

Factors Influencing Instability within Rural Households in Iseyin Local Government Area, Oyo State, Nigeria

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Abstract

Family instability has become one of the most prevalent and endemic social challenges ravaging many families and communities in Nigeria. Since the family is the bedrock on which every society is built, the question of achieving national stability must first be addressed from the family unit with special reference to conflicts in marriages. This study assessed the factors influencing family instability among rural households in Iseyin Local Government Area of Oyo State Nigeria. Multistage sampling procedure was used in selecting a total of 120 respondents for the study. Data were collected with questionnaire and analyzed using means, percentage and inferential statistics. Findings reveal that 56.7% of the respondents had high favourable perception towards family instability. Factors that were found to be influencing family instability in the study area include: religion, family type ($\beta=-0.139$, $p=0.045$), household size ($\beta=0.144$, $p=0.045$), perception towards family instability ($\beta=0.188$, $p=0.020$) and educational background ($\beta=0.554$, $p=0.000$). The study concludes that family instability has more serious consequences on polygamous family and this may also affect their children's education. The study recommends that marital counseling clinics should be established by government, local and religious leaders in major towns and communities to enable couples who are experiencing unresolved conflicts to seek for professional assistance of counselors.

Key words: Factors, Influencing, Family, Instability, Rural, Households, Perceptions

Introduction

There are many institutions that make up the social system, but one that seems most unique and outstanding is the family, because of some vital functions that it performs in the society (Saker 2007). One of the reasons people get married is that they have needs they seek to satisfy. Parts of the needs

that couples seek to fulfill in marriage include companionship and intimacy. Family can be described as the basic unit of the society. It is a social group that is characterized by common habitation, economic cooperation and reproduction. It includes adults of both sexes, at least two of whom maintain a socially approved sexual relationship,

and one or more children, own or adopted, of the sexually cohabiting couple (Esere, Yusuf and Omotosho, 2011). Gove (2006) also defined family as a set of people related by blood, marriage or some others agreed upon relationship or adoption who shares the primary responsibility for reproduction and caring for the members. Such a family is expected to be stable so that member can live in harmony and perform the responsibilities.

Family stability refers to the absence of transitions in any family structure. This could be seen as a situation where guardians of the students are married at the hour of the central labor with no family change (Craigie, 2009). More recently studies have begun to examine family structure changes over the course of a child's life. These studies have specifically focused on the issue of family stability - that is, whether the parent(s) with whom a child lives have been stable or changing over time. Accounting for family stability is crucial because the positive effect of the traditional family may be in part due to stability rather than family structure (Osborne and McLanahan, 2007).

Sandstrom and Huerta (2013) defined family instability as a situation where the family knows no peace, poor structure and organisation, emotional separation of members and poor relationship with relation in-laws. Family instability has become a thing associated with the contemporary family institution, because of the

frequent reoccurrence in recent times in their households. The structure of some families has undergone dramatic change over the past few years. Increases in non-marital fertility, divorce and cohabitation, coupled increase in divorce and remarriage have translated into more complex living arrangements for rural households (Amina 2008).

There are also some social factors that affect the instability of the family within the households. The idea of managing more than one wife might lead to an end of the family. The habits that either the wife or the husband is addicted to smoking or drinking also lead to family dissolution. Lack of trust in many families amongst the couples is wrecking marriages today. Peer influences also threaten the family solidarity if care is not taken couples. As a result of outside influences, irrational decisions are made to the detriment of one's wish and this might lead to a marital crisis. Other factors such as education, illegitimate children, religion, eroding norms and cultural beliefs and infertility of the wife, interference of in-law in decision also initiate instability in the family.

There is no gainsaying the fact that many of the social challenges that are threatening the stability of Nigeria today are seemingly the consequences of marital instability in families. For instance, the challenges in the present school system such as drug addition, high anxiety, emotional instability, cultism, absenteeism, school dropout, depression, lack of concentration, frustration to mention but few, could

be traced to marital conflicts in families. In non-school setting, some societal challenges such as rage, outburst of anger, transfer of aggression, insensitivity, uncooperative attitude, restiveness, thuggery, kidnapping and other corrupt practices are easily classified as consequences of marital instability (Duke-Natrebro 2014).

Family instability has permeated the houses of the rich and the poor, the educated and the non-educated, the young and the old, the rural and urban dwellers most especially in rural households in Iseyin LGA of Oyo State. Unfortunately, most of the traditional methods of resolving marital conflicts appear to be failing. The children who are the proverbial grasses are apparently the primary victims and the effects extend steadily to the community and the society at large. The family is the child first place of contact to the world. The child as the result acquires initial education and socialization from parents and other significant persons in the family. Duke-Natrebro (2014) pointed out that the family lays the psychological, moral and spiritual foundation in the overall development of the child. Structurally, family/homes are either broken or intact. A broken family in this context is one that is not structurally intact, as a result of divorce, separation, death of one parent and illegitimacy.

It has been observed that the rise in the divorce rate over the years is one of the fundamental changes in Nigeria society. A substantial number of

women and children now spend some fraction of their life in single female-headed households, leading many to be concerned about their socio-economic circumstances (Falola, Oyafunke and Odunaya, 2014). The dynamics of culture and human relationships have made researchers to observe many influences, manifestations, happenings and occurrences in marriage stability within the African society. Dunkins, (2000) posited that there are numbers of factors that are seriously threatening stability of marriage in Nigeria and most of these factors are traceable to some inherited behaviour and thinking from the ancient African society, and imported ideas from other sources that are beyond the African concept of marriage. These factors are the significant causes of marriage instability in Nigeria society; as a result of their functions and effects within a home. In another development, Asare, (2005) also observed that families nowadays seem not to care about their wards' marriages because in most cases, the choice of partner is made by the wards themselves contrary to tradition, where a choice was made by parents..

It is obvious that conflict in every sphere of human life is inevitable but efforts must be made to find ways of coping or resolving them as they occur so as to give room for a healthy living. Since the society bears the cumulative effect of unresolved marital conflicts, culminating in national instability, and since almost all the traditional and conventional methods of resolving

family instability appear to have lost the efficacy of conflict resolution in marriages, there must be a deliberate research into finding the study of factors influencing marital instability among rural household has fast become a central point for discussion and research among social scientists.

Objective of the study

The general objective of this study was to investigate the factors influencing family instability among rural households in Iseyin LGA, Oyo State. Specifically, the study:

1. describe socio economic characteristics of respondents in the study area,
2. determine respondents' perception on the factors causing family instability in Iseyin Local Government Area,

Research Questions

The study was guided by the following research questions

1. What are the socio-economic characteristics of respondents in the study area?
2. What are the respondents' perceptions on factors causing family instability in the study area?

Methodology

Design for the study: Survey design was adopted for this study. The survey method normally paves way for a researcher to make use of questionnaire.

Area of Study: The study was carried out in Iseyin, Oyo State. Iseyin is a city located in Oyo State, Nigeria. It is

approximately 100 kilometers north of Ibadan with a coordinate of 7° 58'N 3° 36'E. There are 11 wards in Iseyin. The city was estimated to have a population of 236,000, per a United Nations 2005 estimate, which increased to 302,990 in 2011 (NPC, 2011). Iseyin is centrally located and accessible via road networks from Ibadan, Oyo, Abeokuta, and Ogbomoso. The primary industry of Iseyin is cotton-based textiles, and Iseyin reputed as the home of *AsoOfi* or *AsoOke* a popular traditional fabric worn on special occasions by the Yoruba usually for coronation, chieftaincy, and other important events. Iseyin is part of the Oke-Ogun towns referred to as the "food basket" of Nigeria. The major agricultural activities are farming, hunting, fishing, and food processing, among others

Population for the Study: The population study comprised all heads (male or female) of rural households. These head were young, but old enough to understand family instability in the 11 wards of the study area.

Sample for the Study: The sample was made up of 120 heads of households. Multi-stage sampling technique was adopted. In the first stage, a simple random sampling technique was used to select 10 percent of the 11 wards in the study area which gave three wards. At the second stage, purposive sampling technique was used to select 20 percent of communities (10 communities) in the wards. The final stage involved simple random sampling of 12 households from each

community. This gave a total sample size of 120 households and each of the male or female household heads were selected to give a total sample size of 120 respondents.

Instrument for Data Collection: Data were collected using questionnaire. The questionnaire had both open and close-ended questions based on the objectives of the study. The instrument was validated by three lecturers in the Department of Agricultural Extension and Rural Development, University of Ibadan. A test-retest method of reliability test was employed to determine reliability of the instrument.

A reliability index of 0.85 was obtained.

Data Collection Methods: A total of 120 copies of the questionnaire were distributed by hand. The entire 120 copies were properly responded to and retrieved. This represents 100 percent return.

Date Analysis Techniques: Frequency and percentages were used for data analysis, that is descriptive analysis. The dependent variable for this study was made up of the factors influencing family instability. This was measured using Linear regression model was used to determine the factors influencing family instability.

$$Y = \beta_0 + \beta_1X_1 + \beta_2X_2 + \beta_3X_3 + \beta_4X_4 + \beta_5X_5 + \beta_6X_6 + \beta_7X_7 + \beta_8X_8 + \beta_9X_9 + \varepsilon$$

Where:

Y =Family instability (Family instability index)

β_0 = a constant;

β_j =Is the regression coefficient ($j = 1 \dots 11$);

X_1 =Age of respondents in years

X_2 =Sex of respondent (male=1, female=0)

X_3 = Religion (Muslim =1, Christianity=2, Traditional=0)

X_4 =Educational Background (formal education =1, otherwise = 0)

X_5 = Household size (Number of Persons in a household)

X_6 =Monthly Income (Actual amount in Naira)

X_7 = family type (monogamous =1, otherwise = 0)

X_8 =eroding norms (eroding index)

X_9 =perception (perception index)

ε = Error term.

Descriptive analysis was used using frequency distribution, mean, percentage and inferential statistics such as chi-square (X^2) and Pearson's Product Moment Correlation (PPMC).

Results

Socio Economic Characteristics of Respondents

**Table 1: Distribution of Respondents by Socioeconomic Characteristics
(n=120)**

Variable	Frequency	Percentage	Mean
Age			
20-34 years	42	35	
35-49 years	65	54.2	
50 years and above	13	10.8	38.2 ±8.85 years
Sex			
Male	56	46.7	
Female	64	53.3	
Marital status			
Single	2	1.7	
Married	116	96.7	
Divorced	2	1.7	
Trading	2	1.7	
Educational Background			
No formal education	5	4.2	
Adult education	10	8.5	
Primary education	30	25.0	
Secondary education	50	41.7	
Tertiary education	25	20.8	
Family type			
Polygamy	68	56.7	
Monogamy	50	41.7	
Single parent	2	1.7	
Household size			
1-5 people	58	48.3	6.47±3.32
6-10 people	51	42.5	
11-15 people	7	5.8	
16-20people	4	3.3	

Table 1 shows that majority (54.2%) of the respondents were between 35-49 years with mean age of 38 years implying that most of the respondents were young and in their active years. Also, majority (53.3%) were male, majority (96.7%) married, majority (95.8%) of them had some form of

education, majority (56.7%) were from polygamy family and 48.3% had between 1-5 persons in their households with mean household size of 6 persons.

Perception toward Family Instability

Table 2a: Distribution of Respondents Based on their Perception towards Family Instability N=120

	Perception Indicators	SA(F)(%)	A(F)(%)	U(F)(%)	D(F)(%)	SD(F)(%)	Mean
1	Unemployment of the husband	46(38.3)	53(44.2)	8(6.7)	10(8.3)	3(2.5)	4.08
2	Situations in which wives are the breadwinner.	85(71.7)	24(19.2)	1(0.8)	9(7.5)	1(0.8)	4.53
3	Interference of in-laws in decision making.	92(76.7)	22(18.3)	3(2.5)	3(2.5)	0 (0)	4.69
4	Couples living in different places/locations.	33(27.5)	59(49.2)	15(12.5)	13(10.8)	0(0)	3.93
5	Lack of understanding of each other's culture.	87(72.5)	25(20.8)	1(0.8)	5(4.2)	2(1.7)	4.58
6	Couples practicing different religion.	48(40.0)	57(47.5)	5(4.2)	10(8.3)	0(0)	4.19
7	Infrequent money flow into the family.	100(83.3)	14(11.7)	1(0.8)	5(4.2)	0(0)	4.74
8	Hatred for each other's friends	90(75.0)	26(21.7)	1(0.8)	3(2.5)	0 (0)	4.69
9	Lack of submission is a form of disrespect.	91(75.8)	25(20.8)	2(1.7)	2(1.7)	0(0)	4.71
10	Pride of either husband/wife in the family.	101(84.2)	1(8.3)	2(1.7)	7(5.8)	1(0.8)	4.68

SA = Strongly agree; A = Agree; U = Undecided; D = Disagree; SD = Strongly Disagree

Table 2, shows that majority of the respondents strongly agreed that pride of either husband/wife in the family (84.4%), infrequent money flow (83.3%),interference of in-laws in decision making (76.7%), lack of submission a form of disrespect (75.8%), hatred for each other friends (75.0%), lack of understanding of each other culture (72.5%), situations in which wives are the breadwinner (71.7), couples practicing different religion (40.0%) are perception towards family instability. However, more than half of the respondents (50.8%) strongly disagreed that which can cause misunderstanding

unemployment of the husband is a | perception towards family instability.

Table 3: Categorization of respondents according to their perception towards family instability

Variable	Frequency	%	Maximum value	Minimum value	Mean	Standard deviation
Unfavourable perception	52	43.3	110	61	95.14	±9.71
Favourable perception	68	56.7				

Table 3 shows categorization of respondents based on their perception towards family instability. The Table reveals that 56.7% of the respondents had high favourable perception while the remaining 43.3% had unfavourable perception towards family instability.

Table 4: Pearson Product Moment Correlation Analysis (PPMC) between Respondents' Perception towards Family Instability and Factors Influencing of Family Instability

Variable	r value	P value	Decision	Remark
Perception	0.519	0.000	significant	Reject

Table 4 shows PPMC analysis which reveals that a significant relationship exists between respondents' perception towards family instability ($r = 0.519$, $p = 0.000$) and the factors influencing family instability. Thus, the hypothesis is rejected.

Table 5: Regression Analysis of the Independent Variables and the Factors Influencing of Family Instability

Variable	B	Std. err	t	p-value
Age	0.010	0.057	0.086	0.884
Sex	-0.090	0.071	0.146	0.205
Marital status	0.022	0.176	-1.275	0.731
Educational background	0.028	0.029	-2.290	0.691
Family type	-0.139	0.060	0.399	0.045*
Household size	0.144	0.049	-2.031	0.045*
Perception	0.188	0.004	1.086	0.020*

$R = 0.791$, $R^2 = 0.625$, $Adjusted R^2 = 0.579$, $S.E = 3.516$

Regression analysis was conducted on the independent variables, to examine the factor influencing respondents' family instability in the study. Table 5 shows an R^2 value of 0.58, revealing that the items in the regression model

put together could explain 58% of the variance in the determinants of family instability on the respondents. Table 4 further shows that five variables were found to be significant determinants of family instability, these are: secondary occupation ($\beta=-0.160$, $p=0.024$), family type ($\beta=-0.139$, $p=0.045$), household size ($\beta=0.144$, $p=0.045$), perception towards family instability ($\beta=0.188$, $p=0.020$) and the frequency at which certain factors create disharmony within the family ($\beta=0.554$, $p=0.000$).

Discussion

Most of the respondents were still at their reproductive age. This concurs with the findings of Kalmijn and Portman (2006) that the age at which women marry appears to determine the rate of marital instability, with those marrying older facing lower chances of separating compared to those marrying while young. The 2011 Ethiopian Demographic and Health Survey (EDHS) data reported that 11,097 and 5287 women in the reproductive age group (i.e. 15-49 years) living in rural areas go through family instability. From the findings, females are more affected by family instability than males, which could be because women are more vulnerable than their male counterpart. This is in line with the findings of Smith (2001) who reported a higher number of females than males in rural areas. Table 1 revealed the distribution of respondents by sex reveals that 53.3% of the respondents were female while 46.7% were male. This implies that females are more affected by

family instability than males, which could be because women are more vulnerable than their male counterpart. This is in agreement with Smith (2004) also reported a higher number of females than males in rural areas.

Table 1 also shows that majority (96.7%) of the respondents was married, 1.7% were single and the remaining 1.7% were divorced. This reveals that family instability greatly affects the married couple more than the single and divorced. Findings by Ogbogu (2012) also reported a higher number of married citizens, compared to those that were single, divorced, separated or widowed in Nigeria. Table 1 reveals that 41.7% of the respondents had secondary education, 25.0% had primary education, 20.8% had tertiary education, and 8.5% had adult education while 4.2% had no formal education. This implies that most of the respondents only finished secondary education because some got pregnant when still in secondary, so for this reason, gets married without furthering their education. Findings by Duke-Natrebo (2014) show that most rural dwellers usually stop education during their adolescent period. Table 1 shows that (56.7%) of the respondents were polygamist, 41.7% were monogamist while the remaining 1.7% were single parents. This implies that most of the women in the study area marry at early age to a young man who later marries more wives later into the family. Table 1 reveals that 48.3% of the respondents had a household size of 1-5 people, 42.5%

had between 6 to 10 people, 5.8% had between 11 to 15 people and 3.3% had between 16 to 20 people. The mean household size of the respondent was 6.47 ± 3.32 people. This implies a large household size among respondents in the study area. Availability of family labour, access to cheap food and low/medium livelihood status of the people could possibly be the reasons for a large household size in the study area and which could have an implication of frequent argument among the couples especially polygamous families, irresponsibility of either husband or wife, waywardness of the children, there is hardly any privacy among members of households. Table 1 shows that most (58.3%) of the respondents earned between ₦5,000 - ₦24,000, 25.8% earned ₦25,000 - ₦44,000 while 15.8% earned ₦45,000 and above. The average mean of the respondent was ₦ $24,362.5 \pm 17,106.68$. This implies that more than half of the respondents earn averagely ₦24,000 and above.

According to Table 2, majority of the respondents strongly agreed that pride of either husband/wife in the family (84.4%), infrequent money flow (83.3%), interference of in-laws in decision making (76.7%), lack of submission a form of disrespect (75.8%), hatred for each other friends which can cause misunderstanding (75.0%), lack of understanding of each other culture (72.5%), situations in which wives are the breadwinner (71.7%), couples practicing different religion (40.0%) are perception towards family instability. However,

more than half of the respondents (50.8%) strongly disagreed that unemployment of the husband is a perception towards family instability.

In addition, the categorization of respondents in Table 3, based on their perception towards family instability reveals that 56.7% of the respondents had high favourable perception while the remaining 43.3% had unfavourable perception towards family instability. This implies that different respondents took the perception so serious, some took as something that happens a lot while others disagree totally to some perception of family instability. Ekong (2003) agrees that rural people would always want to defend themselves from anything that can cause pain due to the family values and solidarity inherent among them.

The PPMC analysis in Table 4 reveals that a significant relationship exists between respondents' perception towards family instability ($r = 0.519$, $p = 0.000$) and the factors influencing family instability. Thus, the hypothesis is rejected. This entails that the effect family instability has on the respondents influence the perceptions they believed in.

Regression analysis was conducted on the independent variables, to examine the factor influencing respondents' family instability in the study. Table 4 shows an R^2 value of 0.58, revealing that the items in the regression model put together could explain 58% of the variance in the determinants of family instability on the respondents. Table 4 further shows that five variables were found to be

significant determinants of family instability, these are: secondary occupation ($\beta=-0.160$, $p=0.024$), family type ($\beta=-0.139$, $p=0.045$), household size ($\beta=0.144$, $p=0.045$), perception towards family instability ($\beta=0.188$, $p=0.020$) and the frequency at which certain factors create disharmony within the family ($\beta=0.554$, $p=0.000$). This implies that respondents' secondary occupation, family type, household size, perception towards family instability, and the frequency at which certain factors create disharmony within the family, were the major determinants of family instability in the study area.

Conclusion

The study investigated the determinants of family instability among rural households in Iseyin, Oyo State. The study concludes that respondent' socio-economic characteristics, respondents' perceptions towards family instability and frequency at which certain factors create disharmony within the family have profound effects on marriage leading to instability. It concludes that the children always suffer from the marital instability in which may affect their education, their future or turned them to be wayward. It was discovered that although, conflict in marriage is inevitable but when efforts are not made to resolve an identified conflict, it will degenerate into anarchy, confusion, instability, divorce and total collapse of an expected life-long relationship. This study believes that counseling approach can

effectively assist couples in crises not only to resolve them but also to cope with conflicts as they arise.

Recommendations

The following recommendations are made from family stability in the area of the study:

1. Family and marital counseling clinics should be established in major towns and cities to enable couples who are experiencing unresolved conflicts to seek for professional assistance of counselors.
2. Couples should always be encouraged at any available forum to develop the sense of openness, trust and mutual respect for each other in marriage.
3. Would-be couples should be encouraged to seek pre-marital counseling before engaging in marriage.
4. Couples should consciously encourages good communication strategy and adapt better skills in crisis management without the interference of a third party.

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