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CONSEQUENCES OF MARITAL CONFLICTS ON THE GIRL CHILD IN CHRISTIAN FAMILIES

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Abstract
The study explored marital conflict and its effects on the girl child in Ikeja council area of Lagos State, using a descriptive survey research design to elicit responses from 142 participants. Participants were selected through random sampling while data were collected using a questionnaire and analyzed quantitatively. The study employed Emile Durkheim's Structural Functionalism and Robert Merton's Strain theory as theoretical frames to explain marital conflict and its implications on the girl child. The findings show that marital conflict exists within Christian families in Ikeja Lagos State but is not pronounced. Triggers were infidelity, the number of children, financial issues, domestic violence, and family interference. Unresolved parental conflict affected the girl child, leading to child abuse and poor access to good education. The victims exhibited aggression, suffered depressed, and performed poor in academics due to absent mindedness and psychological issues. In adulthood, they were unable to enjoy stable relations and were always suspicious of their spouses. Solutions to marital conflict and its implications on the girl child were found in government's engagement in counseling services, enacting laws that will curb marital conflict and punishing offenders, creating more awareness on the rights of the girl child and collaboration between the government, church and Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs).

Keywords: Girl-Child, Marital conflict, Marriage

INTRODUCTION

Marital disputes can have a significant impact on families, particularly on children, particularly in Christian households where morals and traditional beliefs are highly valued. Social and cultural expectations put special strains on the girl child during times of family conflict, making her more vulnerable. These disputes have the potential to affect her opinions on relationships, family life, and self-worth by upsetting her sense of stability, emotional health, academic achievement, and social development (Meyer, 2024).

The girl child in Christian families may experience more psychological stress as she attempts to balance the Christian teachings' emphasis on forgiveness and harmony with the realities of family strife (Hatcher, et al. (2022). According to studies by Muluneh, Stulz, Francis, & Agho (2020)
experiencing family conflict can result in mental distress, anxiety, depression, poor academic performance, and a decline in social skills. A skewed perception of marriage partnerships may also be ingrained by this exposure, which could result in future relationships where conflict or harmful relational dynamics are accepted.

In Christianity, marriage is believed to be established by God as a holy union of love and respect, and it is marked by duties, responsibilities, and difficulties related to the individual, society, emotions, and psychology (Witte, 2012). It is the deliberate joining of two people, typically a man and a woman, in order to form a family, live together, and raise children. Intimate and sexual contact are acknowledged, personal interests are put aside, and trust is developed in this connection. Marriage is viewed as mandatory in certain cultures prior to engaging in sexual activity. Marriage requires unity of purpose and a shared set of values, but when these values are incompatible or misunderstood, conflict is unavoidable. A widespread occurrence, marital strife has serious repercussions for both couples and their kids. Ten out of ten couples have dispute, with one or two incidents every month and six to ten impacted per week. This is particularly common in Africa, where 45% of divorces within 30 years and at least one-third of first marriages within 2 years are the result of marital strife (Clark & Brauner-Otto, 2015). Families in Nigeria confront significant difficulties since they are unable to resolve obvious conflicts inside and across families. According to the World Health Organization, majority of girls globally experience violence and despair, which has an adverse effect on their schooling, and marital conflict has a bad influence on partners and children, resulting in health problems (UNICEF, 2006). It is essential to uphold these rights in order to protect girls' future prospects and general well-being (Rani, 2023). Hence, this study focus to investigate the particular effects of marital conflict on the girl child in Christian homes, examining the ways in which these experiences influence her social, psychological, and emotional growth. Christian families and support networks can better handle and lessen the effects of marital conflict by being aware of these effects, creating a healthier atmosphere for the girl child's development.

In order to investigate the relationship between Christian beliefs, marital disputes, and child welfare, this study focuses on Christian households in Nigeria. Being the most common religion in Nigeria, Christianity offers certain family values, beliefs, and moral principles that affect marriage and raising children. A more focused analysis of how faith-based values affect family stability and the welfare of the female child is made possible by comprehending the effects of marital disputes within this religious context. Since Christian families make up a sizable portion of the study population, Christian houses are selected to investigate the relationship between Christian doctrines, marital disputes, and child welfare; and to offer additional level of involvement with the study objective.

Literature Review

Conceptually, marital disputes have a detrimental effect on girls' emotional and psychological growth, resulting in anguish, anxiety, sadness, and low self-esteem. Expectations and roles that are specific to gender amplify these impacts. Marital disagreements have a major socio-educational influence as well, impairing peer connections, academic achievement, and focus. Social pressures, parental neglect, and financial instability make these issues worse, making females more susceptible to early school dropouts and less prospects. Solving these problems calls for a multifaceted strategy.

The theories supporting the study steams on theoretical framework of Strain Theory. According to the Strain theory, which was put forth by Robert Merton and Cohen, social institutions have the power to persuade people to commit crimes (Merton, 1957). It implies that perplexity and anomie can result from both structural and individual-driven societal pressures. Critics claim it is unsuitable for scientific research and lacks comprehensive information on learning deviance. 'In I 938, Robert Merton published an essay titled, "Social Structure and Anomie," where he challenged the view that the causes of crime were located within the individual. 1 Alternatively, Merton proposed that conformity to conventional cultural values was ultimately responsible for high rates of crime and delinquency.' The theory was further extended in Burton Jr & Cullen (1992). The study shows Merton's theory of anomie and social structure has developed into a theory of individual-level strain that connects criminality to obstructed access to aspirations for success. However, methodological restrictions make it difficult to use, and empirical tests have shown inconsistent results. This study urges criminologists to investigate stressful life situations and seeks to uncover problems for a more methodical test.

In Amato (1993), the study examines five perspectives on how children cope with divorce: interparental conflict, economic hardship, stressful life transitions, noncustodial parent absence, and custodial parent adjustment. Theories are developed and research is analyzed. Conflict between parents is encouraged, but a paradigm that integrates different viewpoints is required. Hetrick, Haynes, Clark, & Sanders (2024) studied the theoretical and empirical utility of dimension-based work–family conflict. The study looks at how important certain factors are in the Work-Family-Competition (WFC) nomological network, such as demands on time and family, ambiguity in work roles, and supervisor behaviors that assist families. The suitability of composite-based WFC techniques for broad dimensions like as job and life satisfaction is also examined. According to the pattern anticipated from the dimension-level theorizing, the results largely support a dimension-based strategy. The study covers theoretical, practical, and future research implications.

Meyer, Hardt, Brambilla, Page, & Stöckl (2024) explained intimate partner violence through economic theories. In order to identify predictors of intimate partner violence (IPV) against women worldwide, a comprehensive analysis of 53 economic theories was conducted. Resource theory, bargaining theory, exchange theory, game theory, empowerment theory, male backlash theory, and status inconsistency were all incorporated in the analysis. The study's findings were conflicting, with some evidence supporting economic theories and some not. In order to overcome gender prejudice, economic theories are frequently coupled with feminist theories, and key variables employed varied. But more research is needed on several important presumptions, such the chance to end a relationship and investment ideas.

However, the empirical evidences reveal the

girl child reveals that after more than 25 years of research, the study of marital conflict is at a turning point in its development. It is still debatable if this research is relevant to evolving marital partnerships. In addition to highlighting current theoretical developments, this chapter examines the effects of marital dispute on mental, physical, and familial health (Fincham & Beach, 1999). A recent study investigated the association between married couples' self-esteem, subjective satisfaction, and marital conflict, taking into account potential moderating factors such as the ladies' career level. Self-esteem and happiness were found to be reciprocal, and marital conflict was associated with both. It was discovered that wives were a major contributor to psychological well-being; however, stay-at-home women might not benefit as much (Yu, 2024).

Notable gaps to be filled include work-family conflict frameworks, and theoretical integration. These has hampered research on children's coping strategies in conflict ridden homes. The impact on the social, emotional, and academic outcomes of girls is not well studied. Cultural, economic, and societal aspects are not specifically included in current research, which concentrates on Western or global statistics. Hence, this study is highly important.

Methodology

The study used descriptive research design to examine the effect of marital conflict on girl child in Christian family. The choice of Christianity religious framework, seeks to offer a more profound comprehension of faith-based principles, and the relationship between Christian doctrines, marital conflicts, and girl child welfare. The population of this study comprised educators, community and religious leaders, social workers, child psychologists, and other professionals who observe the effects of instability in Christian households including married couples and separated parents. Using simple random sampling technique, fifteen (15) participants were selected from 10 wards, making a total of 150 respondents. The sampled wards were Wasimi/Opebi/Allen, Anifowoshe/ Ikeja, Ojodu/Agidingbi /Omole, Airport/ Onipetesi/Inilekere, Ipodo/ Seriki Aro, Alausa/ Oregun/Olusosun, Adekunle Vill /Adeniyi Jones/Ogba, Onigbongbo, GRA/Police Barracks and Oke Ira/Aguda. A questionnaire was developed as the instrument of data collection. It was self-administered, 147 responses were returned successfully. Data were analyzed using descriptive statistics while percentage distribution, frequencies, tables and charts were used in the presentation of results.

Presentation of Results and Discussion of Findings

Table 1: Demographic Variables of Respondents

	Category	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Gender of Respondents	Male	79	53.5
	Female	68	46.5
Age	18.30 Years	19	12.7
	31 -45 Years	57	38.7
	46 -60 Years	67	45.8
	61 years and above	4	2.8
Ethnicity	Hausa/Fulani	35	24.6
	Yoruba	57	40.1
	Igbo	47	33.1
	Others	8	5.6
Educational Level	WASCE/SSCE O -Level	35	23.9
	ND/NCE	44	29.6
	HND/BSc	66	45.1
	Postgraduate	2	1.4
Monthly Income	Less than N50,000	19	12.7
	N50,000 - N200,000	28	19
	N200,001 - N350,000	41	28.2
	N350,001 - N500,000	53	35.9
	Abo ve N500,000	25	16.9

Source: Field Work

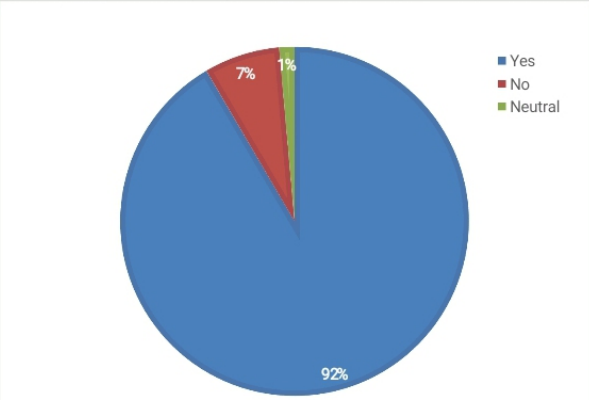
The respondents consisted more of males than females, with majority of them aged between 46 to 60 years of age. Yoruba dominated the ethnicity of the respondents, followed by Igbo and Hausa. The dominance of the Yoruba and Igbo is explainable, considering that Lagos is in South West Nigeria and dominated by the Yoruba ethnic group. Lagos state also has a large number of Igbos who migrated for different reasons ranging from business to career engagement.

The study population is dominated by people who have a Higher National Diploma (HND)/ BSc, followed by those with a National Diploma (ND)/ National Certificate of Education (NCE), earning between N350,000 and N500,000 monthly.

Prevalence of marital conflict among Christian families in Ikeja LGA of Lagos State

Figure 1: Prevalence of marital conflict within Christian families in Ikeja LGA

Figure 1: Prevalence of marital conflict within Christian families in Ikeja LGA

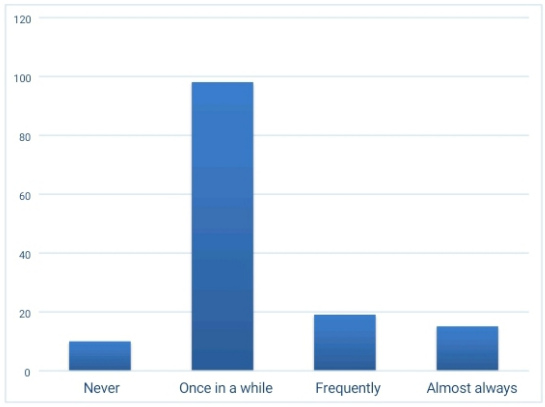


Source: Field Work

Overwhelmingly, 92% of the respondents confirmed the existence of marriage in Christian families in Ikeja LGA of Lagos State. Only 7% denied such while 1% were neutral. The result shows the inevitability of conflict between and among human beings despite being of the Christian religious faith. The inevitability arises when individuals or groups interact and interests varies.

Frequency of Marital Conflict

Figure 2: Frequency of Marital Conflict



Source: Field Work

Despite the huge acknowledgment of the existence of marital conflict in most Christian families in Ikeja LGA of Lagos State, 69% of the respondents agreed that they rarely experience it while 13% thought that it occurs frequently despite their Christian background. About 11% confessed that marital conflict occurs almost always while 7% denied its existence.

Causes of Marital Conflicts among Christian Homes in Ikeja LGA of Lagos State

Variables	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Number of Children	56	40	10	19	17
Religious Affiliation and Practice	35	57	6	20	24
Communication Style	10	30	12	50	40
Financial Issues	102	20	1	7	12
Infidelity and Satisfaction issues	121	12	2	5	2
Role Specification	12	30	7	56	37
Domestic Violence and Poor Mental Health	104	26	3	7	5
Family Inference	22	46	12	22	40
Cultural Practices	18	11	5	38	70

There was a need to understand the causes of marital conflict withing Christian families in Ikeja LGA of Lagos State. Out of the 142 respondents, 96 affirmed that disagreement over the expected number of children in the family resulted in marital conflicts while 36 argued against that and 10 were neutral. The number of children overwhelmingly defines the family's economic power and their ability to take care of the girl child. This standpoint was corroborated by 122 respondents who affirmed that financial issues lead to marital conflicts in families. This finding aligns with Ibukun and Ogunseye's (2018) assertion that economic volatility and finance stresses relations and result in marital conflict. Infidelity, sexual satisfaction, domestic violence, and poor mental health are other major causes of marital conflict. While 131 respondents attributed the phenomenon to infidelity and sexual satisfaction, 130 argued that domestic violence and mental health are triggers of marital conflict. This finding corroborates the arguments of Akinyemi & Isiugo-Abanihe (2016) and Oyediran & Isiugo-Abanihe (2005) that physical, psychological and emotional abuse undermine marriages and healthy family lifestyles.

On the contrary, communication style, role specification and cultural practices had less impact on marital conflicts than the number of children, domestic violence and financial issues. About 90 respondents failed to attribute marital conflict to communication style while 40 were affirmative and 12 were neutral. Similarly, 93 respondents disagreed on role specification as a causative factor to marital conflict while 108 respondents distanced cultural practices from the phenomena. These arguments are contrary to the findings of Adeoye & Jegede (2017) who argued that ineffective communication is a precursor to marital conflict. While it can be argued that poor communication may lead to a breakdown in healthy marital relations, it does not necessarily lead to conflict especially when any of the partners understands the importance of managing high conflict personalities. Similarly, role specification is not a serious issue in Ikeja LGA as the metropolitan nature of the area compels spouses to assist each other in meeting up with family responsibilities.

Human Rights Violations Against the Girl Child in Christian Families in Ikeja LGA

Table 3: Human Rights Violations Against the Girl Child in Christian Families in Ikeja LGA

Variables	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Sex exploitation	12	10	2	90	28
Female genital mutilation	7	15	1	89	30
Early child marriage	6	10	2	78	46
Access to good education	56	29	11	17	19
Child Abuse	60	45	2	13	22
Gender discrimination	36	12	1	54	39

Source: Field Work

Inquiry into the forms of human rights violations against the girl child in Christian families in Ikeja LGA of Lagos State shows that child abuse and access to good education are more prevalent than others. Sexual exploitation, female genital mutilation, early child marriage, lack of access to quality education, child abuse, and gender discrimination were all strongly opposed by the majority of respondents. The majority opposed or disagreed vehemently, although others strongly agreed. Only a small minority disagreed or disagreed strongly with the majority's support for educational access. With 60 strongly agreeing and 45 agreeing, child abuse was the topic with the highest degree of agreement. The opinions on gender discrimination were mixed, with 12 people agreeing and 36 strongly agreeing, while 54 people disagreed and 39 strongly disagreed. Overall, the study shows a range of opinions about gender discrimination, support for educational access, and significant disapproval of abusive and exploitative activities.

Effects of Marital Conflict on the Girl Child

Table 4: Effects of marital conflict on the girl child

Variables	Totally True (%)	True (%)	Partially True (%)	Partially Not True (%)	Not True (%)	Not True At All (%)
More aggressive in their behaviour	18.3	20.4	21.8	22.5	9.9	7
More likely to be disobedient	14.1	18.3	16.2	28.9	14.1	8.5
Exhibit anxiety about issues	18.3	22.5	17.6	22.5	13.4	5.7
Experience depression symptoms	17.6	23.2	18.3	23.9	7	9.9
Difficulty in developing healthy emotional skills	10.6	19.7	21.1	32.4	11.3	4.9
Have low self-esteem	14.1	21.8	17.6	26.8	10.5	9.2
Poor communication pattern	26.1	14.2	13	9.2	16.7	21.8
Poor assimilation	13.4	24.6	16.2	23.9	14.1	7.8
Exhibit empty mindedness	10.6	19.7	19.7	29.6	10.5	9.9
Exhibit a low level of concentration in class	15.5	24.6	11.5	27.5	9.6	11.3
Experience poor financial plan	12.7	14.1	16.2	23.2	21.1	12.7
Exhibit hostile behaviour that negatively affects their marital relationships	12.7	23.9	17.6	26.1	11.3	8.5
Exhibit emotional distance from their spouse when they get married	11.3	21.1	10.5	28.9	15.5	12.7
Level of trust with their spouse when they get married	14.1	25.4	15.5	25.4	7.6	12
Suspicious of their spouse when they get married	16.2	23.2	12	21.8	14.1	12.7
Impatient when handling relationship issues	12.7	19	17.6	23.2	12	15.5

The behavior of girl child is greatly impacted by marital conflict; they are 18.3% more likely to act aggressively and 14.1% more likely to act disobediently. These kids frequently suffer from anxiety and despair, and 10.6% of them struggle to learn effective emotional regulation techniques. The prevalence of low self-esteem is likewise high, at 14.1%. 13.4% of impacted females report having poor integration, and 26.1% report having bad communication patterns. In 10.6% of girls exposed to marital conflict, empty-mindedness is noted. Fifteen percent of girls report having trouble focusing in class, while twelve percent report having trouble with financial planning. 12.7% of girls report that hostile behavior has a negative impact on their marriages. Trust concerns are recorded in 14.1% of cases, while emotional distance from spouses is noted in 11.3% of cases. 12.7% of girls exposed to marital conflict report feeling impatient, while 16.2% of girls express concern for their spouses. Inversely, based on the study, 8.5% of respondents did not think marital conflict enhances rebellious conduct in girls, while just 7% disagreed that it does. 9.9% of respondents did not think that girl children impacted by marital dispute exhibit signs of sadness, and 5.7% disagreed with the statement that anxiety over issues is a problem. 9.2% disagreed that girls have low self-esteem, while 4.9% denied that it is difficult to acquire appropriate emotional abilities. 7.8% of respondents disagreed that poor assimilation is a result of marital conflict, and 21.8% of respondents did not think poor communication patterns were a significant issue. 9.9% of those surveyed disagreed with the notion that girls are empty-minded. Twelve percent of respondents did not believe that poor financial planning abilities had an impact. Emotional distance from a partner in a marriage was challenged by 12.7% of respondents, while 8.5% of respondents denied that hostile behavior had a detrimental impact on marital relationships. Suspicion of a partner was not regarded as important, nor were problems with trust with a spouse.

Management of marital conflict and its effects on the girl child

Table 5: Management of the effects of marital conflict on the girl child

Variables	Totally True (%)	True (%)	Partially True (%)	Partially Not True (%)	Not True (%)	Not True At All (%)
Government organizes seminars to combat marital conflict and its effects on the girl child	7.3	15.2	31.8	10.5	21.9	13.3
Government conducts researches on marital conflict and apply results to minimize effects on the girl child	10.1	18.3	14.2	18.2	24.1	15.1
Government has institution (s), Guidance and Counselling units in public institutions to combat marital conflict and its effects	33.2	22.9	18.3	5.6	13	7
Churches have counseling units to solve marital issues and their effects on the girl child.	12.6	38.5	31.1	9.1	4.4	4.3
Churches operate welfare and empowerment packages to help the girl child	23.5	21.8	15.6	16.4	12.7	10
Churches organize prayer sessions for victims of marital conflicts	34.1	22.2	18	10.2	5.7	9.8
Churches organize outreach and fellowship programs that educate parents on marital issues	34.4	22.4	16.2	9.9	13.1	4
CSOs and NGOs organize advocacy campaigns against marital conflict and implications on the girl child through radio and television programs	11.5	14.7	20.2	20.6	25.5	7.5
CSOs and NGOs engage in Human rights activism to curb marital conflict and its effects on the girl child	20.5	20.3	9.5	26.5	18.6	4.6

Results from Table 5 shows that the government organizes seminars to combat marital conflict and its effects on the girl child. The affirmation came from 7.3% of the respondents who totally agreed that the residents of Ikeja LGA have benefited from seminars and conferences on the issue by public and private institutions, including schools and hospitals. However, 13.3% of the respondents disagreed, stated not true all that the government conducts research on marital conflict and applies results to minimize effects on the girl child. The presence of such units in Ikeja LGA was acknowledged by 33.2% of the respondents.

To resolve marital problems, churches have counselling units, which account for 12.6% of their strategies. 23.5% of interventions are welfare and empowerment packages provided by churches. For 34.1% of their activities, churches host prayer sessions. Additionally, churches conduct outreach programs to teach parents about marital troubles, which make up 34.4% of their operations. NGOs and civil society organizations also provide 11.5% of the effort to advocacy campaigns against marital strife through radio and television programs. An important component of these initiatives is also human rights activism.

Discussion of findings

The intricate challenge of marital conflict is impacted by psychological, cultural, and socioeconomic elements. His study shows that marital conflict is majorly caused by a number of factors, including domestic violence and poor mental health, infidelity and satisfaction. Financial instability, extended family, societal focus on fertility, and childlessness. female genital mutilation, early marriage, and educational deprivation are examples of human rights violations against girls that restrict their potential and well-being and reinforce cycles of inequality. A girl child who experiences marital conflict is more likely to exhibit aggressive behaviors, experience despair, and perform poorly in school. These results are consistent with studies that link children's developmental difficulties to domestic instability. The sustainability, accessibility, and cooperation of stakeholders all affect how effective interventions are. While lobbying campaigns and counselling services can lessen the effects right away, structural shifts in societal and cultural norms are necessary for permanent solutions. In order to achieve sustainable solutions, managing marital conflict necessitates a multi-sectoral strategy and stakeholder participation.

According to a study by Cummings and Davies (2010), children, especially girls, may experience social disengagement and emotional repression as a result of marital conflict. Their social growth and peer connections may be hampered by the combative and reactive communication styles seen in these settings. Hostile attitudes and trust concerns in adulthood show how childhood events have a cyclical effect on marriages. The girl child's ability to handle relationship problems with patience, however, points to a deliberate attempt to break free from unhealthy habits. This demonstrates how resilient and adaptive people may be in the face of traumatic childhood events. The findings of this study supports the assertions by Adebayo & Olaoye (2012) that marital conflict leads to low grades and educational attainment in girl children. The negativity around government involvement is contrary to the assertion by Aghatise (2012) that public institutions create awareness and educate the general public on healthy relationships, management strategies and support services. Rather, the government has Guidance and Counseling units in public institutions that help victims of marital conflict, including the girl child, overcome its effects.

The fear of the unknown frequently causes girls who are raised in violent environments to act aggressively. This is consistent with research by Cummings & Davies (2010) and Amato & Cheadle (2008) that indicates female children who witness marital conflict are more likely to experience violence and unfavorable social relationships. Many times, aggression is a coping mechanism for insecurity. Churches

frequently provide vulnerable people with help and counseling through Service Units, which are partnered with committed members to track their progress. NGOs and civil society groups also help to resolve marital disputes by providing assistance, advocating, and organizing activities that increase public awareness of the rights and privileges of girls, particularly on International Day of the Girl Child. These findings support earlier research that focused on the role of civic organizations and the church in addressing marital disputes (Okechukwu, 2014; Oni & Odukoya, 2015; Omololu, 2017 and Ajayi & Asaleye, 2018).

Considering that conflict is part of human existence, Christian families in Ikeja LGA of Lagos were not immune. A handful of the respondents denied the existence of marital conflict in such families. However, such conflicts were not regular and were mostly triggered by disagreements over the number of children, religious affiliations and practice, financial matters, family interference, infidelity and domestic abuse. Communication styles, role specifications and cultural practices had little impact on marital conflicts. Cultural practices were less impactful as some of them as seen as a way of life and integrated into religious practices.

The study emphasizes how marital conflict, which includes incompatibility, mistrust, childlessness, and family meddling, has a substantial effect on the girl child. These elements cause family strife and put children especially girl child at risk for increased vulnerability. In addition to early marriage or human trafficking, girls who experience marital discord frequently engage in roadside hawking and suffer from health issues like trauma, infertility, and infections. It is often known that children who are exposed to conflict are more likely to experience anxiety, despair, and violence. Governmental, religious, and non-governmental actors use targeted interventions, community-driven initiatives, and institutional frameworks as intervention tactics. The results highlight the necessity of ongoing cooperation in order to lessen the impact of marital conflict on girls, with stakeholders and policymakers giving priority to focused interventions and bolstering support networks for impacted children.

Conclusion

The study provided insight on the effects of parental conflict on the girl child among Christian families in Ikeja LGA of Lagos State. Marital conflict, which is fueled by cultural customs, financial instability, and adultery, has a major negative affect on females in Lagos State's Ikeja Local Government Area. It causes emotional anguish, poor academic performance, low self-esteem, social disengagement, and behavioral problems. A multifaceted strategy that includes legal reforms, support networks, community awareness campaigns, government actions, and emotional support from educational and religious institutions is required to prevent these. The findings of the study underscore the need to avoid marital conflict in the bid to boast the child's emotional, psychological, and social development. The study shows that aggression, depression, poor academic performance and disruptions in relationships in adulthood are consequences of marital conflict. To avert such impacts, the study underscores the importance of support services and interventions by government and nongovernmental institutions. By tackling marital conflict among Christian couples in Ikeja LGA of Lagos State, the development of the girl child, her rights and privileges will be assured.

Recommendations

To address marital conflict and its effects on the girl child, this study recommends a number of strategies. Both urban and rural areas should be the focus of sensitization campaigns to inform parents and the general public about the detrimental impact of marital disputes on the wellbeing of girls. All of the wards in the Ikeja Local Government Area should have easily accessible counselling centers that offer victims expert assistance. To avoid relapses, faith-based organizations should also set up

counselling centers. NGOs and the government should work together to establish safe spaces where victims can come to talk about their experiences and ask for assistance. The government must establish strong policies that outline penalties and establish a legal framework to hold violators accountable in order to address the underlying causes of marital strife. Studies on marital disputes ought to be broadened to examine various settings and cultural elements that affect their frequency and nature. The welfare of the girl child will be safeguarded and marital disputes will be greatly decreased if these initiatives are carried out in a timely, relevant, quantifiable, feasible, and precise manner.

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