Factors Affecting Marital Disruption Amongst Nigerian Immigrants in North America (NINA): A Pilot Study

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Recommended Citation
Ade-Oshifogun, Jochebed B.; Olaore, Augusta Y.; and Aina, Joan O., "Factors Affecting Marital Disruption Amongst Nigerian Immigrants in North America (NINA): A Pilot Study" (2019). Faculty Publications. 1006.
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FACTORS AFFECTING MARITAL DISRUPTION AMONGST NIGERIAN IMMIGRANTS IN NORTH AMERICA (NINA): A PILOT STUDY

Jochebed B. Ade-Oshifogun, PhD
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Joan O. Aina, DNP
Welcome to 2044!

50% of America will be non-white by 2044

Colby & Ortman 2015
Background

- The black African immigrants population more than doubled in the U.S, from 574,000 to 1.6 million, between 2000 and 2016.
- The census data also indicated that 35% of African Immigrants originated from West Africa of which over a third (38.7%) are from Nigeria.
- The largest African Immigrant populations are found in California, New York, Texas, Maryland and Virginia. (Anderson and Lopez 2018)
Conflicts have increased among Nigerian immigrants as they become adjusted to living in the U. S.

There are clashes of the traditional family structures and American culture.

External issues have led to arguments, violence, and other disruptions (Akinsulure-Smith, Chu, Keatley & Rasmussen, 2013).
Initial study goal

■ To ascertain the level of marital satisfaction amongst NINA in a faith based community

■ Faith based because of easy access and openness to respond to marital issues.
Description of Study/Methodology

- IRB approval for the study received from Chicago State University, Chicago, Illinois.
- Approval received from the Nigerian Adventist in North America (NANA) group.
- Standardized survey tool to measure index of marital satisfaction was used (WALMYR Assessment Scales, 1977).
- Survey distributed during the annual NANA camp meeting.
- Implied consent attached to the survey tool.
- Data analyzed for descriptive and correlation with main variables by SPSS v.25 (2017).
Survey Tool and Scoring

- Questionnaire measures the degree of satisfaction with the present marriage
- 25 questions in Likert scale format – ‘none of the time’ to ‘all of the time’
- Questions touched on items like affection, trust, fear, fun, confidence, common interests, finances, future, excitement, arguments, and disagreements.
- Each question has a score of 1-7 with negative questions reversed scored.
- Scores below 30 indicate no clinically significant problem.
- Scores above 30 indicate clinically significant problems.
- Scores above 70 indicates severe distress in the marriage relationship.
Description of Study participants

- 55% Male
- 45% Female
Description of participants

- 77% were married and are living with their spouses
- 78% were married in Nigerian before immigration.
- Primary reasons for immigration are employment (43%) and education (33%)
- All participants were members of the Seventh Day Adventist Church.

Inclusion criteria:
- Must be living in the USA
- Must be a Nigerian married to a Nigerian
Description of participants

Years of marriage

- 0-5: 7
- 5-10: 3
- 11-20: 21
- 20-30: 9
- >30: 7
Results

Frequency of IMS Scores

- Below 30: 71%
- 30-70: 25%
- Above 70: 4%
Results

- Overall, majority of respondents (71%) have no clinically significant problem with their marriage relationships.
- 29% had clinically significant problems.
- Only 4% were experiencing severe distress in their relationship at the time of the study.
## Results - correlations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>IMS Scores</th>
<th>P value</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Gender</td>
<td>-0.013</td>
<td>0.933</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reasons for immigration</td>
<td>-0.238</td>
<td>0.111</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age</td>
<td>-0.12</td>
<td>0.423</td>
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<tr>
<td>Who immigrated first</td>
<td>0.096</td>
<td>0.524</td>
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<tr>
<td>Where was the marriage contracted</td>
<td>0.031</td>
<td>0.839</td>
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<tr>
<td>N</td>
<td>49</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

No significant finding
Follow up Study

- Focus on factors causing marital disruption using culturally sensitive indicators.
- Wider audience
- Mixed method approach
Goal of follow up study

The goal of this study was to examine factors that affect Marital disruptions among Nigerian Immigrants living in North America (NINA).

- Pilot study
- Focus on the United States of America.
Methodology

- Pilot – starting with the USA.
- Cross-sectional, mixed method approach.
- Culturally sensitive questionnaire designed by authors.
- Snowball sampling via e-mail invitation.
- Online questionnaire completed using survey monkey.
- Personal interview conducted with seven volunteers.
- Quantitative data analyzed using the SPSS (version 25).
- Qualitative data analyzed using ATLAS.ti
Questionnaire Items

Please rate your opinion regarding the following factors as causing marital disruptions among Nigerian immigrants living in North America.

• Male verse female role issues in America compared to Nigeria
• Disparities between Nigerian culture expectations and American life style
• Women embracing American women’s liberation ideas
• American Citizenship/Residency status issues
• Inability to find employment in the field of qualification
• Financial instability
• Long separation between spouse immigrating to America
• Financial pressure from Nigeria requiring sending money to family members in Nigeria
• In-law issue
• Domestic violence (physical and/or emotional torture)
• Keeping unresolved marital conflicts secret because “you don’t wash your dirty linen outside” -suffering in silence
• Healthy respect between husband and wife
• Infidelity
• Job pressure (working too much or not at all)
• A non-religious environment
• Buying into the American Dream (Status symbols and other social affluence indicators)
• Lack of personal spirituality
Initial Scoring and Factor Analysis

Scoring
- Treated as individual item Likert scale score
  - Strongly agree (4 points) to Strongly disagree (0 point)

Factor analysis
- Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis
- Rotation Method: Promax with Kaiser Normalization
- Factor loadings < .3 were suppressed.
Results – Quantitative only

Participants

53% Male
47% Female
Participants by Age Group

- 20-30: 8%
- 31-40: 23%
- 41-50: 37%
- 51-60: 25%
- >60: 7%

age in years
Participants by years of marriage

Years

1-5: 22%
6-10: 12%
11-15: 16%
16-20: 16%
>20: 34%
WHERE MARRIAGE WAS CONTRACTED

- Nigeria: 58%
- USA: 40%
- Other: 2%
Who immigrated first

- Self: 29%
- Spouse: 25%
- Both: 22%
- Separate b4 marriage: 16%
- Children: 1%
- Born in USA: 7%
Immigration Reasons

- Education: 41%
- Employment: 28%
- Better Life: 3%
- Join family: 4%
- Marriage: 1%
- Others: 23%
Participants estimates of marital disruption among Nigerians living in the US

- Rarely (1 in 1,000 couples): 9%
- Often (1 in 100 couples): 41%
- Very often (1 in 10 or less couples): 50%
### Median scores by demographics of participants

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Characteristics</th>
<th>n</th>
<th>Mdn</th>
<th>Range</th>
<th>Statistics</th>
<th>p</th>
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<tr>
<td>Gender</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>79</td>
<td>50.00</td>
<td>56.00</td>
<td>U=4876.50</td>
<td>.216</td>
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<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>79</td>
<td>51.00</td>
<td>67.00</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Age group</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>20 - 30</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>43.00</td>
<td>65.00</td>
<td>H=3.153</td>
<td>.533</td>
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<tr>
<td>31 - 40</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>50.00</td>
<td>67.00</td>
<td>df=4</td>
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<tr>
<td>41 – 50</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>51.50</td>
<td>64.00</td>
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<tr>
<td>51 - 60</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>50.50</td>
<td>56.00</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Above 60</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>53.00</td>
<td>38.00</td>
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U: Mann-Whitney Test; H: Kruskal-Wallis Test
## Median scores by demographics of participants

<table>
<thead>
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<th>Demographics</th>
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<th>Range</th>
<th>Statistics</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Years of marriage</strong></td>
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<td></td>
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<td>1 - 5</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>50.00</td>
<td>67.00</td>
<td>$H = 1.435$</td>
<td>.838</td>
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<tr>
<td>6 - 10</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>50.00</td>
<td>48.00</td>
<td>df = 4</td>
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<tr>
<td>11 - 15</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>51.00</td>
<td>63.00</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>16 - 20</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>51.00</td>
<td>56.00</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Over 20</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>51.00</td>
<td>52.00</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Marriage Contracted</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Nigeria</td>
<td>93</td>
<td>51.00</td>
<td>67.00</td>
<td>$H=4.234$</td>
<td>.120</td>
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<td>USA</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>48.00</td>
<td>65.00</td>
<td>df=2</td>
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<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>52.50</td>
<td>26.00</td>
<td></td>
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</table>

U: Mann-Whitney Test; H: Kruskal-Wallis Test
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Items</th>
<th>Mean score</th>
<th>SD</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Male verse female role issues in America compared to Nigeria</td>
<td>3.54</td>
<td>0.638</td>
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<tr>
<td>Disparities between Nigerian culture expectations and American life style</td>
<td>3.48</td>
<td>0.691</td>
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<tr>
<td>Financial instability</td>
<td>3.45</td>
<td>0.598</td>
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<tr>
<td>Job pressure (working too much or not at all)</td>
<td>3.33</td>
<td>0.692</td>
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<tr>
<td>Keeping unresolved marital conflicts secret because “you don’t wash your dirty linen outside” -suffering in silence</td>
<td>3.26</td>
<td>0.882</td>
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<tr>
<td>Women embracing American women’s liberation ideas</td>
<td>3.23</td>
<td>0.888</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Infidelity</td>
<td>3.17</td>
<td>0.842</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Long separation between spouse immigrating to America</td>
<td>3.11</td>
<td>0.866</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inability to find employment in the field of qualification</td>
<td>3.06</td>
<td>0.855</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In-law issue</td>
<td>3.06</td>
<td>0.864</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of personal spirituality</td>
<td>3.03</td>
<td>0.996</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Buying into the American Dream (Status symbols and other social affluence indicators)</td>
<td>3.02</td>
<td>0.953</td>
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## Characteristics of constructs identified

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Construct</th>
<th>Number of items</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>Cronbach’s α</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Financial Stressors</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>2.98</td>
<td>0.26</td>
<td>.72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Relationship Deficiencies</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>2.99</td>
<td>0.12</td>
<td>.74</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intercultural Conflicts</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3.39</td>
<td>0.20</td>
<td>.67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spiritual Systems</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2.89</td>
<td>0.24</td>
<td>.72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Outliers</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>3.00</td>
<td>0.21</td>
<td>.54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All Items</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>3.04</td>
<td>0.25</td>
<td>.79</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
FINANCIAL STRESSORS

Items in construct with factor loadings

- Inability to find employment in the field of qualification .872
- American Citizenship/Residency status issues .772
- Financial instability .502
- Financial Demands From Nigeria .480
- Long Spousal Separation Prior to Migration .419
Domestic violence (physical and/or emotional torture) .812

Keeping unresolved marital conflicts secret (no dirty linens…) .646

Infidelity .608

In-Law Issues .484

Items in construct with factor loadings

MARITAL RELATIONSHIP DEFICIENCIES
Disparities between Nigerian culture expectations and American lifestyle .885

Male versus female role issues in America compared to Nigeria .787

Women embracing American women’s liberation ideas .682

Items in construct with factor loadings
Items in construct with factor loadings

SPIRITUAL SYSTEMS

A non-religious environment .818

Lack of personal spirituality .784

Buying into the American Dream, materialism .567
Healthy respect between husband and wife .692

Job pressure (working too much or not at all).537
MARITAL DISRUPTION

- Financial Stressors
- Marital Relationship Deficiencies
- Intercultural Conflicts
- Spiritual Systems
Probable Cultural Explanations

- **Patriarchal Beliefs**
  - financial stressors
  - intercultural conflicts

- **Traditional Gender role expectations**
  - intercultural conflicts
  - marital relationship deficiencies

- **Extended Family Influences**
  - Outlier factors
  - financial stressors

- **Spiritual Beliefs**
  - Spiritual Systems
Limitations and future studies

- Moved from piloting IMS to culturally sensitive tool.
- This is a measure of perceptions of factors causing marital disruption and not a measure of marital satisfaction.
- Will continue to perfect the tool for wider use and to measure satisfaction.
- Present study is limited to the USA with limited number of participants – limited generalizability.
- Future studies will include more participants and other countries in North America.
Action!
• Nigerian Immigrant Family Orientation

• Supportive & Empowering Nigerian Communities

• Social Services professionals and religious leaders gaining a working understanding of the peculiarities Nigerian Family dynamics.

• Culturally Relevant Immigration and Legal Services
Selected References


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Questions

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