Pedagogy for Overcoming the Challenges of Marital Instability in Nigeria

Douglas O. Nwaokugha

Department of Educational Foundations, Faculty of Education, University of Port Harcourt

Friday Keri-Frank

Department of Educational Foundations, Faculty of Education, University of Port Harcourt

ABSTRACT: *Marriage is a universal practice but what obtains in one culture and state maybe different from what obtains in another. However, one common denominator that is present in the marriage institution irrespective of culture and state of origin is change. Change in marriage has tremendously altered basic and fundamental values and objectives of marriage so much that love, happiness, fulfilments and accomplishments that are inherent in marriage have become hypothetical assumptions following the fact that married couples presently live as intimate enemies (Dildar, Sitwat and Yasin, 2013) – a development where marital instability is fast becoming a norm. Using the philosophical methodology, this paper takes a position that the marriage institution needs to be protected and upon this the paper makes a case by proffering pedagogical strategies for overcoming the challenges of marital instability in Nigeria. Among other things, the paper suggests and recommends that marriage and its survival should take centre stage in educational provisions in Nigeria, that measures should be put in place for the promotion of marriage so much that evidence of marriage should be the basic entry point for access to social goods provided by the state, including the state adopting marriage as a social justice mechanism and supporting those who identify with it. The paper also suggests that decline in marriage and marital instability should be a cause for concern to any state that is desirous of development.*

KEYWORDS: pedagogy, marriage, marital instability, Nigeria.

INTRODUCTION

Marriage is one institution ordained by God that has received many commendations from time immemorial across cultures and is still receiving up till today. The bible in Proverbs chapter 18:22 records that he who finds a wife finds a good thing and obtains favour of the LORD and that it is not good for a man to stay alone (Genesis 2:18). It may be in the light of these commendations that God in his infinite wisdom in the Christian bible deemed it wise to create Eve for Adam, possibly in recognition of the fact that "life is a path usually travelled with a partner (Abelneh and Koye, 2021:1). Marriage and to get married is a phase in life that any reasonable man or woman looks up to the day it will happen in one's life with rays of hope and optimism and part of why marriage is associated with this aura of hope and optimism is that it is a transition and a normal developmental phase in the life of two individuals that is a demonstration and a proof that the two individuals have come of age, have mature to the point

36

of developing a sense of affection, can make choices and consequently can live on their own outside the tutelage and guardianship of their parents. The involvement of a man and a woman in a marriage also shows that the two persons have been socially, culturally and publicly approved, commissioned and certificated to take part and participate in the divine and sacred mission called co-creation.

In some societies especially in developing and undeveloped countries, no man or woman is considered reasonable in its pragmatic and utilitarian reality unless he or she is married and no person, man or woman, is considered lucky or unlucky unless he or she is married. The reason why this is so is that history is replete with facts about people who have been successful only for events in their lives to take the opposite directions as soon as they are married and there are people who have been at the extremes of hardships, sufferings and poverty, only for events in their lives to turn for the better as soon as they married. Part of why this is so is that the choice of who one marries has a lot of influence in shaping, influencing and determining what the man or the woman becomes later in life. The flashes of hopes and prospects in the life of a man or a woman can become reference points in the ashes or domain of history when a wrong choice or a wrong partner enters into the life of a man or a woman. In the same way, misery, hardship and poverty in the life of a man and a woman can turn to epical success and phenomenal wells of treasure the moment some persons identify with the marriage institution. In fact, marriage is a game changer in the life of individuals and the change can be in negative or positive directions.

The foregoing simply points in the directions that marriage is a critical influencer and critical decider in the life of a man and a woman and consequently the prominence that is given to it directly and indirectly highlights its importance in the life of a man and a woman. The importance of marriage can be taken to its right levels when views against the background that marriage is regarded in developing and under-developing states as a necessity that both the man and the woman must indulge in for the continuous flourishing and survival of the society and by extension humanity.

From the above, it may not require the services of a specialist in the philosophical field of analysis or the attention of a specialist in the field of axiology to establish that marriage is a phase in the life of individuals where the individuals who have decided to marry experience such things as love, happiness, fulfilment, accomplishments, enjoyment, peace of mind including emotional and psychological stability. In other words, marriage in its right conception is highly valued and can be a mark of maturity, an institution that guarantees security and autonomy, where the individuals in the marriage live out either their innate potentials or can be influenced to model their lives alongside some variables dictated by the environment they find themselves. Whichever variable that is at work, marriage by its nature has no room for negativity for the persons who have chosen to marry, as it is epically and phenomenally a rosy, beautiful, hope – inspiring, romantic and exciting adventure as naturally, no one marries with the intention to cheat or inflict physical or emotional injuries onto the other.

However, as change is inevitable in human life, current narratives about marriages in recent times are shocking. Any insightful observer who insightfully observes marriages in the twenty first century can notice that marriage is fast becoming an institution where love, happiness,

fulfilment, accomplishment, enjoyment, peace of mind, satisfaction etc have been thrown to the rubbish, in addition to being a site and breeding ground where instability reigns supreme. In fact, recent events in the marriage institution have developed strange features so much that anyone who talks of marriage as a practice where those who are engaged in it enjoy maximum happiness and maximum satisfaction maybe said to be saying so from hypothetical assumptions that are generations apart from reality. What has become the identity of most 21st century marriages is instability and those families that are neck deep in marital instability are doomed as such families must compulsorily replace fundamental features that are associated with marriage such as love, happiness, accomplishment, satisfaction etc with many negative emotions ranging from regret, grief, depression, stress, frustration, hopelessness, helplessness, absent of joy to continuous worry and continuous anxiety. Not to be ignored is the fact that marital instability leaves its inglorious impressions on husbands, wives, children, in-laws and friends of the affected families and an overriding negative influence of marital instability is that the personality, reputation and sense of responsibility of any one who is associated or related to families that are maritally unstable suffers epical, irreparable and phenomenal devaluation that brings their sense of worth into disruptive and adequate critical scrutiny. In fact, it has been claimed and established that the level of disorder in many families and by extension the larger society are traceable to the level of marital instability and decay in marriages. This is to say that a wider constituency suffers the effects of marital instability as the havoc it wrecks on society and humanity generally is total and comprehensive.

A worrisome trend and a cause for concern is that despite the ravaging and rampaging onslaught of marital instability and the corresponding havoc it causes humanity, not much awareness in the form of disseminating the right information about its damaging consequences has been created especially in Nigeria. Our collective inability in this direction has been responsible for the unfortunate prevalence and epical increase in marital instability across the developed, developing and under-developed countries of the world. As a virus that has plagued the Nigerian society in particular and humanity at large and is still plaguing the society and humanity, we, in this paper, focus on proffering solutions or remedies on how the hydra-headed challenges of marital instability in Nigeria can be overcome. The theoretical framework upon which the study is based is social constructivism, which invokes a meaning that ideas and social phenomena are socially constructed through interactions, and our methodology is purely and basically philosophical. An academic discourse according to Nwaokugha and Danladi (2016:421) is said to be philosophical or employs the philosophical methodology when it uses speculation (speculative method), analysis (analytical method) and prescription (prescriptive method), also called the normative method.

Discussions on speculation as a philosophical research methodology is robust as many scholars have one or two things to say about it. According to Odour (2010:97) "to speculate is to wonder, conjecture, guess or to hypothesize, while Agulanna (2011:89) and Aminigo (1999:4) writes that speculation as a philosophical research methodology is an attempt to find logical coherence in an entire realm of thought. According to Nwaokugha (2022:159), a meaning invoked by speculation as a philosophical research method revolves around attempts to find logical clarity or coherence in a piece of presentation that is the focus and subject matter of a philosophical exercise or endeavour. In the words of Nwaokugha and Ihuoma (2019:276), "the whole idea of speculation as a philosophical research method revolves around the thesis that the

38

reasonableness or reasonability and authenticity of a proposition depends on the orderly or logical consistency of the claims that constitute the proposition".

There is a common denominator that unites the positions of the above scholars and this is that the, acceptability, reasonableness and soundness of any piece of presentation heavily depends on the logical, orderly, and sequential arrangements of the facts in the presentations so much that what comes first is orderly and logically related to that which follows it. In other words, speculation as a philosophical research methodology is interested in demonstrating and showing how truth or fact in a proposition is established especially how a conclusion reached in a proposition is derived, according to Nwaokugha (2022:159) from the body of ideas before it or more technically when a conclusion is derived from a premise. What this simply translates into is that the modus operandi of a speculation is one in which a scholar who is favourably disposed to using it, builds up ideas and carefully, sequentially, systematically and logically shows how one idea is logically and systematically related to the other ideas in the whole systems of ideas.

It is important to point out that language and logic are two fundamental tools in any effective and meaning speculation and anyone's expertise in effectively using them can go a long way in convincing and establishing the facts so intended. It is equally important to point out that speculation is a fundamental philosophical methodology for discussing philosophical topics especially those that fall within the brackets of metaphysics. A feature that is associated with metaphysics and metaphysical topics and why speculation is best for them is that they are topics without any definite answers and how one orderly, systematically and logically speculates about them gives clues to the understanding of such metaphysical topics. Speculation as a philosophical research methodology is also used in discussions that revolve around axiology (values) particularly social philosophy, political philosophy, ethics and aesthetics. The modus operandi here is for any scholar who shows interest in any of the areas mentioned above to critically examine realities as they presently exist in his preferred area(s) which may not be in order and through speculation, present what he feels should be the case.

Making meanings explicit and resolution of conflicts are the central focus of analysis as a method of philosophical research. Here, the analyst is interested in all the possible meanings that may be associated with words, terms, concepts and propositions and by so doing whatever vagueness, ambiguities and clumsiness that may be associated with such words, terms, concepts and propositions can be systematically cleared and precision in meaning with regard to the context of use or discipline can be adequately understood. The function of analysis and what analysis does in a philosophical research is exposed by Nwaokugha (2021:102) when he writes that analysis is "key to clarifying and decoding inconsistencies and ambiguities that are ever-present in man's daily social, political, religious, scientific, economic, technological and environmental activities" It can be said that conflict resolution as a focus of analysis centres on the promotion of peace and harmonious living and this alternatively suggests that disagreements, disorder, violence and confrontations that are becoming reoccurring decimals and correspondingly vectors of under-development and human retrogression may be reduced to their barest minimum in a regime where analysis and the analytic method are norms. It has to be said and said very boldly that analysis provides space where different individuals can express their ideas and understanding on terms, words, concepts and propositions and the more this is done, the more the knowledge industry, society and humanity understand the

epistemological and semantic issues that surround such words, terms, concepts and propositions. Because analysis and the analytic method are oriented towards peace-building, precision in meaning and communication including the ability to solve problems, contemporary approach to studying philosophy and philosophical issues are basically analytic. In analysis, the analyst uses language and logic and they help in establishing what Hirst and White (2000) call relationship between language and reality or word and the world.

Prescription as a method of philosophical research simply translates to the establishment of criteria or standards for judging values or making prescriptive value judgement. Every serious piece of academic work must have elements of prescription and this accounts for why Odour (2010:97) writes that "to prescribe is to recommend or set down as a rule or guide". One can say that what scholars do in their writings in the form of proffering suggestions or solutions on how to solve identified problems qualify as prescription. To this end, Nwaokugha (2021:102) says it all when he writes that prescription:

Is achieved in a research in the form of a researcher making autonomous value statements on how an issue that has been the focus or subject matter of a philosophical discussion can be resolved so that all the wrong noticed in the course of the discussion can be harmoniously addressed. In a way, suggestions and recommendations in researches and other forms of writing fall within the frame of reference of prescription.

Whereas it is correct every writer and discipline employs prescription, scholars of philosophy especially those whose major areas of interest are axiology (social philosophy, ethics, aesthetics and political philosophy) may not practice effectively without resorting to prescription. The centrality or ever present nature of prescription hinges on the fact that nothing is fixed and scholars must respond to situations base on their present reality.

In this era of knowledge explosion, many scholars are favourably disposed to the use of the philosophical research method and many reasons are responsible for this. The philosophical research method according to Nwaokugha (2022:159) triggers the breaking of new frontiers of knowledge across disciplines including enriching the knowledge industry in all the disciplines as well as sharpens learners' and researchers' investigative skills. Nwaokugha and Ihuoma (2019:277) say that part of the justifications for the receptive embrace of the philosophical research method is that it boosts;

The confidence levels of researchers as researchers see every challenge in any academic discipline as solvable and resolvable. In fact, philosophical method of enquiry stimulates in scholars the desire to critically and continuously try out new academic options that can result in phenomenal improvements of scholars and the breaking of new frontiers of knowledge. Detailed and comprehensive benefits of the philosophical research methodology is provided by Nwaokugha and Danladi (2016:421) when they write that:

Indulgence or embrace of philosophical research method affords freedom and opportunity that invites, motivates and challenges researchers to venture into various problems areas across disciplines. By this feature, researchers are availed platforms, which in addition to tackling diversified subject matters also promotes progress in the form of extending and breaking new frontiers of knowledge. The issue of diversified subject and the dividends thereof are possible

because philosophical research methods produce and rely more on theories than any other research method. What is implicated here is that philosophical research method is not restrictive and consequently does not in any way impoverish researchers and disciplines that are favourably disposed to using it. It rather contributes to ground breaking breakthroughs in the knowledge industry. All these by implication mean that the knowledge industry and mankind can be better off in terms of opportunities and dividends associated with research, its contributions to improving human conditions and acquisition of knowledge.Any research or academic endeavour that employs the philosophical research methodology traditionally starts with detailed discussion of the key concepts under investigation and correspondingly we begin with marriage and marital instability

Marriage and Marital Instability
Marriage is important in the life of individuals and the continuous flourishing of the society. This is why marriage is one universal practice that is found in developed, developing and underdeveloped societies. In fact, the road to establishing the first and most basic institution of the society, from which every member of the society receives his or her first socialization and education as well as where foundations for internalising the cultural, social, political, moral and axiological norms of the society owe their roots to marriage and may not come to stay without marriage. This means marriage is first and fundamental as it is upon it that other legitimate practices of the society depend. What we know today as family, from axiological and relational points of view cannot exist without marriage as marriage is the foundation of a family. At the level of the life of the individual, most societies do not count any one reasonable when he or she has not identified with the institution called marriage, just as no one is considered lucky or unlucky except he or she is married. Marriage has the divine and metaphysical ability to turn events in the lives of individuals either in positive or negative directions.

As universal and important marriage is, discussions that are centred on it are herculean and can quickly produce sharp divisions among the discussants. What accounts for this is that there is hardly any uniform practice across cultures in all the key and fundamental indexes about marriage. Societies and cultures recognize and uphold practices that are different and unique to themselves in issues of marriage. This feature tends to suggest that though marriage is a universal practice, how societies and cultures handle it is something that is idiosyncratically unique to each culture and society. This is revealing and what it reveals is that there cannot be the same practice in marriage across cultures and no matter what exists in the marriage practices of societies and cultures, the seal and phenomenon of change must be constant on it and it must continue to be so. Because marriage admits change, the marriage institution has become such an institution where change is becoming embarrassing and where new cultures and new practices keep emerging on a daily basis.

One unfolding development which the constant changes in the marriage institution has introduced is the difficulty in concisely and precisely defining marriage. Meanings that used to be associated with marriage may not hold in the face of current realities and there may be the need to define marriage in line with current realities in the marriage institution. This means that the institution called marriage has changed, widened and expanded so much that people who lived one hundred years ago can be shocked to the marrow in the name of what goes on as marriage especially in the 21st century. Consequently, any meaningful discussion of marriage

41

in its contemporary reality may well start or take off from conceptions of marriage as established by scholars in the time past and transit to current happening in the marriage institutions in the present time.

According to Agboola and Oluwatosin (2018:308), marriage is a culturally, religiously and socially recognized union normally between a man and a woman who are referred to as husband and wife. Marriage according to Panganiban (2007) is an emotional, economic and social agreement concluded legally between two persons. In the conceptualization put forward by Beattie (1980), marriage is a union between a man and a woman in which children produced in the union are legitimate offsprings of the man and the woman while Abelneh and Koye (2021:2) define marriage as the coming together of two totally different individuals as husband and wife who agree to plan and set up their own family. In his own conceptualization of marriage with particular focus on Nigeria, Jack (2015) writes that marriage remains a union of two consenting adults (male and female) but largely with the express support and approval of the immediate families of the individuals involved in the relationship. Marriage according to Piotrowska (2015:158) is "primarily formal, legally sanctioned relationship". A new development in marriage that has given the marriage institution a new twist is a practice where a man marries a man or men marry men and a woman marries a woman or women marry women.

The above definitions of marriage can be said to have exposed or opened up some core issues in the marriage institution that may apply in some cultures without which the aim of marriage is defeated and on the other hand these core issues may not apply in some cultures and such core issues revolve around the fact that:

1)   Marriage takes place between a man and a woman.
2)   Marriage takes place between a man and a man and a woman and a woman.
3)   There must be love or other qualities that attract one to marry the other.
4)   Marriage between a man and a woman, a man and a man and a woman and a woman must be sanctioned and approved legally, culturally, traditionally, socially and must be regulated by law, rules, beliefs, customs and attitudes of the people in countries where they occur.
5)   Man and woman, man and man, and woman and woman who are interested to marry each other can marry with or without the consent and approval of their parents and society.
6)   Marriage is a practice where those in it must consent to it before it can stand.
7)   Marriage is initiated for the self-actualization, self-fulfilment, sexual and general enjoyment of the partners and economic empowerment of those who are engaged in it.
8)   Marriage is entered into for the purpose of having children.
9)   Marriage is entered into not for the purpose of having children.
10)   Marriage connotes a relationship that is permanent
11)   Marriage is a contract
12)   There are expectations the society expects from every marriage and every marriage must meet these expectations.

If one takes an analysis of the above one by one, one may come to the conclusion that some are in strict compliance with traditional conceptions of marriage and consequently are upheld by some cultures and societies while some are reflections of modern and postmodern thinking

and their associated freedoms and consequently are upheld by some societies and cultures. The fact in the issue is that some core and fundamental issues in marriage do not strictly apply across cultures and societies, implying that every culture and society has guiding inherent and intrinsic motivation when it comes to marriage that maybe different from the inherent and intrinsic motivations for marriage in another culture and society.

Interestingly, despite the inherent and intrinsic motivations for marriage across cultures and societies, a common denominator that can be found in marriages with roots in tradition and marriages, with roots in modern and postmodern thinking is the phenomenon of change in the marriage institution and this change has potentials to introduce practices that may become infringement on the rights of partners in marriage or elements of freedom for the partners in marriage. Change in traditional, modern, and postmodern marriage has become so radical and drastic so much that humanity is at a crossroad and being at a cross-road has begun to question itself on what marriage is becoming. In this reflective mode, humanity is also becoming apprehensive of whether all that is expected of marriage can be achieved in the face of the changes in the marriage institution.

In the face of the unfolding changes in the marriage institutions, no marriage with roots in traditional, modern and postmodern configuration, is free of intoxicating, radical and revolutionary ideas as rhythms they produce are antithetical to peace, joy, happiness, satisfaction, and fulfilment of the expectations of the society from the marriage institution. Anyone who has objectively viewed the marriage institution in recent times can observed that the traditional conception of marriage that confers some rights to the man over the woman is under attack and the contemporary modern and postmodern conception of marriage with its radical and revolutionary transformations make case for equality of husband and wife and despite making case for the equality of husband and wife, it has equally come under attack in some cultures and societies.

From the above, it is obvious that a definitional crisis of marriage looms as a concise and precise definition of marriage that can capture marriage across cultures and societies may not be possible rather any definition of marriage can well open up what marriage is in its different configurations. A basic problem in the marriage institution today is the attraction of people to imitate, adopt and practice marriage patterns and configurations that are entirely foreign and strange to their culture and society and insist on practising these foreign and strange marriages in their own immediate environment. This is basically and fundamentally the source of the threat on the marriage institution that has introduced instability in the marriage institution across cultures and societies.

Marital Instability
Naturally, the choice of a marriage partner and identifying with the marriage institution is one phase in the life of an individual that tells the individual young man and young lady in particular and the society at large that the individuals in question have come of age. This phase in the life of an individual young man and young lady comes with a determination where choice of a life partner is to be made and to many persons in some societies and cultures, it is a great achievement and favour that one is in this phase of life. To be expected, this phase in the life of any individual is symbolic as it is a turning point and a marker of the beginning of many

pleasant things ranging from happiness, stability, joy, comfort, enjoyment, freedom, sense of fulfilment and sense of higher expectations in the life of the individuals.

To the two persons who are in the marriage, there is always an attitudinal disposition that is demonstrated in the form of excess show of love and mutual understanding so strong that one cannot in any way imagine and dream that the excess show of love and mutual understanding can one day diminish. However, there is great irony in many marriages as in many societies and cultures, the show of love and mutual understanding that used to exist among many married partners quickly slack or tactically and systematically drop to irredeemable levels so much that the excess love and mutual understanding in the relationship quickly becomes history to the point of husband and wife who at the beginning showered themselves with love, care and mutual understanding turn out to live as intimate enemies (Dildar, Sitwat and Yasin, 2013:1433). Where this happens, what has crept in is the route to marital instability. Marital instability according to Hussani and Adejare (2021:10) "has become a thing associated with the contemporary family institution". The centrality of marriage in the formation of the family and the sustainable flourishing of the society and its institutions has made topics and concepts that threaten marriage and the family such as marital instability a focal flashpoint in the 21st century. What has become a receptive and a corresponding attitude to marital instability has been its attraction as a focus of attention for scholarly discussions, meaning that scholars devote exclusive attention to discussing marital instability and in their attempts, there seems to be no one fits all or consensus definition of marital instability.

According to Ojukwu, Woko and Onuoha (2016:89), the term marital instability is the process whereby there is marriage un-satisfaction which could lead to marriage breakdown, separation, desertion or divorce. The term marital instability according to Oleabhiele and Ighalo (n.d) is a situation whereby a couple in a home is going through relational difficulties. They maintain that it implies marital crisis or problem between couples that could result in marriage breakdown through separation, desertion or divorce. In the views of Omoni-Oyafunke, Falola and Salau (2014), marital instability is any process that can lead to the breakdown of marriage through separation, desertion and divorce. Olufintoye and Faluji (n.d:90) define marital instability as the state of tension or stress between married partners as the couple try to carry out their marital roles while Hassani and Adejare (2021:9) write that marital instability simply refers to the interpersonal difficulty with the marital relationship.

Any analytic and insightful scrutiny of all the definitions as provided by the scholars above can reveal that marital instability in its common sense conceptualization revolves around elements of negative developments and absence of stability and harmonious relationships in the marriage of a husband and a wife. In other words, a meaning and idea which marital instability invokes is a development and action in a marriage where all the expected positive emotions- joy, happiness, enjoyment, satisfaction, fulfilment, harmony and cordiality lack and diminish in a marriage and in their place, the marriage becomes prone to struggles, arguments, tensions, hatred, fights, quarrels, disagreements, contests and becomes a theatre of war so much that the ideas, needs, values and likes of one partner in the marriage becomes so infuriating, frustrating, disenchanting and distasteful to the other and vice versa up to the extent of open declaration by the partners that they are no longer interested and correspondingly incompatible in the marriage. It is obvious a revelation which the above exposes is that a husband and a wife in such unfolding situation may have further crisis such as breakdown in communication, control

44

and conflicts of interests in terms of reaching meaningful and sustainable decisions for the development of the family as well as open demonstration of unhappiness, inability of partners to adjust positions (excess rigidity), loss of confidence and trust for one another, incessant suspicion and finally show of incompatibility that can lead to separation, desertion and divorce.

Causes of Marital Instability

Marital instability is a reigning trend in the 21st century in developed, developing and under-developed states and its prevalence has no respect for the developmental sophistication or lack of it of states. Most marriages are unstable because some persons in marriage do not understand inherent features that are at the heart of marriages and consequently embrace behaviours that are inimical and antithetical to the values that are conducive and supportive of the survival and success of marriages. Marriage is a greedy institution (Sarkisian and Genstel, 2018) and demands from those who are into it the highest display of greediness in the earliest or initial stages of the marriage so as to enable couples build and chart formidable and sustainable roadmaps for the survival of the marriage. Anyone who enters the marriage institution with the aim of continuously pleasing everybody especially one's parents, brothers, sisters, friends and associates or without a projection into the future so as to forge or develop a platform for building his or her own family is likely going to undermine what he or she is supposed to prioritize. What the above translates into is that anyone who wants his or her marriage to be successful must resort to or embrace social withdrawal and what this means is that he or she must cut short the length of time he or she spends with or gives to his or her parents, brothers, sisters and other classes of loved ones. True, social networks in marriage can be supportive as well as destructive and married couples need to know when their social network is about to produce desirable and undesirable results. A group in the social network whose actions and activities produce undesirable results most times are in-laws and this is on both sides. According to Orbuch, Bavermeister, Brown and Mckinleg (2013) "close ties with in-laws significantly predict the likelihood of divorce".

The reality here is that some persons abuse the close ties with their in-laws to the point of capitalizing on such relationships to influence, dominate and exploit the relationship to the detriment of their son or daughter in-law. This in-law dominated and in-law influenced relationship is common and is mainly initiated from the side of wives and the result is one in which the family of birth of wives keep gaining upper hands to the detriment of families of birth of husbands. Where this domination and exploitation becomes the norm, a development that is as sure as day and night any day the side on the receiving end gains some level of insight and consciousness is instability in the marriage, separation, desertion or outright divorce.

Marriage has focus, inherent features and priority which everyone who is in it must maintain as a matter of fundamental necessity if the persons are desirous of the survival of the marriage. This focus, inherent feature and priority is that the two persons who have chosen and agreed to marry must consider themselves as being what Sumrall (1993:24) calls "one flesh" and "one physical person". The above remark is instructive as it is like a bond that holds the marriage so cohesive that without it no marriage may succeed. Unfortunately, not too many persons in marriage recognize and take this into consideration. What has been noticed in marriages in recent times is a situation where two persons who have chosen and agreed to marry prefer transferring those rights, privileges, honour and respect that are supposed to be given to one's mate to other people. The manifestation of this in practical translation means that such persons

45

live lives that best project them as not being fit and ready to leave their parent and set up housekeeping elsewhere where they can autonomously build their family and this development is a serious threat to the survival of the marriage. This behaviour which is a demonstration of lack of maturity by people who are in marriage is one factor that is at the root of marital instability. The reality of this development can be deduced from this advice and admonition by Sumrall (1993:24) that:

And if you must choose between honouring your parents and honouring your mate, God makes it crystal clear that your mate comes first. Many marriages fall apart because one or both mates fail to realize this. They are unwilling to put Mom or Dad in the proper place, below husband or wife.

What the foregoing attests to, is that marital instability can be caused by external agent or forces outside the husband and the wife and apart from the in-laws, members of one's social network are at the centre of exploring their proximity in a marriage to wreak havoc in the marriage. The modes of operation of social network members in causing instability in marriage range from their ability to generate rumours, gossips, open resentments, confrontations, make predictions, withdrawal of support that previously used to come from them, staging and constituting arbitration panel over irrelevant matters where they find one guilty, offer of unsolicited advice, interference and in some cases volunteering derogatory and libellous information about one's partner that may be targeted at cracking the foundations of the cordial relationships that exist between couples. Common sense shows that manipulations from the social network that married couples belong to are majorly responsible for breakups in relationships and marriages. Specific behaviours from individuals that are at the heart of marital instability include couples not according themselves the right respect and honour in the marriage institution. No man or woman can be comfortable in the marriage institution where his or her partner is the subject matter that revolves around flirting, stealing, gossip, falsehold and other demeaning attributes. In the same way, no body, whether man or woman can consider his or her marriage safe and stable when he or she is continuously bartered, when he or she is verbally, sexually, emotionally and psychologically abused on a regular basis, when services each is expected to render to one another are left unattended to. In most developing and under-developed countries, poverty, inability of a man to cause his wife to conceive and inability of a woman to conceive including giving birth to male children especially, lack of communication and inability of partners to spend quality time together, cultural factors especially the awareness that a husband or a wife is not of a "pure blood", and is a member of a questionable tribe, family or an outcast are some primary causes of instability in marriages.

Marital instability has a lot of consequences that have potentials to cause general disarticulation in the life of individuals as well as impair the social, economic, emotional, educational and psychological fabrics that hold the society and its institutions together. It is like an ill wind that leaves trails of casualties behind as its damaging effects cuts across the husband, wife, children born into the family, in-laws and every friend and well-wisher of the family. Marital instability leads or causes married partners or couples to abandon one another and corresponding responsibilities when it matters most and the resultant effects are always epical and phenomenal deterioration of whatever conditions, be it health, social, economic, educational, etc under which the partner was abandoned.

Pedagogical Directions for Overcoming the Challenges of Marital Instability in Nigeria

One feature which humanity shares in common across developed, developing and underdeveloped states without recognition to levels of developmental sophistication is conflict and crisis. Wherever there are more than one person, there must be conflict and crisis because there must be different ideas, opinions, values, beliefs, divergent goals, ideologies, philosophies, likes and dislikes. The universal nature of conflict and crisis makes those who subscribe to the idea that conflict and crisis are inevitable in human affairs one hundred percent correct. Marriage as an institution that involves persons of different values, ideas, beliefs, goals, objectives, ideologies and philosophies is one institution where there must always be conflict and crisis and the ever-present nature of conflict and crisis especially in marriage has made marital instability the most contemporary threat to the marriage institution across the globe. The prevalence of conflict and crisis in marriage and the havoc it has wrecked on mankind and his institutions makes marital instability a flashpoint and an area the society should take seriously. One institution societies globally resorts to for solutions that are targeted at addressing the challenges of marital instability is education.

Education ranks as one of the topmost social services that any responsible state provides for its citizens (Shively, 2005). The priority of states in providing education for their citizens derives justifications from the fact that through it, states can direct and redirect the focus of the citizens to directions that can be most beneficial and sustainable to the states and their citizens. States rely on education in orienting and reorienting the behaviours of their citizens in desirable directions including using education as a platform for introducing technological, scientific, social, political, religious, and economic changes that the states deem fit. In fact, there has been no innovation for improving the quality of lives of citizens that is not routed through education. According to Aminigo and Nwaokugha (2009:1), education can widen the mental capabilities of the individual and socialize him or her to live a more decent and disciplined life capable of making him or her an acceptable member of the society and state. In this line of thinking, education is also key for stimulating in people sustainable actions that are conducive for transforming behaviours, beliefs, practices and institutions in the society including serving as instrument and institution that can sensitize a people for greater achievements. People's and state's unquenchable desire for education is key for the empowerment and emancipation of citizens and the ability of education to be a key instrument for the empowerment and emancipation of citizens makes the acquisition of education a pursuit for the rich and the poor. The rich use education to reproduce the ideas of the ruling class and maintain the status quo while the poor look up to education as the only legitimate pursuit they can use to challenge the status quo. What this in reality reveals is that there is no neutral educational provision in any society, as education according to Eboh (1996) can be for the domestication of a people, where the guiding philosophy for educational provision is the production of a band wagon of yes-members of the society who are educated to continuously do the bidding of those who oppress them or for the freedom of a people where the emphasis is on the use of education to raise the level of critical consciousness of a people, that can translate into the people taking their destiny in their own hand through actions in the form of questioning the reasons for their predicaments and other miseries in the society.

Nothing remains in the undesirable form and nothing has resisted positive transformations after stakeholders in education have beamed their insightful, analytic and probing searchlights on any area of focus and the dynamics for success has always been the curriculum, pedagogy and

47

pedagogical methods so far employed. The menace of marital instability and its associated challenges that have held humanity hostage cannot continue to damage or terminate marriages after stakeholders in education have applied the right curricular and pedagogical methods on it. Development of effective and functional curriculum is one way of using education to address the menace and challenges of marital instability.

Curriculum has a multiplicity of meanings but at the heart of it all is that it is a plan of instructional actions and a guide for providing learners learning experiences so that predetermined values and objectives can be attained. Curriculum is translated into reality through a pedagogy. The mention of pedagogy stimulates ideas about the science and art of teaching, the teacher and what the teacher does in the teaching learning situation in the classroom and the education industry. The classroom as a space where too many things happen at the same time can also be used by the teacher to address many contemporary issues plaguing the society. What this implies is that the classroom is a specially designed architectural, aesthetic, infrastructural space where teaching and learning takes place and the teacher is the manager of the classroom who also doubles as a professionally educated personality who through his exploration of the epistemological space and experience in pedagogy can achieve positive transformations especially in marriage and issues that are related to overcoming challenges associated with marital instability in the society. Attempts by any professionally competent teacher to achieve positive transformations in marriage and issues that focus on addressing and overcoming the challenges that are related to marital instability can start with the teacher striving to educate learners on how to become critical thinkers and how to apply the knowledge of critical thinking in their marriage and marital life. Any educational provision that is shallow or that does not prioritize the development of critical thinking skills is a complete disservice to humanity. The position above derives its justification from the point of view that there is hardly any area of human endeavour that can effectively and maximally address or resolve the ever-present conflicts and crises of man and his institutions without appealing to or employing critical thinking and appeal to critical thinking has not and will not disappoint or fail man as the more man falls on it or appeals to it for addressing and resolving his problems, the more man finds clues and remedies to his social, economic, political, religious, scientific and technological problems. The reasons for the prominence that is giving to critical thinking as a platform for solving all the problems of man may derive from what scholars say critical thinking is and the attributes that are associated with it.

According to Ennis (1992), critical thinking stimulates a meaning that revolves around reasonable reflective thinking that is focused on deciding what to believe or do while Siegel (1988:23) writes that critical thinking revolves around two components namely; "the ability to assess reasons properly" and "willingness, desire and dispositions to base one's actions and belief on reasons". In their own conceptualization, Nwaokugha and Ahiakwu (2017:108) write that "thinking that incorporates the ability to systematically subject ideas and propositions to systematic analysis, evaluation, build up and organize ideas including logically demonstrating how such ideas can be used in solving problems can be said to be critical thinking. A more inclusive meaning of critical thinking is provided by Nwaokugha (2018:121) when he writes that:

Critical thinking can be conceived as an exploration, adventure or expedition that maintains a cyclical relationship, starting with an identified subject matter upon which analytic

48

speculations are made that targets generating knowledge and using knowledge and fact thus generated to create ideas and suppositions that can be employed to further explain the fact that was the subject matter of the process of the reflective speculation and more importantly all such efforts are geared towards either illuminating a particular subject matter or solving real problems. What the above simply reinforces is the claim that critical thinking is analytic thinking.

From all the above, it can be said that critical thinking can be associated with identifiable attributes ranging from the ability of such thinking to be focused and directed towards a direction or directions and consequently be the springboard for the exploration of opportunities in the form of the result of such critical thinking generating the ability to provide answers or solutions to questions, be a guide in taking crucial decisions that have potentials to trigger behavioural changes for solving and resolving the multitude and ever-present problems of man and his institutions. Anyone who is a critical thinker or who is vast in the act of critical thinking must possess certain qualities and attributes, which according to Lai (2011:2) are "open and fair-mindedness, inquisitiveness, flexibility, a propensity to seek reason, a desire to be well informed and a respect for and willingness to entertain diverse viewpoints". These are in addition to having skills of analysis, argument, inferences using inductive and deductive reasoning, passing judgements and corresponding same with abilities to take decisions and solve problems.

Any good teacher can explore the foregoing in his teaching to develop qualities that can be beneficial to the learner in resolving his or her marital and other general issues in the society. Where one particularly focuses attention on resolving his or her marital issues, a teacher can develop in learners through critical thinking the ability to critically reflect on one's marriage so far with a view to determining if one's marriage has been on the right or wrong track and ascertain if one has achieved his aim of marrying or not. One who has been taught critical thinking by a good and competent teacher and meticulously practices it can establish variables that are responsible for his or her success or failure in his or her marriage and the implications of such developments for his or her life. Any good teacher who teaches his or her learners critical thinking must harp it into their ears that the best method of learning critical thinking is for the learner to practice it by thinking critically around a subject matter, because it is a behavioural disposition and habit formation no other person can inculcate in another except by oneself through practice. So critical thinking is more of a do-it-your-self activity. However, the individual learner is as free as air to locate or focus such thinking in any area he or she has chosen. In a way, the menace of marital instability and the havoc it causes can make it a flashpoint and an area where critical thinking can be applied.

A perspective that can be explored pedagogically in addressing the challenges of marital instability in Nigeria is teaching learners how to be flexible in issues arising out of marriage and relationships. The teacher can do this by stressing to learners to always explore the virtues of patience, tolerance and accommodation bearing in mind, that there is always room for reconciliation in marriage and relationships. This means teaching learners to avoid any iota of extremism in marriage and relationships. Flexibility as an attribute to be developed in learners in the teacher's attempt to groom learners on how to explore critical thinking in solving their marital problem can also be explored in guiding learners on how and when to resort to compromise especially taking into consideration the remark credited to Menkel-Meadow

49

(2016:1) that "in relationship we are told to compromise to consider the needs and interests of the other".

Common sense and our everyday experience shows that the pattern of communication of some members of the society, inclusive of husbands and wives in the family is far from building peace and stability in the home especially between husbands and wives. Communication according to Islami (2007:75) means exchange of message between two or more persons or between the provider and the recipient in the communication process. Communication is fundamental in marriage and when partners in marriage experience any breakdown in communication, such development multiplies the chances and possibilities of such partners avoiding themselves and consciously and unconsciously lay the foundations that are supportive of conflicts, crises, possible termination and destruction of the marriage. What this may be highlighting is that good communication between a husband and a wife is a sure and sound foundation for success in marriage while poor or lack of communication between a husband and a wife is a sign that the marriage is lacking one of the indexes or engine blocks that holds any marriage together.

It is not an exaggeration that there are couples who avoid communicating to each other simply because of the lack of decorum, politeness, show of arrogance and uncaring manner in which either the one who is communicating or the one at the receiving end may react to the communication process. Such partners usually feel that whatever communication from the opposite direction may not have any value that can help resolve any conflict or crises situation rather that such communication can skyrocket situations from bad to worse. It has been found to be correct that in most cases, what triggers conflicts and crises that lead to marital instability in the family is the inability of husbands and wives to effectively and meaningfully communicate ideas and feelings to one another and the inability of husband and wife to freely, effectively and meaningfully communicate in the home creates situation where a husband and a wife who lives in one house start to suspect one another or at best start to live as "intimate enemies", a development that is the entry point for more unfavourable developments like desertion, separation and divorce.

Whereas communication, which is the exchange of message between two or more persons (Islami, 2007) is important in every marriage and lack of it is detrimental as it is the root cause of conflicts and crises that later destroy marriage, communication is also essential in the resolution of conflicts and crises in marriage. This is why any educational provision that is focused on the challenges of marital instability in the family can first focus on developing pedagogical strategies for promoting communication between husband and wife on one hand and husband and wife and other members of the family on the other. To this end, the education system through counsellors, religious organizations, civil society groups and non-governmental organizations can make the teaching of communication a key component of marriage classes for intending husbands and wives.

No rational thinking individual can doubt the role of communication in marital conflict and crisis resolution, however, as every communication is carried out through a medium which principally is language, a right step in pedagogically addressing marital conflict and crisis resolution can well start with a detailed study of the place of language in communicating ideas especially ideas that relate to marriage and relationships. To successfully achieve this is for the

teacher to make his learners to understand that language and culture are related and whatever culture of people, marriage and its conflicts, crisis and resolutions inclusive are expressed through language hence any pedagogical measure that makes addressing marital challenge and instability a priority may well start with the study of language and how language is used in the different cultures to convey meanings and actions.

Resolving marital instability through knowledge of language can provide what Cohen (2001:26) calls "excellent entry point for investigating how members of a group understand and handle conflicts and crises". This approach that focuses on language study can help resolve marital conflicts and crises quicker because it is context-specific and consequently may not deceive because there is no projection of meaning from one culture onto another culture. In using the pedagogical space to promote communication between husband and wife and other members of the family, the teacher can emphasize that the communicators must respect one another in their communications, be honest and open in their communication through providing space for all communicators to freely share and freely express their ideas on matters of common interest; where an enabling environment for open and free communication is promoted, couples can be free to express themselves and conflicts, crises and marital instability can be checkmated. The teacher can emphasize the need for appropriate choice of words in any meaningful and effective communication. By this the teacher can advise that the use of words that can insult, hurt or dwarf persons should be avoided. This is in addition to teaching the learners to demonstrate the highest level of morality in the marriage institution. Here, the teacher can emphasize the demonstration and teaching of such concepts that build trust, and harmony in marriages and relationships such as truthfulness, honesty, commitment, dedication etc. The teacher can also stress that how individuals or the society perceives a person interms of how peaceful and accommodating one is in the marriage institution or how a person contributes in solving problems of mankind can be strong determinants of the personality of the person or the society's perception about the person.

One obvious fact is that conflict is inevitable in human affairs as no two persons, even twins can have the same beliefs, values, likes, aspirations etc. The simple fact that no two persons has exactly the same beliefs, values, likes, dislikes, aspirations etc creates situations that make conflict an inevitable phenomenon in human life. An awareness that conflict must exist in any environment where there are more than two persons is an indication that conflict in the marriage institution is not a surprise and cannot be a surprise as two persons who have chosen to become husband and wife must have different orientations, beliefs, values, aspirations, like and dislikes. Consequent upon this awareness, there is the possibility of transgression into zone(s) a husband or a wife may consider sacred or no-go-area and this transgression can possibly lead to unhealthy developments on existing relationships between them, and if not well handled, can make marriages unstable.

Consequently, any meaningful pedagogical endeavour that prioritizes addressing issues of marital instability must teach couples or husbands and wives forgiveness and how to forgive one another. Forgiveness according to Paleari, Regalia and Fincham (2010:37) can be conceptualized as an "interpersonal phenomenon, involving changes in thoughts, feelings and motivations toward the offender". As the definition above suggests, the willingness of one that has been offended to show forgiveness to the offender is a beacon of hope that forgiveness is instrumental in any meaningful marital conflict resolution. Making the teaching of forgiveness

51

an area of priority in educational provision to learners and couples can be one sure way of rejigging, restoring and rebuilding a relationship. This is because forgiveness, when demonstrated in a relationship has epical, phenomenal and astronomical powers to mend faces and build bridges where genuine love, constructive communication, commitment and romantic intimacy can become norms in a relationship. One who has been forgiven is less likely to commit such transgression again and no matter how intractable a conflict may be, the moment one party, preferably the offended party forgives the other, and peaceful resolution of the conflict is on the way.

Any teacher who is desirous of exploring the powers of forgiveness in inculcating in learners the skills and strategies for exploring the powers of forgiveness especially in restoring sanity and normalcy in marital relationships can encourage learners and couples to consistently make the act of flexibility in decisions especially in the marriage institution and other form of relationship a cardinal norm in their lives. The teacher should also promote in learners and couples a sense of goodwill and a habit formation that is tilted towards conciliatory thoughts for the offender. No doubt, these are in agreement with constructive approaches to conflict resolution which anyone who is genuinely and sincerely committed to resolving any marital conflict or issue can find plausible to embrace.

CONCLUSION

Marriage is a universal practice and in its configurations revolves around two persons consenting and agreeing to live together as husband and wife. It is the legitimate foundation for the formation of a family and corresponding the base for the continuous flourishing and survival of the society. Paradoxically, there is no uniform practice across cultures about marriage as societies uphold practices that are different and unique about marriage so much that the institution has become one institution where change is becoming embarrassing and where new cultures and new developments keep emerging in a split second order. Part of the change is that unlike in the past where marriage is traditionally associated as a practice between a man and a woman, the new normal in marriage is one where a man can marry a man and a woman can marry a woman. These are in addition to delay in the ages of both males and females who identify with the marriage institution. In recent times, people marry when they are well advanced in age and this has serious negative implications for procreation, the family and the society at large. These changes in marriage have altered and replaced the basic and fundamental values and objectives of marriage with new values and objectives, so pronounced that instead of happiness, love and fulfilment prevailing as norms, married partners presently live as intimate enemies and these developments lay foundations for marital instability.

This paper has focused on how education can be a platform for overcoming the challenges of marital instability in Nigeria and has taken a bold stand that the marriage institution needs to be protected if the continuous flourishing and survival of humanity is to be guaranteed. Part of how marriage can be protected for the common good of humanity is to make marriage a focal flashpoint in educational provisions. Focusing educational provisions on the survival of marriages is a wake-up call for humanity to wage a war against a common enemy that is hell bent on the extinction of the human race from the face of the earth.

Evidence of a marriage certificate can be a basic entry point for access to employment and other social and economic benefits that a state can provide its citizens. Pegging access to opportunities in the state to evidence of marriage can be a move in the right direction because it is the foundation upon which other legitimate practices of the state and humanity depend. To promote marriage, the state should provide support and incentives to those who marry, after all the state will be the direct beneficiary of all marriages in the state as the labour force that serves as the engine room for the development of the state can only be active and productive if marriages are continuously contracted or entered into. In the same way, the state will be the greatest loser where citizens do not indulge in marriages. In fact, a state may hinge or anchor its own social justice on measures that support and promote marriage among its citizens. Decline in marriage and marital instability should therefore be a cause for concern to any reasonable state.

References

Abelneh, S. T. and Koye, K. G. (2021). Marital conflict among couples: The case of Durbete town, Amhara Region, Ethiopia. In *Cogent Psychology, 8(1), pp. 1-17.*

Agboola, J. O. and Oluwatosinm S. A. (2018). Patterns and causes of marital conflicts among staff of selected universities in southwest Nigeria. In *Advances in Social Sciences Research Journal,* 5(8), pp. 306-320.

Agulanna, C. (2011). Ethics and education. A. F. Uduigwomen and K. Ogbinaka (eds). *Philosophy of education: An analytic approach.* Lagos: Joja Educational Research and Publishers Ltd.

Aminigo, I. M. (1999). *A direct introduction to philosophy of education.* Buguma, Hanging Garden Publishers.

Aminigo, I. M. and Nwaokugha D. O. (2009). Achieving sustainable environment through curricular and pedagogical innovations. In N. S. Oguzor and H. E. Adebola (eds). *Education, Development and Changing Environment.* Spain; International Association for Teaching and Learning.

Beattie, J. (1980). *Other cultures: Aims, methods and achievements in social anthropology.* London: Routledge and Kegan Paul.

Cohen, R. (2001). Language and conflict resolution: The limits of English. In *International Studies Review,* 3(1), pp. 25-51.

Dildar, S., Sitwat, A. and Yasin, S. (2013). Intimate enemies: Marital conflicts and conflict resolution styles in dissatisfied married couples. In *Middle-East Journal of Scientific Research,* 1510), pp 1433-1439.

Eboh M. P. (1996). *Philosophical essays: Critique of social praxis.* Port Harcourt, Paragraphics.

Ennis, R. (1992). *Critical thinking. What is it? Proceeding of the 48th annual meeting of the philosophy of education society.* Denver Colorado, March, pp. 27-30.

Hirst, P. H. and White, P. (2000). The analytic tradition and philosophy of education: an historical perspective. In P. H. Hirst and P. White (eds). *Philosophy of education: Major themes in the analytic tradition,* Vol. 1, Philosophy of Education, London, Routledge.

Hussani, M. and Adejare, T. A (2021). Marital instability as perceived by married academic staff of Shehu Shagari college of Education, Sokoto: Implications for marital counselling. In *International Journal of Humanities and Social Sciences Intervention (IJHSSI),* 10(7), pp. 9-15.

Islami, H. (2017). Resolving marital conflicts. Online available at http://www.review@seeu.edu.mk.

Jack, J. T. C. B. (2015). The institution of the family, marriage. Kinship and descent systems. In Abasi-Ekong Edet (ed) *Selected Topics in Nigeria Peoples and Cultures,* Benin City, Dimaf Publishers.

Lai, E. R. (2011). Critical thinking: A literature review. Research Paper: online: Available at http://www.pearsonassessments.com/research.

Menkel-Meadow, C. (2016). Ethics of compromise. In A Farazmand (ed). *Global Encyclopaedia of Public Administration, Public Policy and Governance.* Switzerland Springer International Publisher.

Nwaokugha, D. O. (2018). Prioritizing the development of critical thinking skills in teaching and learning in higher educational institutions in Nigeria. In *African Journal of Higher Education Studies and Development (AJHESD),* 7 pp 118-124.

Nwaokugha, D. O. (2021). Prospects of university autonomy on Nigeria. In *International Journal of Research and Review,* 8(1), January, pp 99-11.

Nwaokugha, D. O. (2022). Entrepreneurship and entrepreneurship education in Nigeria: A search and initiative in a post-modern tradition. *In International Journal of Research and Review.* 9(4), April, pp 157-170.

Nwaokugha, D. O. and Abiakwu, O. F. (2017). Towards a critical thinking based curricular and pedagogical innovations for sustaining democracy in Nigeria. In *British Journal of Education* 5(4) April, pp. 107 – 120.

Nwaokugha, D. O. and Danlandi, S. A. (2016). Language and communication: Effective tools for educational supervision and inspection in Nigeria. In *Mediterrean Journal of Social Sciences,* 7(3), May, pp 420 -428.

Nwaokugha D. O. and Ihuoma J. C (2019). Integrating and adapting Africa's worldviews on education in Nigeria's educational practices. In *Educational Journal of Multidisciplinary Studies*, 8(1), February pp. 271 – 286.

Oduor, R. M. J. (2010). Research methodology in philosophy within an interdisciplinary and commercialized African context: Guiding against undue influence from the social sciences. In *Thought and Practice*: *A Journal of the Philosophical Association of Kenya (PAK),* New Series, 22(1), June pp 87-118.

Ojukwu, M. O., Woko, S. I. and Onuoha, R. C. (2016). Impact of educational attainment on marital instability among married persons in Imo State, Nigeria. *In International Journal of Education & Literacy Studies,* 4(3), pp 88-96.

Oleabhiele, E. J. and Ighalo, P. O. (2019). Perceived consequences of marital instability on the academic performance of undergraduates in Benin City Edo State. Online available at http://www.oer.biu.edu.ng/wp-content/uploads/2019/03/WASMRV6-8.pdf. Pp.95-120.

Olofintoye, T. T., Faluyi, M. A. (n.d). Influence of parents in-laws interference on marital stability among young couples in Ondo State, Nigeria. *In Social Science Education Journal (SOSCED-T),* 4(2), pp.89-96.

Omoniyi-Oyafunke, C., Falola, H. O. and Salau, O. P. (2014). Effects of marital instability on children in Abeokuta metropolis. In *European Journal of Business and Innovation Research, 2 (3),* pp. 68-77.

Orbuch, J. L., Bauermeister, J. A, Brown, E. and Mckinley, B. D. (2013). Early family ties and marital stability over 16 years: The context of race and gender. In *Family Relations, 62,* pp. 255-268.

Paleari, F. G., Regalia, C. and Fincham, F. D. (2010). Forgiveness and conflict resolution in close relationships: Within and cross partner effects. In *Universitas Psychologica*, 9(1), pp 35-56.

Piotrowska, M. (2015). The importance of marriage and family in the narratives of adult children of divorced parents. In *Pedagogika Rodziny. Family Pedagogy, 5(1), pp.* 155-171.

Sarkisian, N. and Genstel, N. (2008). Till marriage do us part: Adult children's relationships with their parents. In *Journal of Marriage and the Family,* 70, pp. 360-376.

Shively, W. P (2005). *Power and choice: An introduction to political science*. London, McGraw Hill

Siegel, H. (1988). *Educating reasons, rationality, critical thinking and education*. London: Routledge and Kegan Paul.

Sumrall, L. (1993). *60 things God said about sex*. New Kensington: Whitaker House.