply of family needs in Southern Kaduna

SA	A	SD	D	Total
188	168	13	15	384
48.9%	43.8%	3.4%	3.9%	100%

Most of the respondents also agreed that Covid-19 caused conflicts to some couples due to short supply of family needs (table 4). The lockdown affected the sources of livelihood of many people who didn't have the time to go out for their normal jobs, and as a result, caused serious conflict or misunderstanding to the families who misunderstood the impact of the Covid-19 lockdown on their lives. For example, the pandemic affected the livelihood of 71% of women and 51% of men in Borno state, Nigeria (World Bank/Traore, 2020). Even couples that were salary earners faced the same problem because people were only allowed to go out twice a week to the market to buy food items and other things needed for the family. The two-day freedom a week was given after several weeks of total shutdown by the government of Kaduna state. That is why Ibrahim (2020) noted that financial insecurity, stress, and uncertainty have led to increased aggression at home, with abusers able to control large amounts of their victims' daily life. The economic recessions put significant financial pressure on many families, which increase unhealthy conflict, family breakdown, abuse, depression and domestic violence (Maiti et al., 2020; Nicola et al., 2020; Poudel & Subedi, 2020; Alvi et al., 2022). Problem of conflict among couples in the study area was more rampant in the urban centers where most people depend on their daily work to feed their families. But this problem was less in the rural areas where less attention was given on the lockdown by the government as such people were moving freely to look for what to feed their families. During the period of the lockdown (March-May), wild food (mango) was available in the rural areas which people fed on freely. This caused a harmonious relationship among many couples in the rural areas.

Table 5: Covid-19 forced many parents to have more time for the family in Southern Kaduna

SA	A	SD	D	Total
256	128	0%	0%	384
66.7%	33.3%	0%	0%	100%II

Majority of the respondents agreed that Covid-19 forced many parents to have more time for their families in Southern Kaduna (table 5). To give birth to a child is not a difficult situation, but taking care of such a child is more important. In some developing countries, people produce children but without taking proper care of them which exposes these children to different kinds of diseases or dangers. The lockdown and movement restriction forced many parents who didn't have time for their families due to too many activities or jobs to live with them for many weeks. This is because they were restricted from movement which made some of them, more especially women who thought their husbands were cheating on them to be



happy. It became a big problem when some of these couples could not provide anything for their family, especially businessmen who depend on daily sales of goods in the market. But this affected some relationships, especially couples who stayed separately due to work requirements (Maiti et al., 2020). For instance, when the lockdown brought them together, since they were not used to staying together, conflicts arose between them.

Table 6: Covid-19 increased the level of rape cases in Southern Kaduna

SA	A	SD	D	Total
91	165	73	55	384
23.7%	43%	19%	14.3%	100%

Majority agreed that Covid-19 increased the level of rape cases (table 6). The Covid-19 lockdown prevented many people from their various works of life, especially the youths who were disengaged from their jobs in the cities. Some were forced to go back to their villages due to hardship, schools were shutdown and as a result, increased the level of rape cases in Nigeria. Level of rape cases was very high during the lockdown all over the country because so many people did not have where to go or what to do leading to having carnal knowledge with different people including children (Nwaogu et al., 2020). Some people (men and women) took advantage of the Covid-19 to defile little children in the study area. They lured some of their victims with either food or other materials things and raped them (United Nation, 2020), since their parents have lost their sources of livelihood. This was a hard time for them as they were struggling to survive. Hundreds of millions of children and adolescents face increasing threats to their safety and well-being, including gender-based violence (GBV), exploitation, abuse and neglect, social exclusion, and/or separation from caregivers and friends (United Nation International Children Emergency Fund, 2020; Plan International, 2020). Sexual exploitation and abuse tend to rise during times of financial hardship and disrupt humanitarian distribution.

Table 7: Covid-19 increased the level of teenage pregnancies in Southern Kaduna

SA	A	SD	D	Total
184	94	70	36	384
47.9%	24.5%	18.2%	9.4%	100%

Majority of the respondents also agreed that Covid-19 has increased the level of pregnancies among children in the study area (table 7). The girl child is vulnerable to varying degrees of sexual abuse by pedophiles in the society. The lockdown caused many children to be victims of sexual abuses which led to unwanted pregnancies and sexually transmitted diseases (Plan International, 2020). Many of them willingly submitted themselves for money to buy food due to hardship caused by the Covid-19 lockdown (Ghosh et al., 2020; UNICEF, 2020). This led to many pregnancies, early marriages and abortions that have affected their future career (UN Women, 2020). Because of this problem, many of them have left school (drop-out), while others have been forcefully married to those who impregnated them. This has caused inequalities and disparities in the education sector including economic and social opportunities (UNESCO, 2020; Briggs et al., 2020).



Girls are more likely to experience sexual exploitation and abuse. Apart from that, the pandemic also increased the risk of women and girls to sexually transmitted infections in the world due to the hardship. The Covid-19 pandemic affected adolescent girls and young women across multiple outcomes, including education, livelihoods, sexual and reproductive health, sexual- and gender-based violence, the burden of unpaid care, and early and forced marriages (Briggs et al., 2020; UNICEF, 2020; UN, 2020). Most of the vulnerable children continue to face teenage pregnancies, early marriages, child labor due to the economic crisis posed by the Covid-19 which led to the lost of many jobs across the world. Millions of children are at increased risk of child marriage and child labor over the coming years as family livelihoods evaporate and economic crises ensue, pushing families to identify other forms of income which harm children (World Vision, 2020).

Table 8: Covid-19 increases the level of prostitution among women in Southern Kaduna

SA	A	SD	D	Total
129	128	91	36	384
33.6%	33.3%	23.7%	9.4%	100%

About the impact of Covid-19 on prostitution among women in Southern Kaduna state, majority of the respondents agreed that Covid-19 increases the level of prostitution among women in the study area (table 8). Prostitution is a business for sex workers more especially in the urban centres of the world. Many people see such work as an illegal or bad occupation in Nigeria. But the Covid-19 pandemic lockdown posed serious hardship to people across the country as a result of the lockdown and restriction on movement imposed by different tiers of governments of Nigeria which made many households across the country to lose their sources of income. Many of them were struggling to feed their families. This forced some women to engage in carnal knowledge with men in order to feed their families, especially those whose family heads were women (UNICEF, 2020). Their means of livelihood were greatly hit by the pandemic which increased the level of poverty among households in the country. This made them commit such kinds of atrocities in order to get food for the family. The pandemic certainly outrage the risk of sexual exploitation, teenage pregnancy, transactional sex similar consequences that were faced by children from Africa after Ebola epidemic (Ghosh et al., 2020).

Even when the lockdown was imposed, they still sneaked out during the night to commit such acts. This increased the level of sexually transmitted infections among the populace. Endangered girls had to undergo transactional sex for fulfillment of basic needs like food, drinking water and shelter (Ghosh et al., 2020). An estimated 42-66 million children could fall into extreme poverty as a result of the crisis, adding to the estimated 386 million children already in extreme poverty in 2019 (UN, 2020). But 23.7% and 9.4% had contrary view that the Covid-19 pandemic did not force women into prostitution. They noted that most of those who engaged in the prostitution have chosen such business as their career even before the Covid-19 pandemic lockdown. They only used the influence of Covid-19 as a cover up of the atrocities they have been committing with their lovers outside their marriages.



CONCLUSION

Pandemic affects all kinds of human race on earth. But women and young adolescent children are the most vulnerable groups of people that are hit the most during any pandemic as many livelihood sources are affected. The effects of the global Covid-19 pandemic are not limited to health related issues alone but also affect marriages, women and adolescents. Many marriages suffer a lot due to different kinds of diseases such as sexually transmitted infections, especially when couples are not faithful to one another. The Covid-19 pandemic caused serious problems in marriages as it prevented many couples from having their marriages, causing unwanted pregnancies among couples, conflict and breaking away of many relationships and also forced many parents to have more time for their children. Women, young and adolescent children also suffered a lot from this pandemic as it denied them access to education. This has had serious effects on the life of these young children and increased the level of poverty, creating inequality among them. As such, it is recommended that proper orientation be given to people on the effects of pandemic on women, young and adolescent children through worship centers and schools, and finally, marriage counseling should involve issues related to the effects of any pandemic and how to maintain their sources of livelihood.

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APPENDIX

QUESTIONNAIRE ON SOCIAL AND LIVELIHOOD IMPLICATION OF COVID-19 LOCKDOWN IN SOUTHERN KADUNA STATE OF NIGERIA

Kindly respond to the questions below as that will help us to generate data for the study. All responses shall be treated confidentially and information obtained shall be use for the purpose of this work only.

Thanks

INTRODUCTION: Please fill in or tick the right option in the space provided below.

Section A: Personal information

1. Sex (a) Male () (b) Female ()
2. Age (a) Less than 20 years () (b) 20-39 years () (c) 40 -59years () (d) 60 years above ()
3. Marital status (a) Married () (b) Single () (c) Widow () (d) Divorce ()
4. Level of education (a) Primary () (b) Secondary education () (c) Higher education () (d) Others specify.....
5. Occupation (a) Farmer () (b) Artisan () (c) Trader () (d) Civil servant () (e) Others specify.....

Note: AS-Strongly Agreed, A-Agreed, A-Strongly disagreed, D-Disagreed

	Section B: Effects of Covid-19 on Marital Issues and Crime	SA	A	SD	D
6	Covid-19 prevented many couples from having their marriages/ marriage ceremonies				
7	Covid-19 forced many couples to have unwanted pregnancies				
8	Many prospectus couples break away due to Covid-19 lockdown				
9	Covid-19 caused conflict due to short supply of family needs				
10	Covid-19 forced many parents to have more time for the family				
11	Covid-19 increased the level of rape cases in Southern Kaduna				
12	Covid-19 increased the level of teenage pregnancies in Southern Kaduna				
13	Covid-19 increases the level of prostitution among women				

14. Suggest ways that may prevent the effects of the pandemic on women and vulnerable children in Southern Kaduna?