

**IMPACT OF SOCIO-CULTURAL VARIABLES ON MARITAL
STABILITY AMONG COUPLES IN EDO STATE, NIGERIA**

ABAIMU FAITH IZIEGBE

SSC1809869

DEPARTMENT OF SOCIOLOGY AND ANTHROPOLOGY

FACULTY OF SOCIAL SCIENCES

UNIVERSITY OF BENIN

SEPTEMBER 2023

**IMPACT OF SOCIO-CULTURAL VARIABLES ON MARITAL
STABILITY AMONG COUPLES IN EDO STATE, NIGERIA**

ABAIMU FAITH IZIEGBE

SSC1809869

**BEING A PROJECT SUBJECT SUBMITTED TO THE DEPARTMENT OF
SOCIOLOGY AND ANTHROPOLOGY, FACULTY OF SOCIAL
SCIENCES, UNIVERSITY OF BENIN, BENIN CITY, IN PARTIAL
FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENT FOR THE AWARD OF
BACHELORS OF SCIENCE (B.SC) DEGREE IN SOCIOLOGY**

SEPTEMBER, 2023

CERTIFICATION

This is to certify that this research project titled **“IMPACT OF SOCIO-CULTURAL VARIABLES ON MARITAL STABILITY AMONG COUPLES IN EDO STATE, NIGERIA**, written by **ABAIMU FAITH IZIEGBE** with matriculation number **SSC1809869** in the Department of Sociology and Anthropology, Faculty of Social Sciences, University of Benin.

.....
DR. MONDAY ABIOLA

(PROJECT SUPERVISOR)

.....
PROF. A.O DOKPESI

(HEAD OF DEPARTMENT)

DATE.....

DATE.....

DEDICATION

This project is dedicated to God almighty and my parents.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

My profound gratitude first of all, goes to God Almighty for his protection and grace over my life, for his mercy and love for me and my family. He is awesome indeed. I am indeed grateful to my wonderful and capable project supervisor, DR. Monday Abiola. It's a great privilege to be taught, instructed and supervised by such an erudite scholar of great reputation, a man with high level of integrity and conscience. I thank him for whom he is, he is one in a million and i also appreciate other lecturers in the Department of Sociology and Anthropology. Faculty of Social Sciences, University of Benin

I wish to express my appreciation to my loving, wonderful and caring parents,whom I am indebted to on how they brought me up with love and encouragement to this very stage and also for their support and prayers for me.

I am also very grateful to my wonderful friends . I appreciate my course mates in the 2018-2019 Session of the programme in the Department of Sociology and Anthropology. I thank them all for the support. Thank you.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

| | |
|-----------------------|-----|
| Title page... | i |
| Certification ... | iii |
| Dedication ... | iv |
| Acknowledgements ... | v |
| Table of contents ... | vii |
| Abstract... | ix |

CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

| | |
|-----------------------------------|----|
| 1.1 Background..... | 1 |
| 1.2 Statement of the problem ... | 7 |
| 1.3 Objective of the study ... | 9 |
| 1.7 Scope of the study ... | 10 |
| 1.5 Significance of the study ... | 10 |
| 1.6 The Research Question ... | 11 |
| 1.7 Definition of Concepts..... | 11 |

CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

| | |
|---|----|
| 2.1 Conceptualization of marital union ... | 13 |
| 2.2 Socioeconomic Status And Marital Stability..... | 27 |
| 2.3 Cultural Norms And Marital Stability | 31 |
| 2.4 Family Structure And Marital Stability..... | 36 |
| 2.5 Theoretical Frameworks | 40 |

CHAPTER THREE: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

| | |
|--|----|
| 3.0 Introduction..... | 50 |
| 3.1 Research design ... | 52 |
| 3.2 area of the study ... | 52 |
| 3.3 Research Population | 52 |
| 3.4 Sample size ... | 52 |
| 3.5 Sample technique ... | 53 |
| 3.6 research Instrument ... | 53 |
| 3.7 Method of data collection | 55 |
| 3.8 Reliability and validity of instruments... | 55 |
| 3.9 Method of data analysis | 55 |
| 3.10 Ethical Consideration | 56 |

CHAPTER FOUR: DATA PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS

| | |
|--------------------------------------|----|
| Presentation And Analysis ... | 56 |
|--------------------------------------|----|

CHAPTER FIVE: SUMMARY CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

| | |
|------------------------|----|
| Summary of finding ... | 71 |
| Conclusion ... | 71 |
| Recommendations ... | 72 |
| Questionnaire ... | 79 |
| References ... | 75 |

ABSTRACT

Despite the available body of research on the impact of socio-cultural variables on marital stability in Nigeria, there remains a need for further investigation, particularly in Benin, Edo state. Understanding comprehensively, the impact of socio-cultural variables on marital stability is therefore essential for promoting individual and familial well-being, and for identifying areas for intervention and support that can help to strengthen marital unions. Educationally, to some men it is very important that their wife should be less educated than themselves if they are going to achieve marital stability. These men feel threatened in their marital leadership role if their wives are better educated and this could lead to conflict in the home and also create confusion between couples.

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the study

Marriage is a vital social institution. It serves as the foundation for the formation of families and the transmission of cultural values and traditions, a very important process of socialization and enculturation, hence the importance of marriage. Marriage also serves various social, economic, and religious functions. While the nature and meaning of marriage have evolved over time, it remains a cornerstone of human social organization and a key aspect of individual and familial well-being.

In Edo state, Nigeria, marriage is deeply embedded in cultural and social norms and is often seen as a rite of passage into adulthood (Esiri, 2021). However, like many other parts of the world, marriage in Edo state is facing new challenges, including economic and social changes that are impacting the stability of marital unions (Esere, Yusuf & Omotosho, 2011).

In Nigeria, there is a growing body of research that explores the impact of socio-cultural variables on marital stability among couples in Nigeria, including the role of socio-economic status, communication, ethnicity, and educational and social changes (Esere, Yusuf & Omotosho, 2011; Maciver&Dimpka, 2012 ;Ajayi, 2021; Amin, Ahmad & Hussain 2018). For instance, studies have found that socio-economic status is a key predictor of

marital success, with couples who have higher levels of education and income reporting greater marital satisfaction (Maciver&Dimpka, 2012).

Communication has also been found to be a critical factor in marital stability, with effective communication skills contributing to better conflict resolution and increased marital satisfaction (Esere, Yusuf & Omotosho, 2011). Additionally, ethnicity and cultural values have been found to influence marital success in Nigeria, with couples who share similar values and cultural backgrounds reporting higher levels of satisfaction (Maciver&Dimpka, 2012).

Another study by Nwamadi (2022) assessed socio-economic determinant factors for marital stability among couples in Port-Harcourt metropolis. The study found that income level, couples level of education and occupational level of couples are determinant factors for marital stability among couples in the area

Despite the available body of research on the impact of socio-cultural variables on marital stability in Nigeria, there remains a need for further investigation, particularly in Benin, Edo state. Understanding comprehensively, the impact of socio-cultural variables on marital stability is therefore essential for promoting individual and familial well-being, and for identifying areas for intervention and support that can help to strengthen marital unions.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

Marital stability is related to but distinct from marital adjustment, marital quality, marital satisfaction, and marital success. The stability of marital unions

are crucial for the well-being of families and the society at large. Unfortunately, marital instability has become a common phenomenon in Nigeria, with divorce and remarriage rates increasing due to various factors, including socio-economic factors (Adegoke & Esere, 1998). Marital instability has been associated with maladaptive behaviour among youths, such as drug abuse, rape, cultism, armed robbery, and kidnapping (Lazarus, et al., 2017). This trend has become a source of concern to various stakeholders, including government, counsellors, opinion leaders, researchers, and educators, who question the role of parents in producing well-adjusted individuals who are assets rather than liabilities to the society. Marital instability has been widely studied to ascertain the factors that promote or affect it, with evidence suggesting the influence of personal and social factors.

One common complaint among married couples is lack of communication. Many couples put up with problems rather than try to fix them. In the beginning they agreed he would earn money and she would take care of the house and kids. When they face new challenges later on, they have to negotiate a new compact. The issue is whether spouses can listen to each other's complaints without interrupting or getting defensive and reach anew consensus. Lack of communication could create a space for misunderstanding and also cause each spouse to begin to create illusion or images in their head which could possibly not exist. With my own observations, it seems like most couples in Benin tend to separate because one could not communicate his or

her feelings to the other or maybe lack of comprehension from both sides which is a very dangerous key to marital instability.

Educationally, to some men it is very important that their wife should be less educated than themselves if they are going to achieve marital stability. These men feel threatened in their marital leadership role if their wives are better educated and this could lead to conflict in the home and also create confusion between couples.

Difference in ethnicity or ethnic groups could also be a variable which is a problem to marital stability among couples in Benin, Nigeria. Understanding of language, beliefs, and cultures of one's spouse might be a bit difficult and complex.

1.3 Research Question

The specific problem addressed by this study is the impact of socio-cultural variables on marital stability among couples in Edo state, Nigeria. Specifically, the study seeks to answer the following research questions:

1. How does socio-economic status impact marital success among couples in Edo State, Nigeria?
2. In what ways does communication influence marital stability in Edo State, Nigeria?

3. How does ethnicity difference influence marital stability among couples in Benin, Edo State, Nigeria?
4. What is the effect of educational level and social change on marital stability among couples in Benin,, Edo State?
5. What is the most significant socio-cultural variables affecting the marital stability among couples in Benin, Edo State Nigeria?

1.4 Objectives of the study

1. To investigate whether socio-economic status has an impact on couple's marital success
2. To determine if communication influences marital stability
3. To find out if ethnicity influences marital success among couples
4. To investigate how educational, social and economic changes affect the stability in marriages
5. To recognize the most significant Socio-cultural variables affecting the marital stability of couples in Benin.

1.5 Significance of Study

The significance of this study on socio-cultural variables and its impact on marital stability among couples in Edo State, Nigeria cannot be overemphasized. Firstly, this study will provide insight into the factors that influence marital stability in Edo State, Nigeria. It will help to identify the

specific socio-cultural factors that contribute to the high rate of divorce and marital instability in the state. By identifying these factors, couples will be better equipped to overcome challenges and build stronger and healthier relationships. Secondly, this study will provide information that will aid policy-makers in creating programs and policies that will help to promote stable marriages in Edo State, Nigeria. Finally, this study will contribute to the existing body of knowledge on marital stability in Nigeria and will be a useful reference for scholars and researchers who wish to conduct further studies in this area.

1.6 Scope of the Study

The scope of this study will focus on couples who are legally married and living in Benin City, Edo State, Nigeria. The study will also examine the impact of socio-cultural factors on marital stability among couples in the region. The research will include both genders and consider the impact of cultural factors such as ethnicity, religion, and socio-economic status. The study will also explore the role of communication in enhancing marital stability. However, the study will not cover couples who are cohabiting but not legally married, and couples who are divorced or separated. The research will take a qualitative approach using semi-structured interviews and gather data from couples in Ovia north-east communities of Ekosodin, Ugbowo, Adolor and Ishiorin Benin City, Edo State.

1.7 Definition of Terms

- i. **Socio-cultural variables:** Refers to the social and cultural factors that influence people's beliefs, values, and behaviours, including their attitudes towards marriage and family life.
- ii. **Marital stability:** Refers to the ability of a married couple to maintain a healthy and satisfying relationship over time, characterized by mutual respect, communication, and trust.
- iii. **Socio-economic status:** Refers to a person's position in society based on their income, education, and occupation, which can influence their access to resources and opportunities.
- iv. **Communication:** Refers to the exchange of information and ideas between people, including verbal and non-verbal interactions, which is critical for building and maintaining healthy relationships.
- v. **Ethnicity:** Refers to a person's cultural or racial identity, including their shared language, customs, and traditions, which can influence their beliefs and values about marriage and family life.
- vi. **Educational changes:** Refers to changes in the educational system or opportunities that may affect people's attitudes and behaviours towards marriage and family life.
- vii. **Social changes:** Refers to changes in the broader social and cultural context, including shifting gender roles, family structures, and values, which can influence people's beliefs and behaviors related to marriage and family life.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 CONCEPTUALIZATION OF MARITAL UNION

2.1.1 HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT OF MARRIAGE

Marriage, as an institution, has undergone significant changes throughout history. The concept of marriage has been shaped by various factors such as cultural, religious, economic, and political forces. Therefore, it is crucial to examine the historical development of marriage to understand its conceptualization.

In the book "A history of marriage," Abbott (2011) provides an in-depth exploration of the historical development of marriage. She traced the evolution of marriage from ancient Mesopotamia, where marriage was considered a contract between two families for political and economic purposes and as a way to form alliances between families, establish control over land, and ensure the inheritance of property.

In ancient Greece and Rome, marriage became more of a personal relationship between two individuals. However, the primary purpose of marriage remained the same, to ensure the stability of social and economic structures. The author notes that in the Middle Ages, the Catholic Church played a significant role in the regulation of marriage. The Church introduced

the concept of marriage as a sacrament, emphasizing its religious significance and the role of the Church in administering it.

Coontz (2005) argues in her book "Marriage, a history," that marriage has been shaped by social, economic, and political forces. she notes that the agricultural revolution marked a significant shift in the concept of marriage. Before the agricultural revolution, societies were typically nomadic, and marriage was not an essential institution. However, with the advent of agriculture, people began to settle in one place and form agricultural communities. The need for social stability and the preservation of property led to the development of the institution of marriage.

Coontz (2005) also highlights the impact of industrialization on the conceptualization of marriage. The author notes that the industrial revolution led to a significant change in the economic structure of society, which, in turn, affected the institution of marriage. The rise of the middle class and the growth of cities led to a shift from arranged marriages to romantic love marriages. Marriage was no longer just an economic and political institution but also a personal relationship between two individuals.

In conclusion, the historical development of marriage has been influenced by various factors such as social, economic, political, and religious forces. The conceptualization of marriage has evolved over time, from being primarily an economic and political institution to a personal relationship between two individuals. The books "A history of marriage" by Abbott and

"Marriage, a history" by Coontz provide valuable insights into the historical development of marriage and the forces that have shaped its conceptualization

2.1.2 SPIRITUAL, ECONOMIC AND LEGAL DIMENSIONS OF MARRIAGE

The spiritual dimension of marriage refers to the religious or spiritual beliefs and practices that are often associated with the institution of marriage. Many religions and belief systems place a high value on marriage and view it as a sacred union between two individuals. In Christianity, for example, marriage is seen as a covenant between a man and a woman and is intended to be a lifelong commitment. In Hinduism, marriage is considered a sacred union and is seen as a means of achieving spiritual and moral perfection.

The economic dimension of marriage refers to the ways in which marriage affects the financial well-being of the partners involved. Historically, marriage was often seen as a means of securing economic stability and social status. In many cultures, the bride's family would provide a dowry or financial support to the groom's family to ensure that the couple would be able to support themselves. In modern times, marriage can still have significant economic implications, including tax benefits, inheritance rights, and shared financial responsibilities.

The legal dimension of marriage refers to the legal rights and responsibilities that are conferred upon partners in a marriage. These rights and responsibilities can include the ability to make medical decisions on behalf of a spouse, the right to inherit property, and the obligation to support a spouse

financially. The legal dimension of marriage can vary widely depending on the jurisdiction and can have a significant impact on the stability of a marriage.

Studies have shown that the spiritual, economic, and legal dimensions of marriage are all important factors in predicting marital stability. In one study, researchers found that couples who shared similar religious beliefs were more likely to have stable marriages (Hohmann-Marriott, 2006). Another study found that couples who had similar economic backgrounds were more likely to have successful marriages (Amato & Kane, 2011).

2.1.3 CULTURAL VARIATIONS OF MARRIAGE

While marriage is universally recognized as an institution that involves a committed relationship between two people, the customs and rituals that surround marriage can vary significantly across cultures. The conceptualization of marriage, therefore, is shaped by cultural values, beliefs, and practices. In this essay, we will explore the cultural variations in the conceptualization of marriage.

Cultural variations of marital unions are reflected in the diversity of marital practices around the world. Some cultures, for instance, practice arranged marriages, where the families of the bride and groom arrange the marriage, often without the couple's input. Arranged marriages are common in many parts of Asia, including India, Pakistan, and Bangladesh, and in some parts of Africa and the Middle East (Nanda, 1998). In these cultures, marriage is viewed as a family affair rather than an individual choice.

In contrast, in Western cultures, marriage is often viewed as a personal choice that individuals make based on their feelings of love and companionship. This cultural perspective emphasizes the importance of individualism and personal autonomy, and it has contributed to the rise of romantic love as a basis for marriage. This cultural orientation is reflected in the contemporary wedding industry, which often emphasizes the couple's unique preferences and desires, including personalized wedding vows, custom-designed wedding dresses, and elaborate wedding receptions.

Other cultures view marriage as a social contract that serves a broader societal purpose beyond the individual couple. In some African societies, for example, marriage is seen as a means of cementing alliances between families or clans. In some cases, polygamy is practiced as a means of strengthening these alliances (Kuper, 2016). Similarly, in some traditional societies in Southeast Asia, marriage serves as a means of ensuring the continuity of family lineage and the transfer of property from one generation to the next.

Cultural variations in the conceptualization of marriage can also be seen in the different roles and expectations placed on husbands and wives within the marital union. In some cultures, for instance, the husband is expected to be the primary breadwinner, while the wife is expected to take care of the home and children. In other cultures, the roles are more flexible, and couples may share household and child-rearing responsibilities equally.

While there are commonalities in the practice of marriage across cultures, such as the importance of commitment and companionship, the

specific customs and rituals that surround marriage can vary significantly. Understanding these cultural variations is essential for developing a nuanced understanding of marriage as a social institution and for fostering cross-cultural dialogue and understanding.

2.1.4 Gender and Marriage

Marriage has been shaped by gender roles and expectations the world over. According to scholars, marriage is a gendered institution that reinforces and perpetuates gender inequality (Risman, 2018). Women, in particular, have been disadvantaged in marital relationships due to patriarchal norms and expectations. In many societies, marriage has been conceptualized as a means of controlling women's sexuality and reproduction, as well as securing their economic dependence on men (Giddens, 1992).

The cultural variations in the conceptualization of marriage have also played a significant role in shaping gender roles and expectations in marital unions. For example, in many African cultures, marriage is seen as a communal affair, where the family and community are involved in the decision-making process (Mbiti, 1969). In contrast, in Western cultures, marriage is seen as an individualistic affair, where the emphasis is on personal choice and autonomy.

The changing gender roles in contemporary societies have also affected the conceptualization of marriage. With the rise of feminism and the women's rights movement, women have become more empowered and independent, challenging traditional gender roles and expectations in marital unions (Lauer & Lauer, 2018). However, gender inequality still persists in many marital

relationships, with women being expected to take on more domestic and caregiving responsibilities, while men are expected to be the breadwinners. However, as society continues to evolve and gender roles become more fluid, the conceptualization of marriage is likely to continue changing, with implications for gender equality in marital relationships.

2.2 SOCIOECONOMIC STATUS AND MARITAL STABILITY

2.2.1 INCOME AND MARITAL STABILITY

Income and marital stability have been the subject of much research over the years. The question of how income affects marital stability has been examined by sociologists and economists alike. One of the key issues in this research is the direction of causality - does higher income lead to greater marital stability, or is it the other way around?

Some studies suggest that higher income leads to greater marital stability. For example, a study by Amato and Rogers (1997) found that couples with higher income were less likely to divorce than those with lower income. Another study by Kim (2010) found that higher income was associated with a lower risk of marital dissolution, particularly for women.

However, other studies have found that marital stability can also lead to higher income. For instance, a study by Korenman and Neumark (1991) found that marital stability led to increased income for both men and women, this is because the wage premium earned by divorced or separated men is attributable

to the advantages gained while married. Their evidence is that wages grow more slowly in the years of divorce or separation.

There are several reasons why income and marital stability may be related. First, higher income can provide financial security, which can reduce stress and conflict within the marriage. Second, higher income can provide more opportunities for leisure and travel, which can enhance the quality of the relationship. Third, higher income can provide access to resources such as counselling or therapy, which can help couples work through marital problems.

However, it's important to note that income is not the only factor that affects marital stability. Other factors such as communication, compatibility, and shared values also play important roles. Additionally, the relationship between income and marital stability may vary depending on other factors such as race, ethnicity, and education level.

2.2.2 EDUCATION AND MARITAL STABILITY

Education and marital stability have been found to have a strong correlation. According to Amato and Kane (2011), higher levels of education are associated with lower rates of divorce. In fact, the divorce rate for those with a bachelor's degree or higher is half of the rate for those with only a high school diploma (Amato & Kane, 2011).

One explanation for this correlation is that education provides individuals with better communication and problem-solving skills. These skills are important in maintaining a healthy relationship and resolving conflicts that may arise within the marriage (Amato & Kane, 2011). Education also gives

individuals access to better-paying jobs and financial stability, which can reduce financial stress within the marriage.

Furthermore, education can shape an individual's attitudes and values towards marriage. Research has found that those with higher levels of education are more likely to view marriage as a long-term commitment and to value the emotional and psychological aspects of marriage (Teachman & Schollaert, 2019).

However, it is important to note that the relationship between education and marital stability is complex and can be influenced by various factors such as socioeconomic status, cultural norms, and age at marriage (Teachman & Schollaert, 2019). Additionally, education is not a guarantee of marital stability, as there are many other factors that can contribute to the success or failure of a marriage.

In conclusion, education is an important factor in predicting marital stability. Higher levels of education are associated with lower rates of divorce, and education provides individuals with important skills and attitudes that can contribute to a healthy and long-lasting marriage.

2.2.3 EMPLOYMENT AND MARITAL STABILITY

Marital stability refers to the ability of a married couple to remain together and maintain a healthy relationship over time. Employment is an important factor that has been linked to marital stability. In this essay, we will explore the relationship between employment and marital stability and the various factors that influence this relationship.

Studies have shown that employment can have a positive effect on marital stability. A study by Killeward (2016) found that husbands who were unemployed were more likely to experience marital problems than those who were employed, as, men who were not working full time were 33% more likely to divorce in the following 12 months than husbands who did have full-time jobs¹. Another study, Galie, March & Vogler (1994) found that family conflicts are reported to be the most negative consequence of being unemployed, even more so than economic problems and loss of self-respect.

However, the relationship between employment and marital stability is complex, and several factors can influence this relationship. One of these factors is the gender of the employed spouse.

Another factor that can influence the relationship between employment and marital stability is the level of income. A study by Amato and Rogers (1997) found that low-income couples were more likely to experience marital problems than those with higher incomes. This may be due to financial stressors that can arise from unemployment or low-paying jobs.

In conclusion, employment is an important factor that can influence marital stability. While employment can have a positive effect on marital stability, several factors, such as gender, income, and the quality of employment, can influence this relationship. Therefore, couples and policy-makers should pay attention to the employment-related factors that can affect marital stability and take steps to address them.

2.3 CULTURAL NORMS AND MARITAL STABILITY

2.3.1 GENDER ROLES AND MARITAL STABILITY

Gender roles play a crucial role in the stability of marriages. The roles and responsibilities that each gender is expected to play in a marriage have evolved over time, and these changes have significantly impacted the stability of marriages. Historically, the gender roles in marriages were quite rigid, with men being the primary breadwinners, while women were expected to manage the household and take care of the children. However, over time, these gender roles have become more fluid, with both men and women sharing responsibilities in and out of the home.

Research has shown that couples who adopt more egalitarian gender roles tend to have more stable marriages. According to a study conducted by the National Marriage Project, couples who share household chores equally are more likely to report being happy in their marriages and are less likely to divorce (Wilcox & Dew, 2015). Additionally, a study conducted by the Institute for Family Studies found that couples who equally share decision-making responsibilities in their marriage report higher levels of satisfaction and stability in their relationships (Carlson, Miller & Rudd, 2020, Gottman, 1994).

On the other hand, couples who adhere to traditional gender roles may experience more marital conflict, which can lead to instability and divorce. For example, a study conducted by the University of Illinois found that women who perceived their partners as being less supportive of their careers were more

likely to experience marital dissatisfaction, which in turn increased their likelihood of divorce (Stone & Lovejoy, 2004).

We can see that couples who adopt more egalitarian gender roles tend to have more stable marriages, while couples who adhere to traditional gender roles may experience more marital conflict, which can lead to instability and divorce. It is important for couples to communicate openly about their expectations and responsibilities in their marriage to ensure that both partners feel valued and respected.

2.3.2 FAMILY VALUES AND MARITAL STABILITY

Family is a fundamental institution that provides a sense of belonging and support. It serves as a primary unit of socialization where individuals learn values, norms, and social roles necessary for their development. In the context of marital stability, family dynamics can have a significant impact on the relationship between spouses. This note will discuss the role of family in marital stability and how it affects the success or failure of marriages.

Research has consistently shown that strong family ties and supportive family relationships are positively associated with marital stability (Amato & Previti, 2003; Umberson et al., 2006). Family support can help to buffer the effects of stressors that couples may face, such as financial difficulties, health problems, and job loss. Conversely, a lack of family support can lead to increased conflict and decreased marital satisfaction.

Additionally, family of origin experiences and values can also impact marital stability. Studies have found that individuals from families with a

history of divorce are more likely to experience divorce in their own marriages (Amato & Booth, 2001). This may be due to learned behaviour and beliefs about marriage, such as lower commitment levels and a more negative outlook on the institution.

Moreover, family structure and composition can also influence marital stability. For instance, research has shown that children from two-parent families tend to have higher academic achievement, less behavioural problems, and lower rates of delinquency (Amato & Fowler, 2002). These positive outcomes can contribute to a more stable and supportive home environment, which can in turn benefit the marital relationship.

2.3.3 RELIGIOUS BELIEFS AND MARITAL STABILITY

Religious beliefs have been found to be an important factor in marital stability. Research has consistently shown that individuals who share the same religious beliefs and practices are more likely to have stable marriages. According to a study conducted by Mahoney, Pargament, Tarakeshwar, and Swank (2001), religious commitment is associated with greater marital satisfaction and stability.

Furthermore, religious beliefs can provide a framework for coping with marital problems and stresses. Studies have shown that couples who view their marriage as a covenant or sacred union are more likely to view their problems as challenges to be overcome together, rather than reasons for divorce (Mahoney et al., 2001).

It is important to note that the impact of religious beliefs on marital stability may vary depending on the specific religious tradition and the individual's level of religiosity. For example, some religious traditions may place greater emphasis on the importance of marriage and family, which may lead to stronger marital bonds. Similarly, individuals who are more religiously committed may have a greater sense of obligation to maintain their marriages, even in the face of difficulties.

In conclusion, religious beliefs can play an important role in marital stability. Couples who share the same religious beliefs and practices are more likely to have stable marriages, and religious practices can positively impact marital quality. Religious beliefs can also provide a framework for coping with marital problems and stresses, and the impact of religion on marital stability may vary depending on the specific religious tradition and the individual's level of religiosity.

2.4 FAMILY STRUCTURE AND MARITAL STABILITY

2.4.1 PARENTAL INFLUENCE AND MARITAL STABILITY

Parental influence is one of the factors that can significantly affect marital stability. The family of origin, as well as the values and beliefs passed down from parents, can shape an individual's attitudes towards marriage and relationships. Studies have shown that individuals whose parents had a stable and satisfying marriage are more likely to have a successful and lasting marriage themselves (Amato & DeBoer, 2001). In contrast, those who

experienced parental divorce or conflict are more likely to experience marital problems in their own relationships (Amato, Loomis & Booth, 1995).

However, it is important to note that parental influence is not the sole determinant of marital stability. Other factors, such as individual personality traits, communication patterns, and external stressors, can also play a significant role. Nevertheless, understanding the impact of parental influence on marital stability can provide valuable insight into the dynamics of relationships and help individuals and couples navigate potential challenges.

2.4.2 EXTENDED FAMILY AND MARITAL STABILITY

Extended family, also referred to as the joint family, is a family structure that includes grandparents, aunts, uncles, cousins, and other relatives living together under one roof or in close proximity to each other. Extended family has played a significant role in many societies, particularly in developing countries, and has been linked to marital stability.

Research suggests that extended family can provide social and economic support to couples, which can contribute to their marital stability. For instance, a study by Taylor et. Al., 2012, notes that emotional support from extended family is positively associated with relationship satisfaction for married and cohabiting African Americans and Black Caribbeans who are romantically involved. It further posits that negative interaction from extended family is associated with lower relationship satisfaction for married, cohabiting, and romantically involved African Americans and for married Black Caribbeans.

Extended family can also serve as a source of cultural values and norms that can influence marital stability. For example, in cultures where marriage is seen as a partnership between two families, the involvement and support of extended family members can help to strengthen the bond between the couple and their families.

However, there are also potential challenges associated with extended family living arrangements, such as conflicts over decision-making, sharing of resources, and privacy concerns. These challenges can negatively impact marital stability if not properly managed.

Further research is needed to better understand the mechanisms through which extended family affects marital stability in different contexts.

2.4.3 FAMILY COMMUNICATION AND MARITAL STABILITY

Effective communication is essential to the success of any relationship, and marriage is no exception. Communication in marriage encompasses a wide range of behaviour, including verbal and non-verbal communication, listening, and expressing emotions. Effective communication in marriage allows couples to resolve conflicts, build intimacy, and maintain marital satisfaction.

Research has shown that family communication is a crucial factor in marital stability. Couples who communicate effectively are more likely to report higher levels of marital satisfaction and lower levels of marital conflict (Doss, Simpson, & Christensen, 2004). In contrast, couples who struggle with communication tend to experience more marital distress and are more likely to divorce.

One key aspect of family communication is the ability to express emotions in a constructive way. Couples who can express their feelings and needs in a calm and respectful manner are more likely to resolve conflicts and maintain marital satisfaction (Savarese, 2013). In contrast, couples who express negative emotions such as criticism, contempt, and defensiveness are more likely to experience marital conflict and eventual dissolution (Savarese, 2013).

Another important aspect of family communication is listening. Couples who listen actively to each other are more likely to understand each other's needs and perspectives, which can lead to greater empathy and intimacy (Grande, 2020). Listening skills also play a key role in conflict resolution, as couples who can listen actively and respond to each other's concerns are more likely to reach a mutually satisfactory resolution (Savarese, 2013).

2.5 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The theoretical framework of this study will be based on the Social Exchange Theory and the Cultural capital Theory.

The social exchange theory suggests that spouses may receive favorable economic rewards or damaging costs from each other and the marital relationship tends to be more stable if marriage can provide higher rewards compared to the associated costs (Homans, 1961; Kelley, 1983; Levinger, 1979; Nakonezny & Denton, 2008) .

The cultural capital theory focuses on how cultural knowledge, beliefs and practices shape individual's social opportunities and outcomes. In the context of marital stability, cultural capital theory can explore how cultural

norms, traditions and beliefs influence couple's behaviors, decision-making processes and perceptions of marital stability. It can provide insights into how socio-cultural variables impact the stability of marriages in Edo state.

2.5.1 SOCIAL EXCHANGE THEORY

Social Exchange Theory (Thibaut & Kelley, 1959) provides a valuable lens for understanding the impact of socio-cultural variables on marital stability. According to this theory, individuals engage in relationships based on the perception of costs and rewards. In the context of marital stability, couples may evaluate the benefits and drawbacks of their marriage, taking into account socio-cultural factors such as cultural norms, gender roles, and economic considerations (Homans, 1961).

In Edo State, Nigeria, socio-cultural variables can influence the exchange dynamics within marriages and subsequently affect marital stability. Cultural norms play a significant role in shaping couples' expectations and perceptions of marriage. For instance, traditional cultural norms may emphasize the importance of marital harmony, family unity, and collective decision-making (Ogunfowokan et al., 2014). Couples who adhere closely to these cultural norms may experience higher levels of satisfaction and stability in their marriages.

Moreover, gender roles within the socio-cultural context of Edo State can affect marital stability. The division of household labor, decision-making power, and resource distribution are often influenced by prevailing gender role

expectations (Folarin, 2008). In instances where gender roles are rigidly defined, discrepancies or imbalances in the fulfillment of these roles may lead to dissatisfaction and conflict within the marriage (Nwokocha & Iroegbu, 2019).

Additionally, economic factors are crucial determinants of marital stability within the framework of social exchange theory. Economic resources contribute to the perceived rewards of a marriage and can affect power dynamics within the relationship. Financial stability and access to resources are often associated with higher levels of marital satisfaction and stability (Dew, 2018).

By applying social exchange theory to the evaluation of socio-cultural variables and their impact on marital stability in Edo State, this study seeks to understand how couples assess the costs and rewards of their marriage within the socio-cultural context. It will explore how cultural norms, gender roles, and economic considerations shape the exchange dynamics and subsequent stability of marriages in Edo State.

2.5.2 CULTURAL CAPITAL THEORY

Cultural capital theory, developed by sociologist Pierre Bourdieu, provides a framework to explore how cultural resources and practices shape individuals' social outcomes. In the context of Edo State, Nigeria, where cultural heritage holds significant importance, examining the influence of cultural capital on marital stability becomes particularly relevant.

In Edo State, Nigeria, cultural capital plays a significant role in shaping societal norms, values, and expectations, including those related to marriage.

Couples who possess similar cultural capital, particularly embodied and institutionalized, are more likely to experience higher marital stability due to shared cultural understanding, communication patterns, and shared expectations. When couples share similar embodied cultural capital, they often have a common understanding of cultural norms, traditions, and values. This shared cultural background facilitates effective communication, as they can interpret each other's intentions, beliefs, and behaviors more accurately. Consequently, couples with shared cultural understanding are better equipped to navigate conflicts and resolve marital issues, contributing to greater marital stability. Empirical studies exploring the relationship between cultural capital and marital stability in Edo State, Nigeria, are relatively limited. However, a study conducted by Okoro and Akpor-Robaro (2018) examined the influence of educational attainment, a component of cultural capital, on marital stability in Nigeria. Their findings suggested that couples with higher levels of educational attainment had a lower likelihood of experiencing marital instability, indicating the potential role of cultural capital in marital relationships.

Cultural capital theory provides a valuable lens to understand the influence of cultural resources on marital stability among couples in Edo State, Nigeria. Shared cultural understanding, communication patterns, and congruent expectations arising from cultural capital can contribute to greater marital stability. Further research exploring the specific dimensions of cultural capital and their impact on marital dynamics in Edo State is warranted to gain a comprehensive understanding of this relationship.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3 Introduction

The purpose of this chapter is to provide an overview of the systematic and scientific methods employed in conducting the research for this study. It involves a thorough description and examination of the research design, the target population, the determination of the sample size, and the selection of appropriate sampling techniques. Additionally, it encompasses the procedures for data collection, organization, and analysis, as well as the utilization and application of specific research instruments.

3.1 Research Design

The research design will be a cross-sectional design. A cross-sectional design is a type of observational study that involves collecting data from a population at a single point in time. In this case, I will be collecting data from married couples in Edo State, Nigeria, at a single point in time. The use of questionnaires is a common method in cross-sectional studies as it allows for the collection of quantitative data on a large sample size. The data collected from the questionnaires will be used to investigate the relationship between socio-cultural variables and marital stability among couples in Edo State. The cross-sectional design is useful for this type of investigation as it allows for the

collection of data on a large sample size, which can provide a representative picture of the population. Additionally, the cross-sectional design is relatively quick and cost-effective compared to other research designs, making it an ideal choice for this project.

3.2 Area of the study

The area of study for this project is sociology or social sciences. In this project, the focus is on the social behavior and relationships of married couples in Ovia North-East of Ekosodin, Ugbowoand Adolor in Benin City, Edo State, Nigeria. The project aims to investigate the impact of socio-cultural variables on marital stability, which is an important aspect of family life in Nigeria. The study of socio-cultural variables is a key aspect of sociology, as it seeks to understand how social factors such as age, education, and religion impact human behavior and relationships. Therefore, the area of study for this project is sociology, specifically as it relates to marriage and family dynamics in Nigeria.

3.3 Research Population

The research population refers to the group of individuals who possess the characteristics or knowledge relevant to the phenomenon being studied. In this study, the research population consists of currently and previously married individuals residing in the Ovia North-East communities of Ekosodin, Ugbowoand Adolor in Benin City, Edo State. The researcher aims to generalize the study's findings to this specific population, as outlined by Gay (1987) who defines the population as the group of interest for the researcher's generalization of results.

3.4 Sample Size

This sample size is essential to ensure that the findings accurately represent the larger population of couples in Ovia North-East, Adolor, and Ishior in Edo state. To achieve this, we will employ the Taro Yamane formula, a widely used method in survey research to calculate an appropriate sample size. The Taro Yamane formula takes into account the total population size, which represents the number of married couples in our study areas, and the desired level of precision, known as the margin of error. This formula provides us with an estimate of the number of couples we need to include to obtain meaningful and reliable results.

Mathematically, the formula is expressed as follows:

$$n = \frac{N}{1 + Ne^2}$$

n = the required sample size

N = the total population size of married couples in Ovia North-East, Adolor, and Ishior.

e = the chosen level of precision or margin of error, expressed as a decimal.

For instance, let's assume that the total population size of married couples in our selected regions is 800, and we decide to have a margin of error of 0.10 (equivalent to 10%). Using the formula, we can calculate the required sample size as :

$$n = \frac{800}{1 + 800 \times (0.10)^2}$$

$$n = \frac{800}{800 \times 0.01}$$

$$n = \frac{800}{1 + 8}$$

$$n = 800/9$$

$$n = 88.9 \sim 89$$

Therefore, based on the Taro Yamane formula, we would need to include approximately 89 couples in our study to achieve a 10% margin of error. By using this formula, we can strike a balance between getting meaningful insights and managing the feasibility of data collection.

__3.5 Sampling Technique

The sampling technique employed in this project is stratified random sampling. This technique involves dividing the population into subgroups or strata based on specific characteristics, such as geographic location. For this project, Ovia North-East communities in Edo State, Nigeria, will be our study area.

The population will be divided into strata based on the specific communities in Ovia North-East, and then randomly select participants from each stratum. This will help to ensure that the sample is representative of the population and also allows us to investigate the impact of socio-cultural variables on marital stability among couples in different communities within Ovia North-East.

3.6 Research Instrument

A questionnaire will be used to collect data from the selected participants. The questionnaire will be designed to explore the socio-cultural variables that may impact marital stability among couples in Ovia North-East communities in Edo State, Nigeria.

The questionnaire will be administered in person to the selected participants and will be designed to be simple and easy to understand. The questionnaire

will include both closed-ended and open-ended questions to gather both quantitative and qualitative data.

Closed-ended questions will be used to collect demographic information, while open-ended questions will be used to gather more detailed information about the participants' experiences and beliefs.

3.7 Method of Data Collection

The method of data collection that will be used is self-administered questionnaires. This method involves providing the participants with a questionnaire to complete on their own. The questionnaires will be distributed to the selected participants and will be designed to explore the socio-cultural variables that may impact marital stability among couples in Ovia North-East communities in Edo State, Nigeria.

The questionnaires will be designed to be simple and easy to understand and will include both closed-ended and open-ended questions to gather both quantitative and qualitative data. This method of data collection is less expensive and time-consuming than face-to-face interviews and can be used to collect data from a large number of participants.

3.8 Reliability and Validity of Instruments

Self-administered questionnaires will be used to collect data from participants. To ensure the reliability of the research instrument, I will be using test-retest reliability, where the questionnaire will be administered to the same group of participants at two different times to assess consistency in their responses.

To ensure the validity of the research instrument, face validity will be used where experts in the field will review the questionnaire to ensure that it appears to measure what it is intended to measure. The use of construct validity, which involves comparing the results of the questionnaire with other measures of the same construct to assess the degree to which the questionnaire measures what it is intended to measure.

Overall, by using these measures of reliability and validity, it will be ensured that the questionnaire is a reliable and valid tool for collecting data on the socio-cultural variables that may impact marital stability among couples in Ovia North-East communities in Edo State, Nigeria.

3.9 Method of Data Analysis

Descriptive statistics and inferential statistics will be used to analyze the data collected from the questionnaires. Descriptive statistics will be used to describe the characteristics of the sample, such as mean, standard deviation, and frequency distributions. Inferential statistics will be used to test hypotheses and make predictions about the population based on the sample data.

The Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) software can also be used to analyze the data. The regression analysis will be employed to assess the relationship between the socio-cultural variables and marital stability among couples in Ovia North-East communities in Edo State, Nigeria. The use of correlation analysis to assess the strength and direction of the relationship between the variables will be implemented.

In addition to these statistical analyses, qualitative analysis allows to analyze the open-ended responses in the questionnaire. Also, content analysis to identify themes and patterns in the responses that are related to the research questions.

Overall, by using both quantitative and qualitative data analysis methods, we will be able to provide a comprehensive understanding of the socio-cultural variables that may impact marital stability among couples in Ovia North-East communities in Edo State, Nigeria.

3.10 Ethical Consideration

For the purpose of this project, we will adhere to ethical principles to ensure that the rights and welfare of the participants are protected. I will obtain informed consent from all participants, which will include an explanation of the purpose of the study, the procedures involved, the risks and benefits of participation, and the right to withdraw from the study at any time.

Maintaining confidentiality by not disclosing any personal information that may identify participants, and to ensure that all data collected is stored securely and only accessible by authorized personnel. We will also obtain ethical clearance from the relevant institutional review board before conducting the study.

To ensure that the participants are not subjected to any harm or discomfort during the study, and debriefing and counseling services will be provided to participants who may experience distress as a result of participating in the study.

Overall, by adhering to ethical principles, the study will be conducted in a responsible and respectful manner, and that the participants' rights and welfare are protected throughout the study.

CHAPTER FOUR

DATA PRESENTATION AND ANALYSES

4.1 Introduction

This chapter consists of data presentation and analysis. First, we present and analyze data for sample background (demographic) variables, thereafter, we present and analyze data for the variables of the study. Finally, we discuss our findings.

EVALUATION OF SOCIO-CULTURAL VARIABLES AND ITS IMPACT ON MARITAL STABILITY AMONG COUPLES IN BENIN, EDO STATE

Due to the social cultural stigma associated with marital instability in this part of the world, a gap was created. That gap is to evaluate the socio-cultural

variables and its impact on marital stability among couples in Benin, Edo state. In order to examine the socio-cultural variables and its impact on marital stability among couples in Benin, Edo state, data were collected from respondent and analyzed. This chapter therefore treats the analysis of the demographic characteristic of respondents as well as other variables that relate to the research objective.

SECTION A: THE BIO-SOCIAL DATA OF RESPONDENTS

TABLE 1: RESPONDENTS BY SEX

| SEX | RESPONDENTS | PERCENTAGE |
|--------|-------------|------------|
| Male | 50 | 50 |
| Female | 40 | 40 |
| Total | 90 | 100 |

Source: Field work, 2023.

As indicated by table 1, majority of the respondents, representing 50.00%, are Male, while 40.00% of the respondents are male. Hence, both sexes were represented as respondents in order to obtain a complete data.

TABLE 2: RESPONDENTS BY AGE

| AGE | RESPONDENTS | PERCENTAGE |
|----------|-------------|------------|
| 15-19 | 2 | 3 |
| 20-24 | 40 | 50 |
| 25-29 | 25 | 25 |
| 30 above | 23 | 23 |
| Total | 90 | 100 |

Source: Field work, 2023.

Table 2 reveals that 4.00% of the total respondents are within the ages of 15-19. Also, 68.00% are within the ages of 20-24. While 35.00% are within the ages of 25-29. Lastly, 3.00% are 30years and above. This table reveals that majority of the respondents are between the ages of 20-24. In addition, since most of the respondents are within the marriageable age the data provided by them would be valid since they are either married or about to get married.

TABLE 3: EDUCATION QUALIFICATION OF RESPONDENTS

| EDUCATION QUALIFICATION | RESPONDENTS | PERCENTAGE |
|-------------------------|-------------|------------|
| Non-formal | 25 | 30 |
| Primary | 25 | 30 |
| Secondary | 15 | 10 |
| Tertiary | 25 | 30 |
| Total | 90 | 100 |

Source: Field work, 2023.

Table 3 indicates that 30.00% of the respondents acquired non-formal education. While, 30% of the respondents has only primary education. Also, 10% of the respondents have secondary education. Lastly, 30% of the respondents have tertiary education. This clearly implies that majority of the respondents are educated, therefore they are intellectually capable of providing the required data.

TABLE 4: RESPONDENTS BY MARITAL STATUS

| MARITAL STATUS | RESPONDENTS | PERCENTAGE |
|----------------|-------------|------------|
| Single | 30 | 40 |
| Married | 70 | 60 |
| Total | 90 | 100 |

Source: Field work, 2023.

As indicated by table 4, majority of the respondents, representing 60.00%, are Married. While, 40 of the respondents are Single. Lastly, none of the respondents is divorced, widowed or separated. This indicated that majority of the respondents have a perception about stable marriage.

TABLE 5: RELIGIOUS AFFILIATION OF RESPONDENTS

| RELIGION | RESPONDENTS | PERCENTAGE |
|----------------------------|-------------|------------|
| Christianity | 75 | 80 |
| Islam | 10 | 15 |
| African traditional | 5 | 5 |

| | | |
|-----------------|----|-----|
| religion | | |
| Others | 0 | 0 |
| Total | 90 | 100 |

Source: Field work, 2023.

Table 6 indicates that 80.00% of the respondents are Christians. While, 15.00% of the respondents are Muslims. Lastly, 5% of the respondents belong to the African traditional religion or any other religion. This indicates that most of the respondents have a religious undertone.

SECTION B: EVALUATION OF SOCIO-CULTURAL VARIABLES AND ITS IMPACT ON MARITAL STABILITY AMONG COUPLES IN BENIN, EDO STATE

Research Questions Analysis

This section presents the responses to the research questions of the study, and this is presented in Table 2 and 3 below.

Research Objective One: To investigate whether socio-economic status has an impact on couple's marital success

Table 2: Socio-economic Status and Marital Success

| Statement | Responses | Frequency | Percentage |
|--|------------------|------------------|-------------------|
| How would you rate your household's current socio-economic status? | Low | 29 | 41.2 |
| | Middle | 60 | 58.8 |
| | High | 1 | 1 |
| Have financial concerns ever led to disagreements or conflicts between you and your partner? | No | 34 | 40.0 |
| | Yes | 56 | 60 |
| . Do you and your partner share similar financial goals and aspirations | No | 34 | 40.0 |
| | Yes | 56 | 60.7 |
| How do you perceive the impact of socio-economic factors on the overall stability of your | Negative | 29 | 41.2 |
| | Positive | 60 | 58.8 |
| | Neutral | 1 | 1 |

| | | | |
|----------|--|--|--|
| marriage | | | |
|----------|--|--|--|

Source: Field work, 2023

Table 2 shows the result of the Socio-economic Status and Marital Success by participants. The result reveals that (41.2%) of the participants affirmed that they would rate their house hold current socio-economic status as low, as against (58.8%) who stated that they will rate it as middle. Also, participants revealed that financial concerns have no led to disagreements or conflicts between them and their partner (40.1%); and those who affirmed were (59,9%). Also The result reveals that(60.2%) of the participants affirmed that partner share similar financial goals and aspirations, as against (39.8%) who stated the direct opposite.

Further more. The table also revealed that (60.2%) of the participants affirmed that the impact of socio-economic factors on the overall stability of marriage is positive , as against (39.8%) who stated the direct opposite.

Research Objective Two: To determine if communication influences marital stability

Table 3: Communication and Marital Stability

| Statement | Responses | Frequency | Percentage |
|---|---------------------------------|-----------|------------|
| How would you describe the quality of communication between you and your partner? | Good | 25 | 30.2 |
| | Poor | 65 | 69.8 |
| How often do you and your partner engage in open and honest discussions about important matters | Often | 25 | 30.2 |
| | Rarely | 65 | 69.8 |
| Do you feel comfortable expressing your feelings and concerns to your partner? | Yes | 25 | 30.2 |
| | No | 65 | 69.8 |
| How do you and your partner typically resolve conflicts or disagreements? | Active Listening and Compromise | 55 | 64.1 |
| | Avoidance | 15 | 15.0 |
| | Seeking advice from | 20 | 19.1 |

| | | | |
|--|--------|--|--|
| | others | | |
|--|--------|--|--|

Source: Field work, 2023

The result in Figure 3 reveals that participants(30.2%) affirmed that the quality of communication between them and their partner is good; other participants (69.1%) stated the opposite. Also, \ participants(69.5%) were of the opinion that they engage in open and honest discussions about important, while other participants (30.5%) were of the opinion that they don't have such freedom of engaging in open and honest discussions about important matters.

Moreover,theparticipants(69.5%) were of the opinion that they feel comfortable expressing their feelings and concerns to thier partner, while other participants (30.5%) were of a diverse opinion.

Furthr more, when asked about the How they and their partner typically resolve conflicts or disagreements, their response where (64.1) Active Listening and Compromise, (15.0) for Avoidance and (19.1) for those who Seeks advice from others

Research Objective three: To find out if ethnicity influences marital success among couples

Table 3.0: Ethnicity and Marital Success

| Statement | Responses | Frequency | Percentage |
|--|-----------|-----------|------------|
| What ethnic background do you and your partner belong to. | Same | 29 | 41.2 |
| | Separate | 60 | 58.8 |
| Are there cultural traditions or practices from your ethnic background that influence your relationship dynamics? | No | 34 | 40.0 |
| | Yes | 56 | 60 |
| Have you and your partner ever experienced challenges in your relationship due to cultural differences? | No | 34 | 40.0 |
| | Yes | 56 | 60 |
| Do you believe that cultural similarities or differences have an impact on the overall quality of your relationship? | No | 34 | 40.0 |
| | Yes | 56 | 60.7 |

Source: Field work, 2023

Table 2 shows the result of the Ethnicity and Marital Success by participants. The result reveals that (29.2%) of the participants affirmed that they are both

from the same ethnic group, as against (60.1%) who stated that they are from separate ethnic group. Also, (60.1 %) of the participants revealed that there are cultural traditions or practices from thier ethnic background that influences their relationship dynamics, while 40% of the respondents where of the opposite notion.

Also, The result reveals that(60.2%) of the participants affirmed that they have experienced challenges in thier relationship due to cultural differences, as against a limited (39.8%) who stated the direct opposite.

Further more. The table also revealed that (60.2%) of the participants affirmed that cultural similarities or differences have an impact on the overall quality of your relationship, as against (39.8%) who stated the direct opposite.

Research Objective FOUR: To Investigate How Educational, Social And Economic Changes Affect The Stability In Marriages

Table 4.0: Educational Social and Economic Changes

| Statement | Responses | Frequency | Percentage |
|---|------------------|------------------|-------------------|
| Have you and your partner experienced any significant changes in education, employment, or social circumstances since the beginning of your relationship? | No | 44 | 40.0 |
| | Yes | 46 | 60.0 |
| How have these changes impacted your relationship dynamics and overall stability | Positively | 38 | 54.0 |
| | Negatively | 27 | 25.0 |
| | No impact | 25 | 21.0 |
| Do you believe that external societal changes, such as shifts in social norms, have influenced your marriage in any way? | No | 49 | 55.0 |
| | Yes | 41 | 45.0 |

Source: Field work, 2023

Table 2 shows the result of the Educational Social and Economic Changes by participants. The result reveals that (40.2%) of the participants affirmed thier partners experienced any significant changes in education, employment, or

social circumstances since the beginning of their relationship, as against (60.1%) who stated the opposite. Also, (54.1 %) of the participants revealed that these changes impacted their relationship dynamics and overall stability positively, while (21%) of the respondents negated the notion. However (25%) were neither positively or negatively impacted.

Lastly, The result from the tables reveals that (55.2%) of the participants affirmed that external societal changes, such as shifts in social norms, have influenced their marriage in any way, as against a limited (45.8%) who stated the direct opposite.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

5.1 Summary

This study was designed to examine the impact of socio-cultural variables on marital stability among couples in Edo state, Nigeria. Chapter one focused on the general overview of the study and laid the foundation in which the research was conducted. The focus of chapter two was to review the available literature as well as relevant concepts. It also gave a theory in which the research was centered. Chapter three gave insight on how data were collected, the population as well as the sample size, sampling technique and method of data collection. Furthermore, in chapter four, the data gathered from respondents using the questionnaire were analyzed.

After analyzing the data it was revealed that all the respondents have an understanding of what the concept of marital stability means. Also, according

to the findings majority of the respondents are middle class earners as they respondents to the questionnaire accordingly. Furthermore, it was revealed that couples socio- economic status has a great impact on couples marital success, however these impact are relatives and varies from one couples to another.

In addition, the study showed that majority of the respondents affirmed that communication is a great driving force to stability in their marriages, this is in line with Adegoke & Esere, (1998) who posited that

Marital stability is related to but distinct from marital adjustment, marital quality, marital satisfaction, and marital success. The stability of marital unions are crucial for the well-being of families and the society at large. This could be achieved through constant flow of communication among partner. Unfortunately, marital instability has become a common phenomenon in Nigeria, with divorce and remarriage rates increasing due to various factors, including socio-economic factors (Adegoke & Esere, 1998).

Also, it was found out that although ethnicity may not be too important to couples who have decided to be together, but other factor enshrine within ethnicity e.g shift in the social norms of a particular partner ethnic orientation may affect the stability of marriages

Lastly, this study also looked into how educational, social and economic changes affect the stability in marriages

5.2 Conclusion

This study has been able to examine the impact of socio-cultural variables on marital stability among couples in Edo state. Also, it has been able to; To

investigate whether socio-economic status has an impact on couple's marital success, To determine if communication influences marital stability, To find out if ethnicity influences marital success among couples, To investigate how educational, social and economic changes affect the stability in marriages ,To recognize the most significant Socio-cultural variables affecting the marital stability of couples in Benin.

From the finding obtained from the responses derived from the respondents, it is clear that various social economic factor comes to paly in respect of stability in marriages

5.3 Recommendation

The following recommendations have been drawn from the result of the data that was analyzed.

1. Couples should learn how to accommodate the essesses of their partners in cases of dispute and disagreement.
2. In times of obvious economic changes such as w are currently, partners are expected to adjust accordingly. The social economic status of couples should never be a reson for dissolution of matrimony.
3. Good and healthy communication skill should be practiced among partners/couples as this may foster understanding among them selves.
4. Active Listening and Compromise, Seeking advice from other: either of these method should Students should be employed in conflict resolution in other to attain stability on marriages.

5. In cases of wrong doing by partners, its best for partners to speak out and address their issues in time to as not to keep in bottled in their mind

6. Couples should try to understand and cherish their partners vies and customs as these are tenant from which individuals in marriages are raised, it can not be changed easily.

Based on these recommendations, those in positions of authority and even non governmental agencies should set of counselling offices for marital issues. As a lot of marriages often time break up as a result of couples not having who to fall back to vent their frustration.

Questionnaire
Department of Sociology and Anthropology
Faculty of Social sciences
University of Benin, Benin

Dear Respondent

I am a final year student of the above named institutional am carrying out a research study on the topic “Evaluation of socio-cultural variables and its impact on marital stability among couples in Benin, Edo state”. Kindly assist me by indicating your opinion where necessary, this study is strictly for academic purpose and you are hereby assured that all information supplied will be treated in a strictly confidential manner.

Thank you
Yours Faithfully
Abaimu Faith.

SECTION A (SOCIO-DEMOGRAPHIC DATA)

Instructions: Please tick appropriately in the sections that following;

- 1. Age: Less than 20 years () 20-24 years () 25-29 years () 30 and above ()
- 2. Sex: Male () Female ()
- 3. Marital status : Married () Unmarried () Divorced () Separated () Widowed ()
- 4. Educational level : Primary () Secondary () Tertiary () Postgraduate ()
- 5. Occupation :
- 6. Religion : Christian () Islam () Traditional Religion ()

Section B : Socio-economic Status and Marital Success

- 7. How would you rate your household's current socio-economic status? Low () Middle () High ()
- 8. Have financial concerns ever led to disagreements or conflicts between you and your partner? Yes () No ()
- 9. Do you and your partner share similar financial goals and aspirations? Yes () No ()
- 10. How do you perceive the impact of socio-economic factors on the overall stability of your marriage? Very positive () Positive () Neutral () Negative () Very negative ()

Section C : Communication and Marital Stability

- 11. How would you describe the quality of communication between you and your partner? Excellent () Good () Fair () Poor ()
- 12. How often do you and your partner engage in open and honest discussions about important matters? Very Often () Often () Occasionally () Rarely ()
- 13. Do you feel comfortable expressing your feelings and concerns to your partner? Yes () No ()
- 14. How do you and your partner typically resolve conflicts or disagreements? Active Listening and Compromise () Avoidance () Seeking advice from others () Others [please specify].....

Section D : Ethnicity and Marital Success

- 15. What ethnic background do you and your partner belong to?
.....
- 16. Are there cultural traditions or practices from your ethnic background that influence your relationship dynamics? Yes () No ()

17. Have you and your partner ever experienced challenges in your relationship due to cultural differences? Yes () No ()

18. Do you believe that cultural similarities or differences have an impact on the overall quality of your relationship? Yes () No ()

Section E : Educational Social and Economic Changes

19. Have you and your partner experienced any significant changes in education, employment, or social circumstances since the beginning of your relationship? Yes () No ()

20. How have these changes impacted your relationship dynamics and overall stability? Positively () Negatively () No impact ()

21. Do you believe that external societal changes, such as shifts in social norms, have influenced your marriage in any way? Yes () No ()

22. What do you think is the most significant socio-cultural variables that affects marital stability among couples? Family () Religion () Communication () Ethnicity () Educational level ()

Section F : Open-ended Questions

23. Please share any additional comments or insights regarding the impact of socio-cultural variables on your marital stability

.....
.....

REFERENCES

- Adegoke, A. A., & Esere, M. O. (1998). Sources of stress and coping strategies among divorcees in Ilorin Metropolis. *The Counsellor: Journal of the Counselling Association of Nigeria*, 16(1), 227-233.
- Ajayi, A. I. (2021). Socio-cultural factors influencing marital instability among couples in Ondo State. *International Journal of Education and Research in Health Sciences*, 7(1), 1-10.
- Amin, S., Ahmad, U., & Hussain, S. (2018). Socio-economic determinants of marital stability: A case study of district Peshawar. *Journal of Managerial Sciences*, 12(2), 141-156.
- Esere, M. O., Yusuf, J., & Omotosho, J. A. (2011). Influence of spousal communication on marital stability: Implication for conducive home environment.
- Esiri, M. (2021). Social change and marriage structure in Nigeria. *International Research Journal of Management, IT and Social Sciences*, 8, 228-235. <https://doi.org/10.21744/irjmis.v8n3.1487>
- Lazarus, S. I., Rush, M., Dibiana, E. T., & Monks, C. P. (2017). Gendered Penalties of Divorce on Remarriage in Nigeria: A Qualitative Study. *Journal of Comparative Family Studies*, 48(3), 369-384.
- Maciver, J., & Dimkpa, D. (2012). Factors Influencing Marital Stability. *Mediterranean Journal of Social Sciences*, 3. <https://doi.org/10.5901/mjss.2012.03.01.437>
- Nwamadi, L. (2022). Socio-Economic Determinants of Marital Stability Among Married Couples In Port-Harcourt Metropolis, Rivers State,

Nigeria. *IOSR Journal of Research & Method in Education (IOSR-JRME)*, 12(1), 39-47.

REFERENCES

- Abbott, E. (2011). *A history of marriage*. John Wiley & Sons.
- Amato, P. R., & DeBoer, D. D. (2001). The transmission of marital instability across generations: Relationship skills or commitment to marriage? *Journal of Marriage and Family*, 63(4), 1038-1051. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1741-3737.2001.01038.x>
- Amato, P. R., & Fowler, F. (2002). Parenting Practices, Child Adjustment, and Family Diversity. *Journal of Marriage and Family*, 64(3), 703-716.
- Amato, P. R., & Booth, A. (2001). The Legacy of Parents' Marital Discord: Consequences for Children's Marital Quality. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 81(4), 627-638.
- Amato, P. R., & Kane, J. B. (2011). Family structure, parental practices, and high school completion. *American Sociological Review*, 76(4), 550-569.
- Amato, P. R., & Previti, D. (2003). People's Reasons for Divorcing: Gender, Social Class, the Life Course, and Adjustment. *Journal of Family Issues*, 24(5), 602-626.
- Amato, P. R., & Rogers, S. J. (1997). A longitudinal study of marital problems and subsequent divorce. *Journal of Marriage and the Family*, 59(3), 612-624.

- Carlson, D. L., Miller, A. J., & Rudd, S. (2020). Division of Housework, Communication, and Couples' Relationship Satisfaction. *Socius: Sociological Research for a Dynamic World*.
- Coontz, S. (2005). *Marriage, a history: From obedience to intimacy or how love conquered marriage*. Penguin.
- Gallie, D., Marsh, C., & Vogler, C. (1994). Unemployment and the quality of life. In D. Gallie, C. Marsh & C. Vogler (Eds.), *Social Change and the Experience of Unemployment* (pp. 288-316). Oxford University Press.
- Giddens, A. (1992). *The Transformation of Intimacy: Sexuality, love, and eroticism in modern societies*. Stanford University Press.
- Gottman, J. (1994). *Why Marriages Succeed or Fail: And How You Can Make Yours Last*.
- Grande, D. (2020, June 2). Active listening skills. *Psychology Today*. <https://www.psychologytoday.com/us/blog/in-it-together/202006/active-listening-skills>
- Hohmann-Marriott, B. (2006). Shared beliefs and the union stability of married and cohabiting couples. *Journal of Marriage and Family*, 68(4), 1015-1028.
- Kim, J. (2010). A diverging trend in marital dissolution by income status. *Journal of Divorce & Remarriage*, 51(7), 404-423.

- Killewald, A. (2016). Money, Work, and Marital Stability: Assessing Change in the Gendered Determinants of Divorce. *American Sociological Review*, 81(4), 696–719.
- Korenman, S., & Neumark, D. (1991). Does marriage really make men more productive?. *Journal of Human Resources*, 282-307.
- Kuper, Adam. (2016). Traditions of kinship, marriage and bridewealth in southern Africa. *Anthropology Southern Africa*, 39(4), 267-280. doi: 10.1080/23323256.2016.1243447
- Lauer, R. H., & Lauer, J. C. (2018). *Marriage and family: The quest for intimacy*. Sage Publications.
- Mahoney, A., Pargament, K. I., Tarakeshwar, N., & Swank, A. B. (2001). Religion in the home in the 1980s and 1990s: A meta-analytic review and conceptual analysis of links between religion, marriage, and parenting. *Journal of Family Psychology*, 15(4), 559-596. <https://doi.org/10.1037/0893-3200.15.4.559>
- Mbiti, J. S. (1969). *African religions and philosophy*. Heinemann.
- Nanda, S. (1998). Arranging a Marriage in India. In S. Nanda (Ed.), *Neither Man Nor Woman: The Hijras of India* (pp. 127-134). Wadsworth Publishing.
- Risman, B. J. (2018). Gender as a Social Structure. In *Handbook of the Sociology of Gender* (pp. 1-18). Springer International Publishing. doi: 10.1007/978-3-319-76333-0_2

Savarese, I. H. (2013, July 17). How to express your feelings in a respectful way. GoodTherapy. <https://www.goodtherapy.org/blog/how-to-express-your-feelings-in-respectful-way-0717135>

Stone, P., & Lovejoy, M. (2004). Fast-Track Women and the “Choice” to Stay Home. *The ANNALS of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, 596(1), 62-83.

Taylor, R. J., Brown, E., Chatters, L. M., & Lincoln, K. D. (2012). Extended Family Support and Relationship Satisfaction Among Married, Cohabiting, and Romantically Involved African Americans and Black Caribbeans. *Journal of African American Studies*, 16(3), 373-389.

Wilcox, W. B., & Dew, J. (2015). The Date Night Opportunity: What Does Couple Time Tell Us About the Potential Value of Date Nights? *National Marriage Project*.

Umberson, D., Williams, K., Powers, D. A., Liu, H., & Needham, B. (2006). You Make Me Sick: Marital Quality and Health Over the Life Course. *Journal of Health and Social Behavior*, 47(1), 1-16.

(Homans, 1961; Kelley, 1983; Levinger, 1979; Nakonezny & Denton, 2008) .

Dew, J. (2018). Economic deprivation and marital quality among young adults. *Journal of Family and Economic Issues*, 39(1), 160-170.

Folarin, G. O. (2008). Gender equality in the context of Nigerian family law: Myth or reality? *African Human Rights Law Journal*, 8(2), 380-403.

Homans, G. C. (1961). *Social behavior: Its elementary forms*. Harcourt, Brace & World.

Nwokocha, E. E., &Iroegbu, A. U. (2019). Gender roles and marital satisfaction among couples in Ibadan, Nigeria. *Gender &Behaviour*, 17(2), 13750-13760.

Ogunfowokan, A. A., Fawole, O. I., &Ojediran, T. D. (2014). Culture, gender and suicidal behavior in Nigeria: Implications for prevention. *International Journal of Culture and Mental Health*, 7(4), 1-15.

Thibaut, J., & Kelley, H. H. (1959). *The social psychology of groups*. Wiley.

Bourdieu, P. (1986). *The forms of capital*. *Handbook of Theory and Research for the Sociology of Education*, 241-258.

- Okoro, O., &Akpor-Robaro, M. O. (2018).

Educational attainment and marital instability in Nigeria: Evidence from 2013 Nigeria Demographic and Health Survey*. *Journal of Research in National Development*, 16(2), 96-103.