International Journal of Innovative Psychology & Social Development 11 (4):117-122, Oct.-Dec., 2023

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Socio-Economic Effects Of Divorce Among The Marriage Couples In Gashua, Yobe State, Nigeria

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ABSTRACT
The study assesses the high divorce rate among couples in Gashua community. The study was guided by two objectives and adopted the descriptive survey design. The study identify the causes of divorces, and the ways in which the marital dissolution or divorced affects the couples, their children and the Gashua community. Primary data were collected through questionnaires across Gashua community and all were analyzed. The data comprises sixty married couples living together; twenty divorcees' men and twenty divorcees' women were selected at random and were given copies of questionnaires. The results obtained showed that the major causes of divorce in Gashua community include: adding additional wives, lack of patient, infertility and childlessness, poverty, and insubordination of wife to husband. Adding additional wives and lack of patient seems to be the most occurring factor that cause high rate of divorce among the sample involved in the study area. The results also revealed that divorce do significantly affect divorcees, their children and the Gashua society as a whole. Based on these findings it was recommended that Religious/ cultural teaching about marriage right from courtship is a necessity. Such teaching includes; marriages should be based on love and not beauty, materialism, lust etc. Patience in marriage, conflict resolution, forgiveness and consequence of divorce among others should be taught during marriage counseling.
Keywords: conflict resolution, divorce, Gashua community

INTRODUCTION

Marriage is an institution which guarantees the procreation, care and education of the young; the stability of the family; and the continuity of society upon which the survival of the human race depends (Okoh, 2004). The increasing rate of divorce in Nigerian homes is an intricate incident happening among Nigerian couples and in the world at large. In recent years, Yobe state in Nigeria witnesses the high rate of marital dissolution. That is, number of divorced men and women were increasing on daily basis. The rampant occurrences of divorce in Yobe state homes have social, economic and political effect in the society.

Marital breakdown is worldwide phenomenon, but the reasons or causes are differing from one continents to another or nations to another or community to another (Sa'idu, Anas & Nawas , 2015). Various explanations about the increase in the rate of divorce have been provided: Some of the common causes of marital problems or divorce as noted by Arowolo (2002) are, abuse, power tussle between couples, poor financial management, infidelity, infertility/childlessness, hot temper, influence of mother-in-law, influence of bad companies, influence of alcohol, improper use of

language, impotence, poor communication between couples, early marriage, prolonged sickness, prolonged hardship and maltreatment.

Divorce is the legal dissolution of marriage. For Nwoye (1999:453), "divorce is the only ceremony that marks the official end of a marriage, just like a wedding ceremony marks the official beginning of the same marriage". He further noted that it takes place in the court presided over by a judge. For Gahler (2006) divorce is the judicial separation of the spouses and completely disruption of their marital relations. He further noted that it is the dissolution of marital relations, in this process marriage is completely broken down either in social or legal context. Obiadi (2002) noted that divorce is the breaking up or dissolution or abrogation of marriage. According to Hornby (2001) divorce is the legal ending of a marriage. It is to end one's marriage to somebody by legal means. According to Mirror (2003) divorce is the complete break up or dissolution of marriage through legal means.

Divorce has adverse effects on both parties concerned, their children and the society. It frustrates the life chances of the children of such separation and children of such families usually constitute a nuisance to the society. According to Mgbodile (2000), children are the greatest victims of a battered marital relationship.

Although Gashua community in Yobe state has witnessed the high rate of divorce in recent years, little is known about the consequences of divorce in the area. Hence, this called for the study.

Statement of problem

Marriage is also the backbone of socioeconomic and political development. Its progress and maintenance signifies harmony, while crisis and divorce in the family signals dangers and insecurity in the society. In Christianity, there is no standard reason for marriage breakdown while in Islam; there are guidelines that need to be followed by divorce, and after the divorce. Does the Christians follows the teaching bible concerning marriage and divorce; and does the rules and guidelines of the Qur"an and Sunnah in respect to divorce followed by Muslim ummah in Gashua community? The purpose of this paper is to gain a better understanding of the current research regarding the reasons why the rate of divorce increases in Gashua community as well as the consequence of divorce and also to proffer solutions.

Objectives of the study

The main objective of the study is to assess the rate of divorce among male and female genders in Gashua community. The specific objectives include:

i. Identify the causes of divorce in Gashua community
ii. Examine the effects of divorce on divorce on divorcees, their children and the society

Research questions

i. What are the causes of divorce in Gashua community?
ii. What are the effects of divorce on divorcees, their children and the society?

Research hypotheses

H_O: Divorces do not significantly affect divorcees, their children and the society

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Research Design

The research design for the study was descriptive survey. A survey is a method of collecting information by interviewing or administering questionnaires to a sample of individuals. Descriptive survey research design allow researcher to gather information, summarize, present and interpret for the purpose of clarification (Orodho, 2002).

Population and Sample of the Study

The population of the study consists of all the divorcees and the married men and women in Gashua community. In other to minimize sampling error, this study applied simple random technique in selecting and interacting with the divorcees, married men and women in Gashua community One hundred respondents were selected in Gashua community. Respondents in primary data consists of sixty married homes, twenty divorce males and twenty divorce females and they were all given copies of Questionnaire at random, they filled and returned them to the researchers.

Research Instrument

The instrument used for the collection of primary data on this study was a prepared questionnaire and direct interview. The items in the questionnaire were structured in such a way that would enable the respondents to pick alternative answers against their choice of responses.

Data Collection

The instrument used for the collection of primary data on this study was a prepared questionnaire and direct interview. This questionnaire is divided into three parts. The items in the questionnaire were structured in such a way that would enable the respondents to pick alternative answers against their choice of responses. The Questionnaire consisted of items covering various possible causes of divorce and possible solutions as mentioned in the literature on divorce. The items of the Questionnaire were grouped into three parts. The number of items under each cause was the major ones identified in the literatures as the causes of divorce. Part one is a demographic variable, part two is the causes of divorce in Gashua Community and was constructed in Likert format with a 4 scale scoring technique, respondents were free to choose Strongly Agree, Agree, Disagree or Strongly Disagree of any of the statements in the Questionnaire, part three is the ways of preventing divorce or restoring the broken homes.

Methods of Data analysis

In treating and analyzing of data collected, extensive use of tables and percentages will be of paramount importance. The data collected will be presented in tables and analyzed in percentages.
The hypothesis will be analyzed by the use of Chi – Square.

Formula = $X^2 = \sum \frac{(0-E)2}{E}$

Where X^2 = chi – square
0 = observed frequency
E = expected frequency

Decision rule: if the calculated value of the chi square is greater than the table value at 95% confidence level, the null hypothesis will be rejected while alternative hypothesis will be accepted.

DATA PRESENTATION, RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Table 1: Age of the respondents

Age	Respondents	Per cent
11-20	11	11
21-30	39	39
31-40	21	21
41-50	17	17
51 –above	12	12

Source: Authors Computation, 2023

Table 1 above indicates that the participants varied in terms of age. The youngest participants is between the ages of 11-20 years, which also constitute11% the members. 39 members found themselves within the age categories ranging of 21-30 years, they 39%) which have the highest respondents.21% fall within the age of 31-40 years, 17% fall within the range of 41-50 years while 12% fall within the age of 51 years above.

Table 2: Gender of the respondents

Gender	Respondents	Per cent
Male	45	45
Female	55	55

Source: Authors Computation, 2023

In table 2 above, the majorities of respondents are women, which are 55% of the respondents while from the side of men, they are 45%.

Table 3: Marital status of the respondents

Marital status	Respondents	Per cent
Married	60	60
Divorced	40	40
Total	100	

Source: Author's Computation, 2023

Based on the marital status of the respondents, table 3 shows that 60% of the respondents are married while 40% are divorcee.

Table 4: Years of marriage before divorce

Length of divorce	Respondents	Per cent
< 1 to 5yrs	20	50
6-10 years	11	27.5
11-15 yrs	7	17.5
16yrs- above	2	5
Total	40	100

Source: Author's Computation 2023

Table 4 above indicates the length of marriage before divorce. 50% of the respondents marriage last between less than one year to 5 years, 27.5% lasted between 6-10 years, and 17.5% lasted for the period of 11 years while only 5% lasted for 16 years and above.

Table 5: Number of children before divorce

Number of children	Respondents	Per cent
1-5	26	65
6-10	13	32.5
10 –above	1	2.5
Total	40	100

Source: Authors Computation, 2023

In table 5 above, the selected samples given the questionnaires show that majority of the divorcee (65%) has 1-5 children before divorce followed by 32.5% of 6-10 children and 2.5% with 10 children and above.

Table 6: Educational levels of the respondents

Educational level	Respondents	Per cent
No education	20	20
Koranic	23	23
Primary	27	27
Secondary	19	19
Tertiary	10	10
Total	100	100

Source: Authors Computation, 2023

Table 6 above indicates, In terms of qualifications, 20% have no education, 23% have koranic education, 23% obtained their primary school certificates. However, 19% received and hold their secondary school certificates. 10% were their Diploma, N.C.E (National Certificate of education) and or first B.sc, B.A or B.Ed. Degree certificate and higher degree.

Table 7: Religion of the respondents

Religion	Respondents	Per cent
Islam	85	85
Christian	15	15
Traditional	-	
Others (specify)	-	
Total	100	100

Source: Authors Computation 2023

Based on the religion faith of the respondents, Table 7 above indicates that 85% of the respondents are Islam while 15% are Christian.

Test of hypotheses (Chi square test (X^2)

Table 8: Chi square test of Causes of marriage breakdown on divorcee in Gashua community in Yobe State

s/n	Effects	Strongly agree	Agree	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Total
1	High level of trauma	34(25.6)	20 (30.8)	26 (22)	20 (21.6)	100
2	Untold hardship	20(25.6)	32(30.8)	23(22)	25(21.6)	100
3	Lack of respect	17(25.6)	32(30.8)	29(22)	22(21.6)	100
4	Insecurity	25(25.6)	30(30.8)	20(22)	25(21.6)	100
5	Exposure to sexually transmitted diseases	32(25.6)	40(30.8)	12(22)	16(21.6)	100
	Total	**128**	**154**	**110**	**108**	**500**

Source: Authors Computation, 2023

$$X^2 = \sum \frac{(0-E)^2}{E}$$

$$X^2 = \sum \frac{(34-25.6)^2}{25.6} + \frac{(32-25.6)^2}{25.6} + ..+ \frac{(16-21.6)^2}{21.6} = 24.05$$

The tableted X^2 with (5-1)(4-1) = 12 degrees of freedom at 5% probability level is 21.026. Since the calculated value (X^2) =24.05 is higher than the table value, we reject the null hypothesis and conclude that divorces do significantly affect divorcees

Table 10: Chi square test of Effect of marriage breakdown on their children in Gashua community in Yobe State

s/n	Effects	Strongly agree	Agree	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Total
1	By their schooling activities	20 (30.4)	27 (26.2)	28 (23.8)	25 (19.6)	100
2	By their sound character	39 (30.4)	21(26.2)	25(23.8)	15(19.6)	100
3	By their welfare	22(30.4)	31(26.2)	27(23.8)	20(19.6)	100
4	Hatred by their step mother	40(30.4)	28(26.2)	18(23.8)	14(19.6)	100
5	Easily frustrated and misery	31(30.4)	24(26.2)	21(23.8)	24(19.6)	100
	Total	**152**	**131**	**119**	**98**	**500**

Source: Author's Computation, 2023

$$X^2 = \sum \frac{(0-E)^2}{E}$$

$$X^2 = \sum \frac{(20-30.4)^2}{E30.4} + \frac{(39-30.4)^2}{E30.4} +...+ \frac{(24-19.6)^2}{19.6} = 21.76$$

The tableted X^2 with (5-1)(4-1) = 12 degrees of freedom at 5% probability level is 21.026. since the calculated value (X^2)=21.76 is higher than the table value, we reject the null hypothesis and conclude that divorces do significantly affect divorcees' children.

Table 11: Chi square test of Effect of marriage breakdown in Gashua community of Yobe State

s/n	Effects	Strongly agree	Agree	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Total
1	Increase in Prostitution	32 (25)	24 (19.8)	21 (24.8)	23(30.4)	100
2	Promote indiscipline	37(25)	21(19.8)	20(24.8)	22(30.4)	100
3	Hooliganism and armed Robbery	19(25)	23(19.8)	20(24.8)	38(30.4)	100
4	Drug trafficking	17(25)	16(19.8)	30(24.8)	37(30.4)	100
5	Homicide and occultism	20(25)	15(19.8)	33(24.8)	32(30.4)	100
	Total	125	99	124	152	500

Source: Authors Computation, 2023

$$X^2 = \sum \frac{(0-E)^2}{E}$$

$$X^2 = \frac{(32-25)^2}{25} + \frac{(37-25)^2}{25} + \ldots + \frac{(32-30.4)^2}{30.4} = 21.73$$

The tableted X^2 with (5-1)(4-1) = 12 degrees of freedom at 5% probability level is 21.026. Since the calculated value (X^2=21.73) is higher than the table value, we reject the null hypothesis and conclude that divorces do significantly affect the society.

We can therefore conclude that divorce do not significantly affect divorcees, their children and the society

CONCLUSION

Family break-ups constitute one of the serious problems facing marriage as an institution in Nigeria and in Gashua community in particular. It has negative effect on the divorced couples, their children and the society at large. In view of the important role family plays in the society, there is the urgent need for the parents, religious leaders, traditional rulers, governments and other stakeholders to evolve ways of saving families from frequent marriage break ups.

RECOMMENDATIONS

i. Religious/ cultural teaching about marriage right from courtship is a necessity. Such teaching among others include; marriages should be based on love and not beauty, materialism, lust etc,; patient in marriage, conflict resolution and consequence of divorce.
ii. Counsellors should liaise with the religious leaders (priests, pastors and imams) to organize the series of programs, in which every groom and bride has to undergo on how to handle each other in the relationship, (that is rights and duties toward each other).

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