

## IMPLICATION OF FAMILY INSTABILITY ON CHILD UPBRINGING IN IBADAN SOUTH-WEST LOCAL GOVERNMENT AREA, OYO STATE

Mufutau, R. A<sup>1\*</sup>, Banjo, O.K.<sup>2</sup>, Odewumi D.O.<sup>2</sup>, Adewunmi, R. D<sup>3</sup>, Ikpomwen, K. K<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Dept. of Agricultural Extension and Rural Sociology, Olabisi Onabanjo University, Ago-Iwoye, Nigeria.

<sup>2</sup>Federal College of Agriculture, Moore Plantation, Ibadan, Oyo State

<sup>3</sup>National Institute for Hospitality and Tourism, Lagos State.

\*Email: [rafiuadeniyi60@gmail.com](mailto:rafiuadeniyi60@gmail.com); +2348039431998

### ABSTRACT

*The study assessed implication of family instability on child upbringing in Ibadan South West Local Government Area, Oyo State. Simple random sampling technique was used to select 60 respondents for the study. Structured questionnaire was used to collect data which were analyzed using descriptive statistical tools such as frequency distribution, percentages and mean while Chi-square was used to test the hypothesis at  $p \leq 0.05$  level of significance. Results revealed that majority (56.7%) of the respondents were female, 88.3% were within  $\leq 50$  years of age, majority (80.0%) of the respondents were married with 75.0% within household size category of 1-5 members. Causes of family instability were lack of unity (93.5%), lack of good communication (91.7%), and financial constraints (86.7%) among others. Also, child trafficking ( $\bar{x}=2.75$ ), waywardness ( $\bar{x}=2.68$ ), lack of home training and good behaviour ( $\bar{x}=2.63$ ), deviant behaviour ( $\bar{x}=2.62$ ) were some of effects of family instability ranked in that order. Test of hypothesis indicated a significant relationship between family instability and mother-in-law interference ( $\chi^2=27.787$ ), lack of good communication ( $\chi^2=26.182$ ), lack of unity ( $\chi^2=6.429$ ;  $p > 0.05$ ) and financial constraints ( $\chi^2=10.288$ ;  $p > 0.05$ ). Conclusively, financial problem, lack of unity and poor communication were instrumental to unstable family. It was therefore recommended that there is need for provision of financial opportunities, efficient and effective communication to combat instability among family members.*

**Keywords:** *Family instability, implication and child upbringing.*

### INTRODUCTION

A family is a social group consisting of two parents and their children living together as a unit (Fabrizio *et. al*, 2013; Kristin, Margaret, Michael, Julie, & Lawrence, 2018). It is an institution that protects, covers, shield and nurture its members. Family members are important to each other and offer each other love and support (Amato & Boyd, 2014). The family protects its members from external attack, by providing food, clothes, shelter and care. The young ones grow to trust the family as a place of peace and comfort, sharing their problem with the family member to expose each other's secret. Family as a social group suffers instability (Lee & McLanahan, 2015), a situation whereby the family knows no peace, has poor structure (Kristin *et. al*, 2018) and organization, emotional separation of members (Kreidl, Stípková & Hubatková, 2017) and poor relationship (Kalmijn, 2015).

Children upbringing centers on rearing of children, especially the care, love and guidance given by parents. It is also the process of promoting and supporting the physical, emotional, social

(Bernardi & Radl 2014) and intellectual development of a child from infancy to adulthood (Vanassche *et al.*, 2014; Bergström *et. al.*, 2015). Child upbringing refers to the intricacies of raising a child and not exclusively to the biological relationship. The most common caretaker in child upbringing is the biological parent(s) of the child in question, although others may be an older sibling, a grandparent, a legal guardian, aunt, uncle or other family members.

As explained by Bastaits, Ponnet & Mortelmans (2012), family instability is a significant risk factor for children's cognitive, behavioral and emotional development often because it undermines effective parenting practices and parental functioning economically. Disadvantaged families are particularly likely to experience family instability (Juho, Fabrizio, & Diederik, 2017).

The causes of family instability depends on the type of family each spouse is born into, in this case negative family pressures might quicken the breakdown of the family (Härkönen, 2014). The ethnic barrier might also make the parents call for an end to the relationship of the family. It should be understood that these factors are common in Nigeria because of its multi-ethnic composition. Since we have different ethnic groups, people from Eastern region found it difficult to propose marriage to people from Northern Nigeria or West. This kind of marriage when proposed could be terminated by both parents because of distance, differences in language and dressing code.

Another cause of family instability is interference of extended family. Marriage is an exclusive association of two people, and that if the men and women who marry do not disengage themselves from their parents; they will invariably fall into divorce (Amato & Anthony, 2014; Gähler & Palmtag, 2015). Low income places strain on marriage especially on the husband; failure to live up to expected role lead to family instability. A husband who cannot provide for the need of the family (financial responsibility) might make his wife to engage in a promiscuous act.

The aim of marriage is procreation and without it, marriage is incomplete. Therefore childless marriages are bound to experience conflict and family instability (Jennifer, 2015). Any marriage without a child leads to family instability. Also, the age of marriage is an important factor when considering marriage instability. Also, Anima (2008) opined that people who get married in early age are emotionally immature and not in position to assume the responsibilities of the family. The consequences of family instability is that the absence of one parent makes it impossible for a single parent to be an adequate role model, therefore a child who is not given parental love, guidance and personal attention often develop problems that hinder the child's growth (Bernardi & Radl, 2014). The increase in divorce rates is one of the most visible changes in contemporary family life (Havermans, Botterman, & Matthijs, 2014). Several studies have reported how children living in divorced and other lone parent families tend to have lower levels of economic well-being (Magnuson & Berger, 2009; Fabrizio *et al.*, 2013) , and how the cross-national variation in these gaps is closely related to support from the welfare state. The increase of the new forms of instability calls for a deep analysis of the new phenomena in order to understand their causes and consequences (Bernardi & Radl, 2014). Instability and the breakdown of family and conjugal ties have relevant consequences on demographic, social and economic nature (Erola & Jalovaara, 2016) of the persons involved. There are negative consequences on the wellbeing of separated or

divorced partners as well as on their children, and the risks of poverty for women with children increase.

However, in recent time, it has been observed that family instability in Nigeria has increased especially in Ibadan South West Local Government Area Oyo State. This phenomenon has resulted into social problems as a result of social welfare intervention by government and private individuals. Children brought up in such homes encounter problems moving from mother to father in order to meet their needs and when they cannot cope with the situation they indulge in various social vices like truancy, robbery, stealing, smoking, drug trafficking, prostitution, cultism, and other social vices. This normally affects the society as a whole because family is the nucleus of the bedrock of the society. It is therefore pertinent to unravel the causes, effect and proffer informed solutions to family instability through the following research questions.

### RESEARCH QUESTIONS

- i. What are the socio-demographic characteristics of the respondents in the study area?
- ii. What are the causes of family instability among the respondents in the study area?
- iii. What are the effects of family instability on upbringing of children among the respondents in the study area?
- iv. What are the solutions to family instability among the respondents in the study area?

### OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The main objective of this study was to investigate the implication of family instability on child upbringing in Ibadan South West Local Government Area Oyo State. The Specific Objectives were to;

- i. describe the socio-demographics of the respondents in the study area;
- ii. identify the causes of family instability among the respondents in the study area;
- iii. determine the effects of family instability on child upbringing among the respondents in the study area and;
- iv. proffer solutions to family instability among the respondents in the study area.

### HYPOTHESIS OF THE STUDY

**H<sub>0</sub>:** There is no significant relationship between causes of family instability among respondents and effects of family instability on child upbringing

### The Study Area

Ibadan South West Local Government Area was carved out of the defunct Ibadan Municipal Government (IMG) in 1991. The Administrative Headquarter is located at Oluyole Estate. It covers a landmass of 133,500 square kilometres with a population density of 2,401 persons per square kilometre. The 2010 estimated population for the area was 320,536 people, using a growth rate of 3.2% from 2006 census. The Local Government Area is bounded by Ibadan North West and Ido Local Government Areas to the north, Oluyole Local Government in the south, Ido Local Government Area in west and Ibadan North and South East in the East. There are no serious farming activities in the area being an urban centre. Most of the agricultural products planted

outside the area are being processed in the Local Government Area. The Local Government Area is a home for small, medium and large scale industries. Majority of the large scale industries are located in the Oluyole Estate, Ibadan. Among them are Yale Foods Nigerian Limited, Caps Feed Nigerian Limited, Niger Hygiene, 7up Bottling Company etc. The Local Government area is dominated by the Yorubas and other tribes who engaged in different type of economic activities.

### **The Study Population**

The population of the study consists of households in Ibadan South West local Government of Oyo state.

### **Sampling Technique**

A simple random sampling technique was used to select 10 communities from Ibadan South West Local Government where 6 household members were randomly selected from each community making a total number of 60 respondents.

### **Instrument for Data Collection**

Primary data was utilized for this study. A well-structured questionnaire was developed in collaboration with co-researchers which was administered to the households in the study area. Reliability of the instrument was estimated by calculating Cronbach's alpha value for items in the research instrument. A reliability coefficient of 0.78 was obtained. This indicates that the instrument was good for research work.

### **Data Analysis**

Data for this study was analyzed using descriptive statistics such as frequency distribution, mean and percentage while chi-square was used to test the hypothesis. Objective 1-4 were analyzed using descriptive statistics such as frequency distribution, mean and percentage.

## **RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

### **Socio-demographic characteristics of the respondents**

Respondents' socio-demographic characteristics are as shown in Table I. The table showed that majority (56.7%) of the respondents was female while 43.3% were male. This implies female often bear the burden of family instability. The results on age distribution revealed that 36.0% of the respondents were within 31-40 years, 35.0% were within 41-50 years, 16.7% were within 21-30 years while 11.7% were above 50 years. This is an indication that most of the respondents were adults. The results further indicated that majority (80.0%) of the respondents were married, 13.3% were divorced, 5.0% were single while 1.7% of the respondents were widowed. This implies that there were more married folks in the study area. Majority (61.7%) of the respondents were Christians while 38.3% were Muslims. This implies that there were more Christians than Muslims. Majority (55.0%) of the respondents had tertiary education, 40.0% of them had secondary education while 5.0% had primary education. By implication, respondents in the study area were mostly literates. The table further showed that most (75.0%) of the respondents had 1-5 household members while 25.0% had 6-10 household members. This implies that respondents in the study area had small household size. The results showed that 55.0% of the respondents were traders, 38.3% were civil servants while 6.7% were farmers; this is an indication that major occupation in the study area was trading. Socio-demographic characteristics such as educational attainment, age

and issues like parental separation and social origin, dictate family stability (Bernardi & Radl, 2014).

**Table I: Socio-demographic characteristics of the respondents**

Variable	Frequency	Percentage	Mean
<b>Gender</b>			
Male	26	43.3	
Female	34	56.7	
<b>Age</b>			
21-30	10	16.7	39years
31-40	22	36.6	
41-50	21	35.0	
51 and above	7	11.7	
<b>Marital status</b>			
Single	3	5.0	
Married	48	80.0	
Divorced	8	13.3	
Widowed	1	1.7	
<b>Religion</b>			
Muslim	23	38.3	
Christianity	37	61.7	
<b>Educational status</b>			
Primary education	3	5.0	
Secondary education	24	40.0	
Tertiary	33	55.0	
<b>Household size</b>			
1-5	45	75.0	5
6-10	15	25.0	
<b>Occupation</b>			
Farming	4	6.7	
Trading	33	55.0	
Civil servant	23	38.3	

**Source: field survey, 2019**

### Causes of family instability

Major causes of family instability identified by the respondents were lack of unity (93.5%), lack of good communication (91.7%), financial constraints (86.7%), interference of mother-in-laws (85.0%) and constant disagreement (80.0%) among others.

This is an indication that the major causes of family instability in the study area were lack of unity, good communication, financial constraints, mother-in-law interference and constant disagreement. This corroborates the study of Härkönen (2014) that lack of cooperation and unity among family members could trigger instability.

**Table II: Causes of family instability**

Items	Yes	No
Financial Constraints	52(86.7)	8(13.3)
Religion Crisis	43(71.7)	17(28.3)
Lack of Unity	56(93.3)	14(6.7)
Constant Disagreement	48(80.0)	12(20.0)
Infidelity	40(66.7)	20(32.4)
Ethnic Crisis	38(63.3)	22(36.7)
Lack of courtship	43(71.7)	17(28.3)
Incompatibility	43(71.7)	17(28.3)
Age difference	25(41.7)	35(58.3)
Low level of educational attainment	29(48.3)	31(51.7)
Childlessness and infertility	40(66.7)	20(33.3)
Sickle cell disease	35(58.3)	25(41.7)
Mother in-law interferences	51(85.0)	9(15.0)
Lack of good communication	55(91.7)	5(8.3)

**Source: Field survey, 2019**

### Effect of family instability on child upbringing

As shown in Table III, “children from unstable families can be used for child trafficking” ( $\bar{x}=2.75$ ) had the highest mean and was therefore ranked first. Also, “children become naughty and wayward” ( $\bar{x}=2.68$ ) was ranked second, “children lack home training and good behaviour” ( $\bar{x}=2.63$ ) was ranked third, children tend to be deviant ( $\bar{x}=2.62$ ) was ranked fourth, “children from unstable family tend to be aggressive in nature” ( $\bar{x}=2.60$ ) was ranked fifth, “children from unstable family lack good education” ( $\bar{x}=2.58$ ) was ranked sixth, “children tend to suffer economic hardship” ( $\bar{x}=2.27$ ) was ranked seventh while “children tend to end up as house girl/boy” ( $\bar{x}=2.08$ ) had the least mean and was therefore ranked eighth. This is an indication that children affected by family instability can be used for child trafficking, can become naughty and wayward, they lack home training and good behaviour and also tend to be deviant. This further implies that family instability have negative and destructive effect on affected children. As explained by Gähler and Palmtag (2015), Amato and Boyd (2014), and McLanahan, Tach & Schneider (2013), parental divorce, psychological problems were offshoots of unstable families.

**Table III: Effect of family instability on child upbringing**

Items	High	Low	Not at all	Mean	Rank
Children from unstable families can be used for child trafficking	46(76.7)	12(20.0)	2(3.3)	2.73	1
Children become naughty and wayward	43(71.7)	15(25.0)	2(3.3)	2.68	2
Children from unstable families tend to be deviant	40(66.7)	17(28.3)	3(5.0)	2.62	4
Children from unstable families tend be aggressive in nature	39(65.0)	18(30.0)	3(5.0)	2.60	5
Children tend to end up as house girl	22(36.7)	21(35.0)	17(28.3)	2.08	8
Children tend to suffer economic hardship	26(43.3)	24(40.0)	10(16.7)	2.27	7
Children from instability family tend to lack good education	38(63.3)	19(31.7)	3(5.0)	2.58	6
Children lack home training and good behavior	40(66.7)	18(30.0)	2(3.3)	2.63	3

**Source: field survey, 2019**

### Solution to family instability

Majority (98.3%) of the respondents agreed that good communication is a solution to family instability, 93.3% agreed that good understanding is a solution to marital instability, 90.0% agreed that mutual respect for each other is a solution to marital instability, 88.3% agreed that proper marriage counseling is a solution to family instability, 81.7% agreed that good background of both partner is a solution to family instability, 81.7% also agreed that adequate finance is a solution to family instability, 75.0% agreed that short time of courtship is a solution to family instability while 61.7% were of the opinion that good health status is a solution to family instability (Table IV)

**Table IV: Solution to family instability**

Items	Yes	No
Proper marriage counseling	53(88.3)	7(11.7)
Adequate finance	49(81.7)	11(18.3)
Good communication	59(98.3)	1(1.7)
Good understanding	56(93.3)	4(6.7)
Short time courtship	27(45.0)	33(55.0)
Mutual respect for each other	54(90.0)	6(10.0)
Good health status	37(61.7)	23(38.3)
Good background of both partner	49(81.7)	11(18.3)

**Source: field survey, 2019**

### Relationship between the causes of family instability and its effect on child upbringing.

Chi-square analysis of the relationship between causes and effect of family instability on child upbringing is as shown in Table V. From the table, there was significant relationship between effect of family instability on child upbringing and mother in-law interferences ( $\chi^2=27.787$ ;  $p\leq 0.05$ ), lack of good communication ( $\chi^2=26.182$ ;  $p\leq 0.05$ ), lack of unity ( $\chi^2=6.429$ ;  $p>0.05$ ) and financial constraints ( $\chi^2=10.288$ ;  $p>0.05$ ). However, religion crisis ( $\chi^2=12.797$ ;  $p>0.05$ ), constant disagreement ( $\chi^2=11.801$ ;  $p>0.05$ ), infidelity ( $\chi^2=17.449$ ;  $p>0.05$ ), ethnic crisis ( $\chi^2=11.446$ ;  $p>0.05$ ), lack of courtship ( $\chi^2=18.672$ ;  $p>0.05$ ), incompatibility ( $\chi^2=9.599$ ;  $p>0.05$ ), age difference ( $\chi^2=14.488$ ;  $p>0.05$ ), academic qualification, exposure and literacy ( $\chi^2=12.032$ ;  $p>0.05$ ), childlessness and infertility ( $\chi^2=18.118$ ;  $p>0.05$ ) and sickle cell disease ( $\chi^2=18.717$ ;  $p>0.05$ ) were not significant. Mother-in-law interference, lack of good communication, lack of unity and financial constraints significantly influenced family instability. This corroborated the study of Härkönen (2014) and Westphal, Poortman & Van der Lippe (2015) that unstable family had trends, patterns, causes, and consequences.

**Table V: Chi-square analysis showing the relationship between the causes of family instability and its effect on child upbringing**

Items	Chi square values	Df	p-value	Decision
Financial Constraints	10.288	12	0.050	S
Religion Crisis	12.797	12	0.384	NS
Lack of Unity	6.429	12	0.008	S
Constant Disagree	11.801	12	0.462	NS
Infidelity	17.449	12	0.133	NS
Ethnic Crisis	11.446	12	0.491	NS
Lack of courtship	18.672	12	0.097	NS
Incompatibility	9.599	12	0.651	NS
Age difference	14.488	12	0.271	NS
Academic qualification, exposure and literacy	12.032	12	0.443	NS
Childlessness and infertility	18.118	12	0.112	NS
Sickle cell disease	18.717	12	0.096	NS
Mother in-law interferences	27.787	12	0.006	S
Lack of good communication	26.182	12	0.010	S

**Source: field survey, 2019 NS=Not significant and S= Significant @ $p \leq 0.05$**

## CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

### Conclusion

In conclusion, family instability can negatively influence children upbringing leading to child trafficking, waywardness and naughtiness, poor home training and bad behaviour among the children. Good communication and understanding, mutual respect for each other and proper marriage counseling can mitigate/reduce the effects of family instability on children upbringing. Finally, financial constraints, disunity, mother-in-law interference and poor communication in the family significantly influence child upbringing.

### Recommendations

From the findings of this study, the following recommendations are made:

- i. The family should be financially secured with good jobs in order to provide for their households. This will reduce increasing rate of family instability and disunity among married couples;
- ii. Effective and efficient communication must be pursued vigorously among couples. This will enable them to understand, prevent constant disagreement which usually threatens peaceful family and;
- iii. Undue influence or interference from mother-in-laws should be avoided. This will reduce cases of family instability and promote good child upbringing.

**REFERENCES**

- Amato, P. R., & Anthony, C. J. (2014). Estimating the effects of parental divorce and death with fixed effects models. *Journal of Marriage and Family*, 76(2), 370–386.
- Amato, P. R. & Boyd, L. M. (2014). Children and divorce in world perspective. In A. Abela and J. Walker (Eds.), *Contemporary issues in family studies: Global perspectives on partnerships, parenting and support in a changing world* (pp. 227–243). Chichester: Wiley.
- Anima, R. N. (2008). Marital Instability and its Impact on Women and Children of Bangladesh. Shahid Sharawardi College Laxmibazar, Dhaka, Bangladesh.p31.
- Bastaitis, K., Ponnet, K., & Mortelmans, D. (2012). Parenting of divorced fathers and the association with children's self-esteem. *Journal of Youth and Adolescence*, 41(12), 1643–1656.
- Bernardi, F. & Radl, J. (2014). Parental separation, social origin, and educational attainment: The long-term consequences of divorce for children. *Demographic Research*, 30, 1653–1680.
- Erola, J., & Jalovaara, M. (2016). The replaceable: The inheritance of paternal and maternal socioeconomic statuses in non-standard families. *Social Forces*, 95(3), 971–995.
- Fabrizio B, Juho H., Diederik B., Linus A., Rydell, K. & Dimitri, M. (2013): Effects of family forms and dynamics on children's well-being and life chances: literature review. A project funded by European Union's Seventh Framework Programme under grant agreement no. 320116. p4
- Gähler, M., & Palmtag, E. L. (2015). Parental divorce, psychological well-being and educational attainment: Changed experience, unchanged effect among Swedes born 1892–1991. *Social Indicators Research*, 123(2), 601–623.
- Härkönen, J. (2014). Divorce: Trends, patterns, causes, consequences. In J. K. Treas, J. Scott, and M. Richards (Eds.), *The Wiley-Blackwell companion to the sociology of families* (pp. 303–322). Chichester: Wiley.
- Havermans, N., Botterman, S. & Matthijs, K. (2014). Family resources as mediators in the relation between divorce and children's school engagement. *The Social Science Journal*, 51(4), 564–579.
- Jennifer, B. K (2015) Marriage Advantages in Perinatal Health: Evidence of Marriage Selection or Marriage Protection. *Journal of Marriage and Family*. 78(1): 212-229
- Juho, H., Fabrizio, B., & Diederik, B. (2017). Family Dynamics and Child Outcomes: An Overview of Research and Open Questions. *European Journal of Population*, 33(2), 163–184.
- Kalmijn, M. (2015). How childhood circumstances moderate the long-term impact of divorce on father-child relationships. *Journal of Marriage and Family*, 77(4), 921–938.
- Kreidl, M., Stípková, M., & Hubatková, B. (2017). Parental separation and children's education in a comparative perspective: Does the burden disappear when separation is more common? *Demographic Research*, 36, 73–110.

- Kristin, H., Margaret, A., Michael, U., Julie, G., & Lawrence, G. (2018): Do Changes to Family Structure Affect Child and Family Outcomes? A Systematic Review of the Instability Hypothesis. *Journal of Family Theory and Review*, 10(1), 87-110.
- Lee, D., & McLanahan, S. (2015). Family structure transitions and child development: Instability, selection, and population heterogeneity. *American Sociological Review*, 80(4), 738–763.
- Magnuson, K., & Berger, L. M. (2009). Family structure states and transitions: Associations with children’s well-being during middle childhood. *Journal of Marriage and Family*, 71(3), 575–591.
- McLanahan, S., Tach, L., & Schneider, D. (2013). The causal effects of father absence. *Annual Review of Sociology*, 39, 399–427.
- Vanassche, S., Sodermans, A. K., Matthijs, K., & Swicegood, G. (2014). Commuting between two parental households: The association between joint physical custody and adolescent well-being following divorce. *Journal of Family Studies*, 19(2), 139–158.
- Westphal, S. K., Poortman, A. R., & Van der Lippe, T. (2015). What about the grandparents? Children’s post-divorce residence arrangements and contact with grandparents. *Journal of Marriage and Family*, 77(2), 424–440.