

Publication

Bride price payment and women's autonomy: Findings from qualitative interviews from Nigeria

JournalArticle (Originalarbeit in einer wissenschaftlichen Zeitschrift)**ID** 4511111**Author(s)** Princewill, Chitu Womehoma; Wangmo, Tenzin; Jegede, Ayodele Samuel; Riecher-Rössler, Anita; Elger, Bernice Simone**Author(s) at UniBasel** [Wangmo, Tenzin](#) ; [Elger, Bernice Simone](#) ; [Princewill, Chitu](#) ;**Year** 2019**Title** Bride price payment and women's autonomy: Findings from qualitative interviews from Nigeria**Journal** Women & health**Volume** 59**Number** 7**Pages / Article-Number** 775-788**Keywords** Autonomy; Nigeria; bride price; culture; marriage; women

Marriage involving a man and a woman is a universal social institution, but its practices vary among cultures. In Nigeria, a marriage is recognized after gifts are given, and a bride price is paid by the groom's family to the bride's family. Understanding the bride price will reduce the challenges women face in their marital homes. Women's autonomy is important for them to address matters affecting their health. We examined married Ikwerre women's perspectives on bride price and its impact on their autonomy using qualitative methods. From December 2014 to March 2015, 34 in-depth interviews and six focus group discussions were conducted with married Ikwerre women. Participants reported that patriarchy and a culture of absolute respect for men, not the bride price, was the reason for women's diminished autonomy. Participants noted that payment of the bride price was critical for validating marriage to give women respectable status in society as wives. Patriarchal rule and the demand for absolute respect for men need to be addressed in the Ikwerre culture. A woman's capability to address her health needs and use health care is largely dependent on her ability to act autonomously. Thus, educational interventions to enable women's decision-making are critical.

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