



Gombe Journal of Geography and Environmental Studies (GOJGES)

Vol. 2 N0.1 Jun. 2021

e-ISSN: 2714-321X

p-ISSN: 2714-3201

<http://www.gojgesjournal.com>



ANALYSIS OF SPATIAL VARIATION AND FACTORS INFLUENCING DIVORCE IN SELECTED LOCAL GOVERNMENT AREAS OF BENUE STATE, NIGERIA

¹EJEH, B., ²MAMMAN, M., ³YUSUF, R.O., ⁴ARIGBEDE, Y.A. and ⁵BELLO, A.O.

¹⁻⁴Department of Geography and Environmental Management, Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria, Kaduna State, Nigeria.

⁵Department of Geography, Federal College of Education, Zaria, Kaduna State, Nigeria

*Corresponding Author's Email: findbenejehnear82@gmail.com

Abstract

The increase in the incidence of divorce is an emerging phenomenon all over the world including Nigeria and Benue State in particular and this varies over space. The study analyzed the spatial variation and the factors influencing divorce in selected LGAs of Benue State Nigeria. Data for this study were obtained through questionnaire and focus group discussion, interview and personal observation. Purposive sampling method was used to select six Local Government Areas, while 386 households were chosen as sample size. Descriptive statistics such as frequency, percentages, mean score were used for the analysis. Result from the finding indicates about 82% awareness of the increase in the incidence of divorce in the study area. The spatial variation shows that the incidence is more in Otukpo (34%) and less in Tarka (3%) than other LGAs. It is established that economic factors (4.01) influences the increase in the incidence of divorce than other factors. Prominent among them is infidelity and poor communication while differences in denomination contribute less. Based on the findings, it is therefore recommended that government should pass a legislation that ensure pre-marital counseling is mandatory for couple entering into marital union for the first time to curb the increase in the incidence of divorce, there is need for sensitization of people on the effects of divorce on children and women who most vulnerable.

Key words: Analysis, Benue, Divorce, Factors, Spatial variation

1. Introduction

Marriage according to Gove (2006) is the state of being united with a person of the opposite sex as husband or wife for the purpose of companionship, procreation and maintaining a family. Marriage and family life have undergone major changes globally including Nigeria in general and Benue State in particular. In addition Haskey (1997) opined that the contemporary society has become more dynamic in structure and prone to changes. One of the prominent of these changes is the increase in the incidence of divorce.

Divorce can be defined as the legal dissolution of a socially and legally recognized marital

relationship that alters the obligations and privileges of the two persons involved (Eyo, 2016). Globally, the incidence of divorce has witnessed an increase rapidly. As reported by Aghajanian and Thompson (2013); Elena (2018), there is approximately 12% in 1960 to 16% in 1970. These continue to increase from 26% in 1980 to 28% in 1990 and surged further to 35%, 41% and 44% in 2000, 2010 and 2017. Spatially, this increase is about 87% in Luxembourg, 65% in Spain, 55% in France, 51% in Russia, 46% in United States, 44% in Germany, 42% in United Kingdom, 42% in New Zealand, 38% in Australia and Canada



while other countries recorded low rates such as 1% in India, 3% in Chile, 9% in Columbia, 15% in Mexico, 21% in Brazil and 22% in Turkey and Iran respectively.

In some developing countries of Africa such as Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Kenya, Tanzania, Uganda and Zimbabwe divorce has remained remarkably constant over the last 20 years with 10%. In Liberia, Malawi, Namibia, Senegal, Togo and Zambia, there is a substantial variation in the risk of divorce within the first 20 years of marriage, with a reported statistic of about 47% (Elena, 2018). Most marriages and divorces in Sub-Saharan Africa are not officially registered. For that reason, researchers cannot rely on vital statistical data to compute the divorce rate, which is the typical method used in US and Canada.

Nigeria like other parts of the have witnessed and still experiencing similar increase in the incidence of divorce. For instance, Nigeria recorded 1.0% of divorce rate in 2004 which increase to 9.9% in 2005 and declined sharply to 0.9 and 0.7 in 2006 and 2007 (National Bureau of Statistics, 2009). Benue State is not in exception from this increase as other parts of the country over time. For instance, the State had a divorce rate of 0.9 in 2004 which increase to 9.2 in 2005 and declined sharply to 1.9 and 1.7 in 2006 and 2007 (National Bureau of Statistics, 2009). There is no doubt this increase varies over space. Factors such as infidelity, abuse, alcohol addiction, abandonment, unemployment, financial problems, lack of communication, lack of commitment, differences in personal and career goals among other have been cited to influence the incidence of divorce (Ezeh, 2000; Kumuyi, 2004; Prem Singh and Philip, 2014). The increase in the incidence of divorce has implication on the individual member of the

family and society at large. For instance, Hester and Patford (1997) and Wilson (2002) reported that, parental divorce increases children vulnerability to physical and sexual abuse. Given the fact that the incidence of divorce is a global phenomenon, many authors have contributed to the discussion from across the world. A few of them are examined to establish the research gap;

Adegoke (2010) assessed the socio-cultural factors as determinants of divorce rates among women of reproductive age in Ibadan using questionnaire and inferential statistics. The objectives of the study were to: examine the socio-cultural factors influencing divorce rate, influence of education, religion on divorce, strategies for reducing the rate of divorce. The result shows a significant relationship between the socio-cultural factors on divorce rate. Two strategies were identified such as encouragement of couples to participate in premarital education before marriage, secondly the need to strengthen marriage by reforming divorce laws to make divorce harder. The study however, failed to consider other factors such as demographic and economic that could lead to divorce and used only women of the reproductive ages as its target population while this study focused on the household heads which is made up of men and women in Benue State.

Asa and Nkan (2017) used descriptive and inferential statistics to examine the factors associated with marital instability in Akwa Ibom, Nigeria. The objectives of the studies were to: assess the nature of marital instability among married couples, examine the factors responsible for marital instability. The findings reveal that, age differences, age of marriage, religious difference are the major socio-cultural factors responsible for divorce. Lack of confidence, desertion, alcohol addiction,



substance abuse, non-cooperating attitude and lack of trust are the major psychological causes of divorce, while financial problem, joblessness and poverty are the major economic factors responsible for divorce. The study is limited to rural farming households. The present study focused on both urban and rural household heads.

Otanwa (2018) in Benue State used descriptive statistics and factor analysis assessed the factors responsible for divorce. The objectives of the studies were to: assess the causes of divorce in Makurdi Local Government, examine the trend of divorce, examine the effects of divorce on households and offspring of divorcees. According to the findings, infidelity, nagging and wife beating are the major factors responsible for divorce. Though the study is insightful yet, it was limited to Makurdi metropolis which cannot be used for the entire Benue. Secondly, the study was not concerned about the spatial variation of divorce. This study focused on six Local Governments representing the three senatorial zones in the state.

Mekonnen, Kass and Ayelewb (2019) in Ethiopia used semi-structure interview and

descriptive statistics examine the prevalence, causes and consequences of divorce. The objectives of the studies were to: assess the prevalence of divorce, examine the causes and consequences of divorce. The findings of the study show that lack of communication, spouse engagement in extra marital affairs and family interference are the major social factors responsible for divorce while sexual incompatibility, distrust, drug addiction were the major psychological factors of divorce. However the study was silent on the economic factors. Despite the afore studies from various authors much about the spatial variation of the incidence of divorce remains fairly unknown in Benue State. This creates a gap in knowledge which this study fills. This study therefore analysed the spatial variation and the factors influencing divorce in six selected Local Government areas of Benue State, Nigeria. The objectives of the study include:

- i. assess the level of awareness of the increase in divorce in the study area;
- ii. examine the spatial variation of divorce rate in the study area;
- iii. examine the factor influencing the increase in the incidence of divorce in the study area;

2. Theoretical Framework of the Study

This study is anchored on one theory: Social Exchange Theory

Social Exchange Theory: The theory was developed by George Homans (1961) who posited that human beings will create and maintain relationship if they believe that rewards they derive from such relationships will exceed costs. Homans developed five general propositions concerning social behaviour and the exchange of resources. Three of these propositions reflect the behavioural Psychologists model. These include:

- a. For all action taken by persons, the more often a particular action is rewarded, the more likely the person is to perform such action
- b. If in the past the occurrence of particular stimulus, or set of stimuli, has been the occasion on which a person's action has been rewarded, and the more similar the present stimuli, have been are to the past ones the more likely the person the action or some similar action then.
- c. When a person's action does not receive the reward they expected, or receives punishment he did not expect, he/she will be angry and becomes likely to perform aggressive behavior.

d. The greater the profit a person receives as a result of his action; the more likely he is to perform the action.

e. The more often in the recent past a person has received particular rewards the less valuable any further unit of that reward becomes for him. Although, Homans refers to individuals' interactional inputs and outcomes as costs, investments, rewards and profits. The weakness of the theory is that, it laid more emphasis on the

social factors leaving the other factors such as the economic aspects. While Homans has gone a long way to provide powerful prepositions to explain why an individual takes one course of action or maintains some relationships while dissolving others, he does provide explanation of what constitutes a benefit to an individual and a cost to another. The theory was used to explain the factors influencing the incidence of divorce.

3. Materials and Methods

3.1 Study Area

Benue State lies within the lower river Benue trough in the middle belt region of Nigeria. It lies between Latitude $6^{\circ} 30'$ to $8^{\circ} 0' 0''$ N of the

equator and longitude $7^{\circ} 30'$ to $10^{\circ} 0' E$ of the Greenwich meridian (see figure 1).

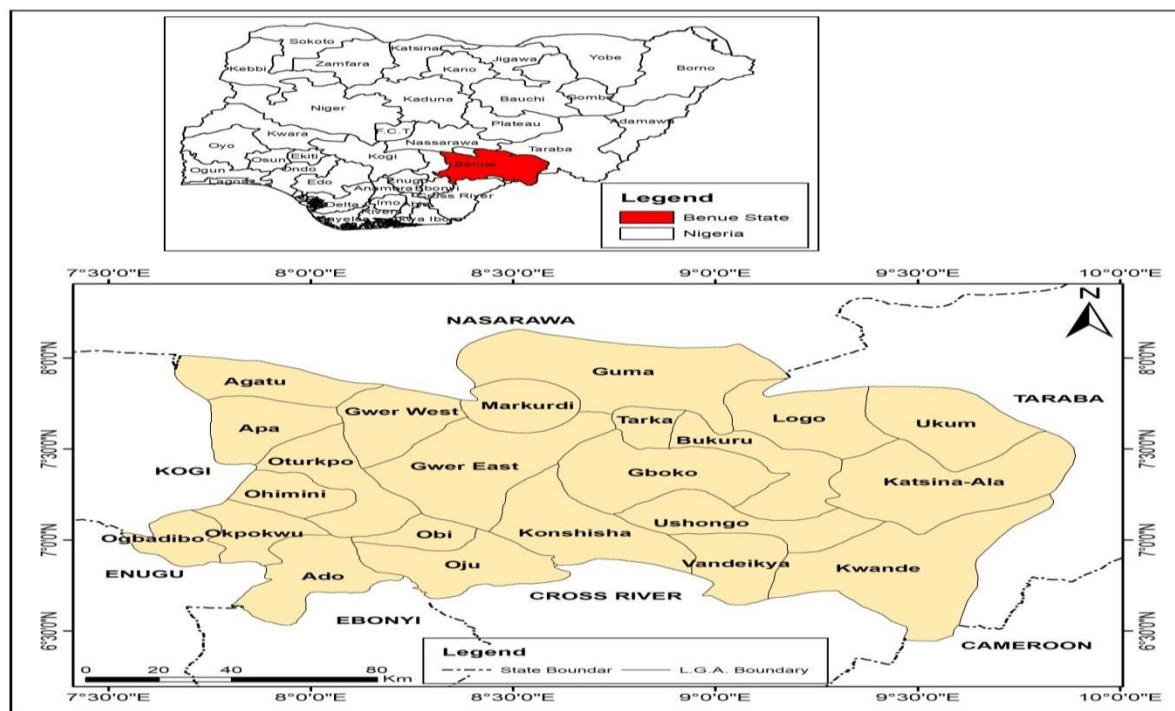


Figure 1: Map of Benue State

Source: Adapted from Administrative Map of Nigeria (2019)



Benue State shares boundaries with other States like Nassarawa to the north, Taraba to the east, Cross-River to the south, Enugu to the south-west and Kogi to the west. The state also shares a common boundary with the Republic of Cameroun on the south-east with a landmass of 32,518 square kilometer (Ujoh and Alhassan, 2014). The State has a total population of 6, 427, 991 as projected in 2019 making it the 7th most populous State in Nigeria having about 51% and 49% population of males and females. However, the distribution of the population according to Local Government Areas shows marked duality. There are areas of low population density such as Guma, Gwer, Ohimini, Katsina Ala, Apa, Logo and Agatu, each with less than 120 persons per sq. km. while Vandeikya, Okpokwu, Ogbadibo, Obi and Gboko have densities ranging from 200 persons to 260 persons per sq. km (NPC, 2006).

Makurdi LGA with its restricted coverage around the town has over 400 person per sq. km. Benue State comprises of several ethnic groups which are Tiv, Idoma, Igede, Etulo, Abakpa, Jukun, Akweya and Nyofon, Igbos, Yorubas, Hausa among others. The Tiv are the dominant ethnic group, occupying fourteen Local Government Areas, while the Idoma and Igede occupy the remaining nine Local Government Areas. The people of the State are famous for their cheerful and hospital dispositions as well as rich cultural heritage (NPC, 2006 and Ujoh, 2014). This cultural heritage support early marriage and large family structure.

Agriculture forms the backbone of the Benue State economy, engaging more than 70

percent of the working population. Bush fallow using simple tools is the dominant system though mechanization and plantation agriculture/agro-forestry are gradually becoming popular. Use of farm inputs such as fertilizers, improved seed, insecticides and herbicides is increasingly encouraged through the activities of the Ministry of Agriculture, BNARDA and the National Agricultural Land Development Authority

(NALDA). Benue state is acclaimed the nation's "food basket" because of its rich and diverse agricultural produce which include yam, rice, beans, cassava, potatoes, maize, Soya beans, sorghum, millet and coco-yam. The state also accounts for over 70 percent of Nigeria's Soya beans production (Ujoh and Alhassan, 2014). There has been a gradual shift from a grain and root crop economy to a tree economy in much of the State. It also boasts of one of the longest stretches of river systems in the country with great potential for a viable fishing industry, dry season farming through irrigation and for an inland water way. Basically, all crop farmers in the State raise at least one form of livestock to supplement income from crop farming. There are few commercial farms in existence and the most common livestock kept are pigs, goats and poultry. Breeds of animal kept are predominantly local and the system of husbandry practiced ranges from free range to semi-intensive. Agriculture being the main occupation of the people could lead to early and hence the increase in the incidence of divorce (Benue State Ministry of Information and Orientation, 2012).



3.2. Methods

3.2.1 Data collection

Field survey design was used for the study. The design employed sampled population of household heads from where the data was collected to answer the research questions. Tools used in data collection include questionnaire was complimented with Focus Group Discussion (FGDs) as well as In-depth interview (IDI). One Focus Group Discussion (FGDs) were conducted in each of the selected LGAs making a total of six (6). The discussants consist of three (3) males and three (3) females to obtain information on the incidence of divorce in the study area over time. IDIs were conducted in each of the selected LGAs making a total of Six with community leaders, religious leaders, court

registrar and aged person (60 and above) either male or female. The types of data needed and sources of acquiring them were both primary and secondary. These include information on the demographic and socio-economic characteristics of respondents, level of awareness of the increase in divorce, factors influencing increase in divorce. Records of divorce cases from the selected L.GAs were obtained between 2000 and 2019 so as explain the spatial variation of divorce incidence in the study area. Benue State has comprises twenty-three (23) Local Government Areas which are grouped into three (3) senatorial zones.

Table 1: Distribution of sample size

Zones	Estimated households	Number of Respondents
Benue North-East		
Kwande	60, 005	79
Logo	45, 128	55
Benue North-West		
Gkoko	96, 160	116
Tarka	20, 301	26
Benue South		
Ohimini	18, 264	24
Otukpo	70, 901	86
Total	310, 759	386

Source: Field Survey, 2019

In order to arrive at the estimated number of households, Nigeria average house size of six (6) persons per household was used to divide the projected population in each of the Local Government Areas (LGAs). This gave a total of 1, 114, 412 number of households in Benue State. However, a total of three hundred and seventeen thousand four hundred and seventy-four

(317, 474) households in the selected LGAs was used as the study population. To determine the sample size, Yamane (1967) method for determining sample size was used. A total of 386 households were used as sample size. Using the exponential formula, the 2006 population census was projected to 2019. The projection of selected LGAs was based on



the Benue State Population growth rate of 3.6%.

3.2.2 National Population Commission, 2009

After grouping the Local Government Areas (LGAs) according to the three (3) senatorial zones, two LGAs were purposively selected from each senatorial zone making a total of six (6) Local Government Areas (LGAs). From the selected two LGAs, one with the highest and lowest estimated households were purposively selected from each of the

Northeast, Northwest and southern Senatorial zones. This is to enhance equal representation from each senatorial zone. The household at ward level in each of the selected LGAs served as a unit of observation. After arranging the wards in each of the selected LGAs alphabetically, systematic sampling was used to select the second, fourth ward in that order. .

Table 2: Wards in the selected Local Government in the study Area

Wards in Gboko LGA

Gboko central	Mbaavarakaa	Mbatser
Gboko East *	Mbadam *	Mbatyu *
Gboko Norh west	Mbadim	Ukpekpe
Gboko South *	Mbakper *	Yandev North *
Igyorov	Mbakwen	Yandev South
Mbaanku *	Mbatan *	

Wards in Kwande LGA

Adikpo metropolis	Mbaketsa	Yaaav
Lieve i *	Menev *	Moon *
Lieve ii	Tondov i	Kumakwagh
Mbadura *	Tondov ii *	
Mbagba/mbaikyan	Usar	
Mbaikyor *	Mbayoo *	

Wards in Logo LGA

Mbadyul	Mbavuum	Ukembergya/tswarv
Mbagber *	Nenzev *	Yonov *
Mbater	Tombo	
Mbayam*	Turan *	

Wards in Ohimini LGA

Agadagba	Idepka	Onyagede-ehaje
Awume-ehaje *	Ochobo *	Onyagede-icho *
Awume-icho	Oglewo-ehaje	Onyagede-icho
Ehatokpe *	Oglewo-icho *	

Wards in Otukpo LGA

Adoka-icho	Ewulo	Otukpo town Eest
Adoka-ehaje *	Ekete *	Otukpo town West*
Allan	Otobi	Ugboju ehaje
Entekpa *	Otukpo town central *	Ugboju icho *

Wards in Tarka LGA

Mbaajirakaa	Mbaigba *	Mbanyagber
Mbaayo *	Mbaikyo/mbayia	Shitile *
Mbachaverikyondo	Mba kwakem *	Tongov

Source: Field Survey, 2019 *Selected wards

What informed this method was the uneven distribution of the number of wards in each of the selected LGAs. Convenience sampling

method was used to select a household in each of the selected wards for questionnaire administration. The head of each household



was chosen as the respondent and where he/she is not available; the eldest adult person was selected to represent the household. This was done until the required sample size is got. One copy of questionnaire was administered per household to allow full participation of other

households especially in urban areas where there are multiple tenants. This was done with the help of field assistants. Data were analysed using descriptive statistics such as frequencies, table, bar graph.

4. Results and Discussion

4.1 Demographic and socio-economic characteristics of respondents

Table 3 presents the demographic and socio-economic characteristics of the respondents.

Table 3: Sex, Age, Marital status, occupation and monthly incomes of the Respondents

Sex	Frequency	Percentage
Male	240	62.2
Female	146	37.8
Age group (years)		
35-39	9	2.3
40-44	22	5.7
45-49	41	10.6
50-54	101	26.2
55-59	65	16.8
60-64	71	18.4
65 and above	77	19.9
Marital Status		
Single	33	8.5
Married	237	61.5
Widow	41	10.6
Divorce	49	12.6
Separated	26	6.7
Occupation		
Civil service	88	22.8
Farming	212	54.9
Pettytrading/business	62	16.1
Artisan	10	2.6
Student	8	2.1
Housewife	6	1.6
Monthly income		
No fixed income	131	33.9
₦5000- ₦10,000	42	10.9
₦10,000- ₦15,000	37	9.6
₦15,000- ₦20,000	45	11.7
₦20,000- ₦25,000	22	5.7
₦25,000- ₦30,000	6	1.6



₦30,000- ₦35,000	13	3.4
₦35,000- ₦40,000	26	6.7
₦40,000 and above	64	16.6

Source: Field Survey (2019)

Table 3 reveals that about 62% of the household heads were males while 38% were females. This is in tandem with the fact that, the households in Benue State like other traditional African societies are male-headed dominated. This is in consonance with similar studies on households by Osezua 2009; Ogwuche and Asoba 2013; Aboajah, Andrew, Chia and Okeme 2018 which reported in Benue State 78% and 23%, 69% and 31%, 71% and 29% male-head dominated. The age distribution of respondents in Table indicates the dominance

Result of occupation of the respondents reveals that 55% farmers while others were in civil service, artisan and housewife. This is in consonance with the study by Ejeh (2016) and Aboajah *et al* (2018) where 55% and 97% of the respondents were farmers. The income distribution of respondents reveals that about 34% have no fixed income. This could be nature of occupation engage in. About 32% earned monthly income between ₦5,000- ₦20,000. Only about 28.2% of the respondents earned monthly income above the national minimum wage of N30, 000

4.2 Education, ethnicity and Religion of Respondents

Table 4 shows about 82% of respondents had formal education while 18% had no formal education. The ethnic composition shows that Tiv (52.8%) are the major ethnic group

of 50 years and above which accounts for 81%. The findings is similar with Attah, Mbah and Okeke (2018) and Aboajah, Onjewu, Chia and Ocheme (2018) which reported age bracket 50 years and above in Benue State. The table also the marital status and the result reveals that majority of the respondents (62%) were married. The finding is in tandem with other studies in Benue State by Osezua (2009); Okeke, Ihenacho and Obasi (2015); Upev, Haruna and Giroh (2016) where 77.5% 69.2% 82.5% of the respondents were married accordingly.

(thirty thousand Naira) as obtainable in Nigeria. This suggests that most of the sampled population were low-income earners, which is very much related to the kind of socio-economic activities engaged in. Secondly, it could be attributed to the high number of respondents with primary education as highest qualification which can influence their opportunities to be gainfully employed in high income jobs. However, the study disagrees with Ogwuche and Asoba (2013) where majority of the household heads earn monthly income between 51,000 and 100,000 per month in Benue State.

followed by Idomas with 24%. This is in conformity with the work of Otanwa (2018) where Tiv and Idoma constitute the majority of the ethnic groups in Benue State. The religion of respondents show about 95% practice Christianity while 5% are traditional

and Muslims. In confirmation of the findings, Ejeh (2016) and Otanwa (2017) in their study reported Christian religion as the dominant

religion with few Muslim and traditional worshippers in Benue State.

Table 4: Level of Education, ethnicity and Religion of Respondents

Highest Educational Level	Frequency	Percentage
No formal education	68	17.6
Primary	146	37.8
Secondary	98	25.4
Post-secondary	74	19.8
Ethnic Group		
Idoma	93	24.1
Tiv	204	52.8
Igbo	34	8.8
Igede	40	10.4
Yoruba	5	1.3
Hausa	10	2.6
Religion		
Islam	12	3.1
Christianity	368	95.3
Traditional	6	1.6

Source: Field Survey, 2019

4.3 Awareness of the increase in the incidence of divorce in Benue State

To determine the awareness of the increase in the incidence of divorce in the study area, the

respondents were asked on their knowledge of the increase in the incidence of divorce in their community from year 2000 to 2019.

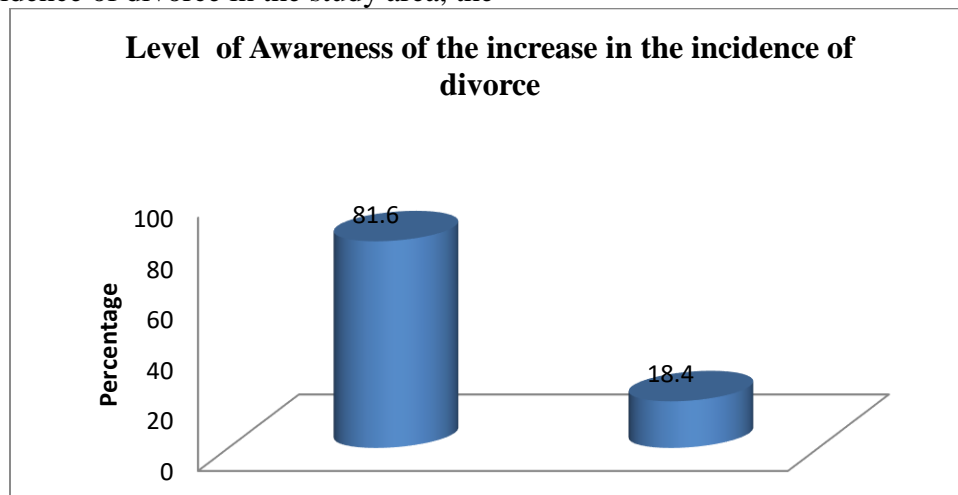


Figure 2 Respondents awareness of divorce
Source: Field Survey, 2019.



This is presented in Figure 4. The result shows that about 82% affirmed that there is an increase in the incidence of divorce. This is an indication that divorce is an increasing social phenomenon in the study area. The findings is in tandem with similar views by Mohammad (2014), and Bezuidenhout (2017) who both stated an increasing in the incidence of divorce in their studies. However, the findings differs from the study by Mezieobi and Ibekwe (2017)

4.4 Spatial Variation of Divorce cases in Benue State

The spatial variation of divorce cases is presented in Table 5. Result indicates that, the level of divorce is more observed in Otukpo (34%) and less in Tarka (3%) than other

in who reported that the increase in divorce and other transformation that the family is experiencing in developed and developing countries is non-existent in Nigeria Families. The reason for the difference between the present study and Mezieobi and Ibekwe is attributed to difference in data collection. The formal is based on assertion while the latter is a survey research.

LGAs. This suggests that more people are divorced in Otukpo when compared with other LGAs. Furthermore, there are more people that are adhering to marital vows and remain in marriage in Logo, Tarka than other LGA.

Table 5 Spatial variation of divorce in the selected LGAs

LGA	Number of cases	Percentage
Gboko	311	21.7
Kwande	175	12.3
Logo	90	6.2
Ohimini	339	23.6
Otukpo	482	33.6
Tarka	38	2.6
Total	1,435	100

Source: Author compilation, 2019.

This affirms the view of Ucan (2007) which reveals that the distribution pattern of divorce vary from place to place or culture to culture. Wajim and Harry (2020) added that upholding marital vows are apparently becoming unrealistic in the 21st Century as evident in the overwhelming rate in the number of single parent households caused by divorce. The increase in the cases of divorce could have implication on the family. Lauer (2002) reported that all family conflict which could result to divorce diminish the quality of life.

The high incidence of divorce in Otukpo than other LGAs could be attributed to its heterogeneity nature where people tend to get away from unpleasant marriage through legal means. Secondly, it could be attributed to people's accessibility to courts. This is because, almost all the various courts responsible for civil cases are situated in one premise where it can be easily accessed while the low reported cases in Tarka, Logo and other LGA is likely due to low patronage and accessibility of the court by the people, due to the distance of the court from them as some



of the selected council wards are almost 5-6 kilometers away from the LG headquarters where the court is situated. As a result most marital dissolution in such areas takes place
Excerpt of In-depth interview with court registrar grade II Area court, Otukpo confirmed that:

Some couples prefer divorcing their spouse without the knowledge of the court, the reason apart from distance is that, they did not marry in the court. Some considered the shame of standing before the court especially when the cause of such dissolution is infidelity and this affect their interest in filing such cases in the court (Court Registrar Otukpo, 2019).

Another interviewee added that:

The grade I area court is presently in bad condition, so some of the civil cases from that court have been transfer to grade II area court. That makes people to be reluctant in bringing their cases leading to low reported cases in the court (Mr. James Grade I area court Logo 2019).

The implication of the finding is that, as the cases of divorce continues; number of single parent household is likely to increase as well

outside the court and without any witness either through the community heads or the religious leaders as revealed by respondents.

which can affect the wellbeing of children and women who are most vulnerable.

4.5 Factors influencing the incidence of Divorce

The distribution of respondents on the factors influencing the rate of divorce is shown in Table 5. Result shows that economic factors influence the increase in the incidence of divorce than social and psychological factors. On the social factors, extra marital sex was identified as the major factors than others. This is in agreement with Mekonnen, Kass and Anyllud (2019) study which stated

infidelity and lack of communication as the social factors influencing the incidence of in Ethiopia. According to Vincent (2009), betrayal, adultery and cheating in marriage have become some of the most common reasons for divorce among young couples, and that infidelity in marriage can ruin the best of relationships. In other words, whether it is a cheating wife or husband, the



repercussions are devastating for all. Lyons, Manning, Longmore and Giordano (2014) in their study found that in Western countries it has been estimated that between 25 and 50% of divorcees cited spouse infidelity as the primary cause of divorce. Infidelity is

universal in all societies and in all times and among both sexes. The authors added that infidelity in females is not tolerated, but in males it is considered their right in many instances.

Table 5: Factors influencing divorce rate in the study

Social Factors	Mean score	Rank
Extra marital affairs	4.73	1 st
Poor communication among couples	4.46	2 nd
Family interference	4.19	3 rd
Religious difference	4.01	4 th
Absence of children	3.86	5 th
Drug addiction	3.85	6 th
Ethnic background	3.62	7 th
Differences in denomination	2.94	8 th
Total	3.95	
Economic Factors		
Financial incapacity of spouse	4.10	1 st
Increasing number of women entering the labour market	4.10	1 st
Demanding occupation	3.95	3 rd
Unemployment	3.87	4 th
Total	4.01	
Psychological Factors		
Lack of sexual satisfaction	4.11	1 st
Lack of trust among couples	4.10	2 nd
Nagging and wife beating	4.01	3 rd
Age difference between couples	3.37	4 th
Total	3.89	

Source: Field Survey, 2019

Morgan and Rindfuss (2013) reveal that males are more likely to be involved in extra-marital relations than females. The implication is that, apart from societal condemnation, it has a substantial effect on the couples and the family as a whole. Such

as feeling of betray and loss of trust between the partners. In the contemporary society, high rate of divorce have been contributed to by infidelity. Kreppner and Lerner (2013) reported that infidelity is the most common problem in marriage, which is devastating to



relationships and the most difficult problem to treat. Walsh and McGoldrick (2013) noted that while most couples disapprove of infidelity; its causes are complex and varied. Schlacter, Razzouk and Mills, (2016) stated the reasons for infidelity which include relationship deficits such as lack of affection or a social context in which infidelity is tolerated. However, a difference in denomination does not contribute much to the increase in divorce cases. This means people are likely to maintain their marital vows irrespective of denomination provided it does not trampled on others beliefs.

Financial incapability of spouse and labour force participation were identified as the main economic factors. Financial incapability could include inability to meet the financial needs as a result of low income base of the family or inability to manage their financial resources. This is similar to Asa and Nkan (2017) who reported financial problems as the major economic factor responsible for divorce in Akwa Ibom. In addition, Hofheimer (2010) reported that financial difficulties can add stress to any relationship, especially marriage. Brown and Manning (2010) posit that money or aspects related to it are possible cause of disagreement between couples. Choi and Marks (2008) added that some couples fight over issues such as shared financial responsibility, unequal financial status, undisclosed financial state, overspending and lack of financial support.

Kuhn and McParland (2008) posited that lack of communication over financial issues is the real problem and not money per se. Study by Halliday-Hardie & Lucas, 2010; Britt & Huston, 2012 and Bezuidenhout, 2017; reported that financial stress has a direct impact on financial wellbeing. When couples are unable to manage their finances because

of inadequate resources or poor money-management decisions, they are constrained from achieving financial wellbeing and relationship satisfaction. Britt, Huston and Durband (2010) viewed that financial stress is more prominent when a couple's financial contributions are not equitable (i.e. one partner is contributing significantly more to the couple's finances than the other).

Dew and Stewart (2012) argue that the presence of financial stress may also exist in a relationship because both partners are being affected by common financial stressors such as low income and high debt. Halliday-Hardie and Lucas (2010) in their study found a direct negative effect of financial stress on relationship satisfaction. Britt and Huston (2012) state that couples who argue over money are couples who have not taken time to focus on each other. This is typically during the early stages of their relationship which is the appropriate time to build on their commitment as a couple. When less focus is placed on resolving financial conflicts, it is evident to see the significant impact of financial disagreements, influenced by both money and relationship factors, on committed and married couples (Britt, Huston & Durband, 2010).

Another economic factor is the labour force participation. Some women especially in urban areas are postponing marriage to complete their education, develop career interest and acquire labour force skills that compete with child bearing which in turn affects fertility by reducing the number of years one is able to reproduce within marriage. Isiugo and Abanihe (1993) documented that, the growing educational and job prospects for women across generations, timing of marriage and education



has led to greater involvement of women in the development process that has intense consequences on their traditional roles as caregivers.

With women integration into labour force, they have become financially independent and are more likely to remain unmarried or may increase the risk of divorce. The more educated a woman is, the higher the likelihood that she will be independent, which is demonstrated by better chances in the labour market for more resources and power. This is likely to increase their possibility to leave an unhappy marriage without the risk of poverty or unemployment (Eyo, 2018). Lack of sexual satisfaction was identified as the major psychological factors. Sexual dissatisfaction could include erectile dysfunction, delayed ejaculation. When this occurs in marriage, it could lead to divorce or infidelity. Most marriages end in divorce due to nagging by woman which could lead to beating by man. Others could be due to lack of proper communication. In all, social and economic factors are more responsible for divorce than psychological factors

The findings confirm the relevance of Social Exchange Theory by Homan who is on the assumption that human beings form and sustain relationships if they believe that the rewards they derive from such relationships will exceed costs. This is true for marriage and divorce because couples tend to stay in

5. Conclusion

There is no doubt that there is an increasing incidence of divorce in Benue State which is one of the indicators of family transformation in recent times. The increase in divorce cases vary over space which is influenced by both social, economic, and psychological factors. This is an indication a continuing revolution

marriage when they know it is working for them or if it is of benefit to them, but when they realize that it is not what they expected, and then they separate or even divorce. The theory also states that when a person's action does not receive the reward he or she expected, or receives punishment he or she did not expect; he will be angry and is likely to perform aggressive behaviour. This applies to marriages when young couple get married and after a short time want to back out because their expectations are not met in the marriage, because of this, the marriage ends up in divorce. Many couple are getting into marriage expecting it to be a bed of roses like during the dating time only to be hit by a small conflict then they want to divorce. The theory proposes that the greater profit a person receives as a result of his action, the more likely he is to perform that action.

In marriage, this is evident when one is having a fulfilling and happy marital life and the couples have a way of always working out their conflict amicably. In such a case, one cannot find a reason to dissolve his or her marriage but to continue to stay in it and make it better. In this study, it was discovered that extramarital affairs, financial incapacitation and sexual satisfaction were identified as the major factors responsible for divorce in the study area which could trigger an aggressive behaviours which can eventually lead to divorce and separation with its implications.

in the social lives of people similar to the one that took and still taking place in Western and Asian countries over the last four decades. However, the increase in the cases of divorce may not uniformly follow the same pattern due to variation in socio-economic background and development.



6. Recommendations

Based on the findings of the study, the following recommendations are essential for government, demographers and other development actors:

i. There is need by government to strengthen marriage institution to promote stable family pattern through either rigid divorce law as practiced in India or enforce proper timing of marriage to reduce the rate of divorce which

is one of the major causes of single parenthood.

ii. Government should pass a legislation that ensure that pre-marital counseling is mandatory for couple entering into marital union for the first time to curb the increase in the incidence of divorce.

iii. There is need for sensitization of people on the effects of divorce on children and women who most vulnerable

References

- Aboajah, F.N., Onjewu, S.S., Chia, J.I. and Okeme, S. (2018). Socio-economic Determinants of Cassava Production in Benue State, Nigeria, *International Journal of Environment, Agriculture and Biotechnology* 3(2): 550-557
- Adegoke, G. (2010), Socio-cultural factors as determinants of divorce rates among Women of reproductive age in Ibadan metropolis, Nigeria department of social work, university of Ibadan, Ibadan, Nigeria. *Stud Tribes* 8(2):107-14. Retrieved from: <http://www.krepublishers>.
- Aghajanian A., and Thompson, V. (2013). Recent divorce trend in Iran. *Journal of Marriage and Family*. 75: 342-362.
- Alhassan, M.M and Ujoh, F.I. (2014). Assessment of pollutants in streams around a cement plant in central Nigeria. *International Journal of science and Technology* 4 (5): 59-66
- Asa, U. A. and Nkan, V. V (2017). Factors Associated With Marital Instability Among Rural Farming Households in Akwa Ibom State, Nigeria *European Scientific Journal* 13(15):290-299
- Attah, A.J., Mbah, E.N and Okeke, M. (2018). Assessment of factors limiting production of citrus among smallholder farmers in Benue State, *Journal of Agriculture and crops*, 4(12): 170-175
- Bezuidenhout, F.J. (2017). *A reader on selected social issues*. 5th Edition. Pretoria:Van Schaik. Britt, S. L. and Huston, S. J. (2012). The role of money arguments in marriage. *Journal of Family and Economic Issues*, 33 (4):464-476.
- Britt, S. L., Huston, S. and Durband, D. B. (2010). The determinants of money arguments between spouses. *Journal of Financial Therapy*. 1(1): 42-60.
- Brown SL. & Manning, B.K, (2010). Marriage and child well-being: Research and policy perspectives. *Journal of Marriage and Family*. 2(5):1059-77.
- Dew, J.P. and Stewart, R. (2012). A financial issue, a relationship issue, or both? Examining the predictors of marital financial conflict. *Journal of Financial Therapy*, 3(1):43-61.



- Elena, A. (2018). Top 10 countries with highest Divorce rate in the world. Retrieved from <http://www.trendnet//8004/countries-with-high-est-divorce-world-families-lowest-highest-India-Japan/> Accessed on 4th June 2018
- Ejeh, B (2016). *Comparative analysis of knowledge and use of modern contraceptives among male and female in Okpokwu Local Government Area, Benue State, Nigeria*. M.Sc dissertation submitted to the department of geography Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria.
- Ezeh, C.A. (2000). Marital problems and their social consequence in Nigeria. The intervention rate of social work profession, Enugu; Otuson Press
- Eyo, U.E. (2016). *Jesus and Women in Johannine Gospel: A Paradigm Shift in an Androcentric Culture and the Implications for the Efik people*. Unpublished Ph.D. thesis submitted to the Department of Religious and Cultural Studies, University of Calabar
- Halliday-Hardie, J. and Lucas, A. (2010). Economic factors and relationship quality among young couples: Comparing cohabitation and marriage. *Journal of Marriage and Family*, 72 (5):1141-1154.
- Haskey, J. (1997). Children who Experience Divorce in Their Family. *Population Trends*, 87, 5- 10.
- Hester, M., & Patford, L. (1997). *Domestic Violence and Child Contact Arrangements in England and Denmark*, Policy Press, University of Bristol, Bristol.
- Hofheimer, C. (2010). *What every young woman should know about divorce*. New York: Academic Press.
- Homans. G.C. (1961). *Social behavior*. NY: Harcourt Brace.
- Iuigo-Abanihe, U. (1993). Fertility in Unmarried Couples. *Journal of Bio-Social Sciences*. 4,
- Kuhn, M.H. and Mcparland, T.S. (2008). An empirical investigation of self-attitudes. *American Sociological Review*, 19 (55):68-76.
- Kumuyi, W.F. (2004). Effect of Marital Instability on Children. Christain Women Mirror, Deeper Life publication
- Kreppner, K and Lerner, R.M. (2013). *Family systems and life-span development* Hillsdale: Psychology Press.
- Laurer, R.H (1995). Social problems and the quality of life. Dubuque (Lowa) Wm. C Brown Communication, Inc:
- Lyons, H.A., Manning, W.D., Longmore, M.A. and Giordano, P.C. (2014). Young adult casual sexual behavior: Life-course-specific motivations and consequences. *Sociological Perspectives*, 57 (1):79-101.
- Mekonnen, Y., Kassa, K. and Ayalew, M. (2019). Prevalence, causes and consequences of divorce in Ethiopia, *African Journal of Social Work* 9 (1): 73-78
- Mezieobi, A.S., and Ibekwe, P. (2017). Contemporary Family Choice: Areas of Nigerian families' Change Lag. *European Journal of Research and Reflection in Educational Sciences* 5 (1).
- Morgan, S.P and Rindfuss, R.R. (2013). Marital Disruption: Structural and Temporal



Dimensions. *American Journal of Sociology*, 90 (107):1055-1077.

National Bureau of Statistics (2009). Social Statistics in Nigeria. Federal Republic of Nigeria

Ogwuche, J.A. and Asobo, V. (2013). Assessment of Socio-economic Factors Affecting Household Charcoal use in Makurdi Urban Area of Benue State, Nigeria. *Journal of Environmental Research and Management* 3(7):180-188

Okeke, A.M., Ihenacho, A.C and Obasi, C.N. (2015). Determinants of Local Rice Consumption among Households in Benue State, *International Journal of Food Science and Technology*, 5(1): 1-10

Osezua, O.C. (2009). *An Anthropological analysis of changing family structures, women trafficking and international prostitution among the Binis of Nigeria*. A Ph.D thesis submitted to the department of sociology and anthropology Obafemi Awolowo University, Ile-ife Osun State, Nigeria

Otanwa, M. (2017). *Causes and effects of divorce in Makurdi metropolis, Benue State*. M.Sc. dissertation submitted to the department of geography Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria.

Prem Singh, J.G, Philip, S.R. (2004). A study on increasing the divorce rate in Kerala. *Journal of Humanities and Social Science* 19 (6): 58-60

Schlacter J, Razzouk N and Mills M. (2016). *The family life cycle revisited*. In *Proceedings of the 1979 Academy of Marketing Science (AMS) Annual Conference 2016, Springer International Publishing*, 38-42.

Ucan, O. (2007). Retrospective Evaluation of Women who applied crisis center in Divorce. *Klinik Psikiyatri* 10: 38-45

Upev, S.K., Haruna, L and Giroh, D.Y.(2016). Analysis of Resources use efficiency among Soyabeans farmers in Gboko, Benue State, *Global Journal of Agricultural Sciences* 15: 57-63

Vincent, N. O. (2009). The top five reasons why people get a divorce. (ed) Washington, DC: Macmillan.

Walsh, F & Mcgoldrick, M. (2013). Bereavement: A family life cycle perspective. *Family Science*, 4 (10): 20-27.

Wilson, R. F. (2002). The cradle of abuse: Evaluating the danger posed by a sexually predatory parent to a victim's siblings. *Emory Law Journal*, 51, 241–307.

Wajim, J. and Harry, S.G (2020). Single Parenting and its effects on the development of children in Nigeria. *The International Journal of Social Sciences and Humanities Invention* 7(03): 5891-5902

Yamane, T. (1967). *Statistic: An Introductory Analysis*, 2nd Ed., New York: Harper and Row.