

## **Effect of Marital Infidelity on the Family: A Perception Study of Ihe/Owerre in Nsukka Local Government Area of Enugu State**

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### **Abstract**

This study examined public perception of the effect of marital infidelity on the family in Ihe/Owerre in Nsukka Local Government Area, Enugu State. The study was conducted using multistage sampling technique. Cluster and simple random sampling techniques were used to select 167 respondents. Structured questionnaire was adopted as the instrument for data collection while In-depth interview served as a complementary data collection instrument. The data were collated and analyzed using the statistical package for social sciences (SPSS). The findings showed that divorce mostly resulted from marital infidelity. It equally revealed that men toppled in marital infidelity and educated ones engage more in marital infidelity; marital infidelity thrived due to lack of finances and finally that civil servants engaged more in marital infidelity than people in other occupations. The study, therefore, recommends continuous creation of awareness on the health challenges and other problems associated with marital infidelity to deter people from engaging in it; provision of jobs and empowerment, especially for women, by the government and spouses should be satisfied with what they have acquired and avoid greed.

**Keywords: Divorce, Marital Infidelity, Emotions, Marriage, Family**

### **Introduction**

Marriage is the socially acceptable union between a man and a woman (Osarenren, 2013). It means the coming together of two different individuals as husband and wife who agree to plan and set up their own family. For Okoh (2004), quoted in Ogwohademhe and Ishola (2013), it is an institution which guarantees the procreation, care and education of the young, the stability of the family and the continuity of society upon which the survival of the human race depends. Russell (1959) stated that “marriage differ, of course, from other sex relations by the fact that it is a legal institution. It is also in most communities a religious institution, but it is the legal aspect which is essential”

At any given time in human history, a family comes into existence each time a marriage is successfully contracted. The family is the most important primary group and the smallest social unit in any particular society. Family setting is universal because the human society exists or has existed with some form of family organization (Onwuasonya, 2006).

Marital infidelity has become a major occurrence in today’s society which has turned out to be a major problem in the society. Marital instability can be seen as a disorganization of marriage that is, the misunderstanding or disagreement of husband and wife and lack of harmony in the homes of married couples. Ezennaya (1998) defined it as a breakdown of orderliness and solidarity in the family unit, a dissolution or violation of roles or when one fails adequately to perform their roles and obligation. According to Posmo (2004), marital instability is when couples are unable to resolve conflict, the same pattern of dispute occurs repeatedly and there are no new ways of dealing with the problem, the tendency is that inability will creep in and such instability can threaten the entire relationship resulting to bitter quarrel, emotional withdrawal, lack of affection and Divorce.

Swenson (2012) opined that infidelity indicates that there is no effective communication within the marriage. Many types of affair have been documented in literature. Turner (2013) confirmed that the type of affair one is into is defined by the need it meets. The most often practiced is sex affair which is basically for sexual pleasure and does not end in love affairs. The second type is love affairs. This obviously threatens the peace and stability

of marriage. Turner (2013) further explains that love affair is an intimate relationship between a married person and someone who is not his or her spouse.

Marital instability is a social problem that is capable of causing everlasting sorrow on the children, the couple and even the society at large. According to Fernando (2013), these acts of infidelity lead to other problems in the marriage. From creation, every society has its traditional practices such as loving one's spouse, having sex only with ones partner among others, which are pronounced during marriage ceremonies are expected of couples to boost the image and self-esteem of their partners. Fernando (2013) noted that some partners deviate from these norms and exhibit it outside their marital homes and this has been a source of marital dispute and instability among couples. The negative outcome of this often times impacts the children psychologically and socially.

There are two main types of infidelity that may occur in a relationship which include; Emotional and Physical infidelity. An affair is generally considered to be a secondary relationship that is a combination of types and possibly fall under both main categories of physical and emotional infidelity (Schnell, 2018).

Marital infidelity is a threat to marriage and family because it leads to moral degradation, lack of trust and respect for the spouse involved in these act. According to Igbo (2008), marital infidelity is one of the probably causes of marital instability. Lee (2013) affirmed that extramarital behavior is a violation of rules and violation of relationship norms by one partner resulting into jealousy and rivalry action which can be sexual or emotional. Glass (2012) describes extramarital affair as any emotional or sexual intimacy that violates trust. Samel (2012) describes marital infidelity as a state of being unfaithful to a covenant, to an agreement, or to a bond such as marriage. It is a phenomenon that adversely destabilizes the uniqueness of marriage and family institutions. It is a phenomenon that adversely destabilizes the uniqueness of marriage and family institution.

Female infidelity is the new trend because extra marital sex by men is socially tolerated and in many respects, even socially rewarded (Idoko, 2018). The prevalence of married men's participation in extra marital sex in Nigeria is well documented (Karanja, 1987; Onusuloye, Caldwell & Caldwell, 1997; Lawoyin and Larsen, 2002; Mitsunaga, Powell, Antonia, Heard, Nathan, Larsen., 2005). A study published in the National Opinion Research center's (2013) found that while the percentage of men who admitted to infidelity has held constant over the last two decades, the percentage of wives who reported having affairs rose almost 40 percent. Before the advent of civilization, married women, no matter the conditions they found themselves never became promiscuous; they remained chaste and faithful to their vows. Cheating among Nigerian women is the new trend, which is abstract and very different to what was in existence two decades ago, when women were faithful, patient and more tolerating (Ejaifo, 2012). According to Onwuegbusi, (2010), it is a very difficult issue for any marriage to continue to exist smoothly or for any family to continue to thrive peacefully in the face of a case of marital infidelity involving any member of the marriage or family.

Living apart from each other among married people sometimes leads to marital infidelity (Gagnon, 2001). Ogungbadejo (2013) affirms that marital infidelity causes significant damage to the spouse's image, personal confidence and socio-economic condition at the home front having a deep impact on the attitudes of the family members. In support of the above, Barr (2013) corroborated this fact that marital infidelity affects both the immediate and extended families. When marital infidelity results to divorce, the divorced spouse may be blamed for the demise of the other spouse and the damage of the children. Perhaps this is the reason Quatanani (2013) opined that an extramarital affair is not acceptable for both male and female because it is a shameful act. It destroys the family, breaks the bond of relationship and destabilizes the home.

Consequences of marital infidelity are always too bitter to condone. This situation has disunited a good number of marital unions that were once very happy in Ihe/Owerre in Nsukka local government of Enugu State

### **Statement of Problem**

Marital Infidelity impacts negatively on the development in any given area due to its effect on people involved. Resources that are made for the development of the family are deviated for extra-marital affairs and the treatment of HIV/AIDS (Kenya Forum, 2013). Marital infidelity in the family has an effect on reproductive health of the people involved in it. Marital infidelity has deleterious effects on the reproductive health (fertility or conception of children) and consequently, marriages. This is because unsafe sexual liaisons put the involved individuals at risk of HIV/STD's and other infectious diseases. Smith (2007) found out that men acquire HIV through having affairs outside marriage and thereby infecting their wives. Those involved in multiple sex partnerships hardly care to use condom without the fear of HIV and AIDS or other sexually transmitted diseases, once their basic needs are met which could be food, shelter or clothing. Marital infidelity perforates the sacredness and sanctity of marriage institution as well as family in the society. It has rendered a number of marriages meaningless by destroying the institutions of marriage and family.

Research on marital infidelity shows that it leads to marital strife leading to divorce, wife battering, prostitution in urban areas and the spread of Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV) and Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome (AIDS) (National Aids Control Council (NACC) 2007). Marital infidelity has been associated with increased risk of mental health problems, including depression and anxiety (Cano & O' Leary, 2000). Despite its effects on the health of their family members and the society at large, it is worrisome to observe that married individuals still indulge in extramarital affairs. What could be behind this rise? It is based on this that the study set out to find out public opinion on marital infidelity in Ihe/Owerre in Nsukka Local Government of Enugu State.

### **Objectives of Study**

The study aimed to determine whether:

- i. Families who engage in marital infidelity are more likely to experience divorce than those who do not.
- ii. Males are more likely to engage in marital infidelity than females.
- iii. Educated people are more likely to engage in marital infidelity than uneducated people.
- iv. Those with financial constraint are more likely to indulge in marital infidelity than those who are without such constraint.

### **Literature Review**

Kasyoka Kioko (2015) conducted a study on the determinants of infidelity among married couples in Mwingi Central Constituency Kitui County in Kenya. The study adopted a descriptive survey research design as well as a structured questionnaire, focus group discussion and interview schedule. The population of the study was 19,591 households in Mwingi Central Constituency (MCC) in which a sample size of 265 households were used. The finding of the study reveals that each gender has specific motivators to engage in marital infidelity depending on their specific attitudes towards marital infidelity. The study concluded that the key determinants of marital infidelity among married couples are gender specific and diverse and are broadly classified as cultural, social, physical and economic.

Onwuegbusi (2010) conducted a study on public perceptions of the effects of marital infidelity on the family Idemili North Local Government Area of Anambra State. Population of the study was 193,952 in which 86,201 were married men while 107, 751 were married women. The study adopted the systematic sampling approach with a sample size of married 530 respondents aged 25-45 years. The finding of the study indicated that inability of partners to provide the material needs of their partners in marriage often leads one of the partners to seek assistance outside the marriage and in so doing get involved in marital infidelity. The study concluded that marital infidelity has wrecked a number of marriages, breaking them apart.

Idoko (2017) conducted a study on public perception on the prevalence and causes of marital infidelity among married women in Enugu North L.G.A, Enugu State, Nigeria. The study adopted the cross sectional survey design as well as multi-stage sampling technique. Population of the study was 321, 510 with a sample size of 400 respondents. The findings of the study showed that a majority of the respondents were aware that married women engaged in marital infidelity. A total of 77.6% of the respondents identified sexual infidelity as the most common form of infidelity, and 28.5% agreed to economic support as the major reasons women engage in marital infidelity. The study also found that religious opposition and customs had a significant influence on people's attitude towards marital infidelity in Enugu North Local Government Area. The study concluded that married women who engage in infidelity do so because of sexual benefits (satisfying their sexual urge) as well as for economic support.

Mapfumo (2016) examined unfaithfulness among married couples in Manicaland Zimbabwe. The study adopted a mixed method design using approaches from the quantitative and qualitative paradigms. Questionnaire and focus group discussion were also used for data collection. Forty-three (43) respondents participated in the study. The findings of the study revealed that the common understanding of infidelity/unfaithfulness was a married person's sex relationship with a person outside the principal relationship; infidelity was more prevalent among married men than it was among married women. Reasons for infidelity included sex, finance, respect, dignity and luxuries. The effects of unfaithfulness were diseases, stress, violence and divorce. The study also found that, after being cheated on, one would seek for counselling failure which divorce would be the final resort. The study concluded that the understanding of the concept of infidelity in this study was as much as it was understood elsewhere to mean sexual intercourse between at least one dyadic partner and another person who does not belong to the primary relationship.

Akinade and Dulaman (2002), cited in Nwadike (2014), investigated how sexual contacts outside marriage take place in exchange for money and other material compensation. The study adopted descriptive survey. Structured questionnaire was used as instrument for data collection. A total of 308 married respondents were interviewed. The result indicated that many married people have sex outside marriage in exchange for what they don't have, like getting jobs and promotions among others.

Voughan (2012) identified one most common form of extramarital affair as office affair. It is a major type of affair because more women are now in the work force and they spend more hours at work with co-workers and even travel on the job. This allows close relationship with the opposite sex. Adebayo (2012) frowns at marital infidelity and he is of the opinion that marriage institution is no longer held in high esteem in the contemporary Nigeria society and that infidelity attracts penalties of confessing and dying afterwards. Hughes (2009), however, posits that couples who engage in extramarital affair should be charged to court for adultery. They could be sued by the jilted spouse or stand as correspondents in divorce proceeding. According to Platt & colleagues (2008), adult children who knew about their father's infidelity were about more likely to engage in philandering.

Whyle (2008) posits that sexual disorder, either on the part of the man or the woman, may lead to marital infidelity. Sexual disorder on the part of the man may be impotence, a situation where he cannot reach erections fully to satisfy his wife's sexual needs. The woman may be frigid in which the man finds it difficult to penetrate and usually gets away annoyed. The above may lead him or her to engage in marital infidelity. Also, a situation where the husband and wife are no more physically attracted to each other, the feeling of guilt sets in, thereby making either of the partners to be unfaithful.

### **Theoretical Framework**

The study adopted the social exchange theory. The theory was propounded mainly by Homans in 1958 in an article titled "Social Behaviour as Exchange", published in American Journal of Sociology. According to Otite and Ogionwo (2006), a network of relationships exists in a society which implies interactions between two or

more individuals or groups. Social interactions or relationships are also known as exchange relationships. It is a process of reciprocity, that is, “give and take” or exchange in social life. The reason for the choice of this theory is because from the facts seen on the causes of marital infidelity, it can be deduced that in most cases of marital infidelity, there is a play of the process of reciprocity between the parties involved. The application of exchange theory in the study explains the rationale behind extra-marital affairs. In any relationship that involves two people, there is no one who comes into the relationship with nothing to offer in reciprocity. As it is obtainable elsewhere, in Ihe/Owerre in Nsukka Local Government Area of Enugu State, men and women who get involved in marital infidelity always offer one thing in exchange for another. In a situation where a woman for instance is not getting favourable attention on her material and financial needs from her husband, she goes all out of herself to seek for ways of meeting her material and financial needs. In most cases, she gets the attention of a man who may be lacking sexual gratification or sincere love and affection in his own marriage. These two individuals therefore will come into this relationship, with each offering something to reciprocate for what he or she receives in the relationship. When the public does not seem to condemn extramarital affairs within a community, there seems to be a justification of such exchange or reciprocity between the parties involved. Yet such reciprocity is absurd and a misappropriation of values. If, however, the exchange theory becomes more applicable within marriage relationships in Ihe/Owerre whereby married couples in mutual relationships try always to reciprocate the needs of each other in the most meaningful manner, then marital infidelity will gradually fizzle out in the Area.

**Area of Study**

The study area is Ihe/Owerre in Nsukka metropolis. Nsukka metropolis is the center of Nsukka Local Government Area with a projected population of 411,700 (National Bureau of Statistics, 2016). Nsukka is bounded by other Local Government Areas which are Igbo-Eze South and Udenu North and East; Igbo Etiti and Uzo-uwani on the South and West respectively. Nsukka Urban is one of the urban in Enugu state which serves the political senatorial head-quarters of six surrounding Local Government Areas. Nsukka Urban is known as the site of the University of Nigeria, the first indigenous Nigerian University founded by Dr. Nnamdi Azikiwe, the first president of Nigeria. Nsukka metropolis consists of three prominent communities namely: Nkpunano, Ihe/Owerre and Nru. Ihe/Owerre constitutes the study area. Each of these communities has villages within them. For instance, Nkpunano comprises Isiakpu, Echara, Umuakashi and Nguru, Ihe/Owerre has Umuntu, Umuachom, Umunkaka, Owere-Enu, Owere-Ani and Amozara, while Nru consists of Iheagu, Edem, Umuoyo, and Ezeamah.

**Data and Method**

The study adopted multi-stage sampling technique in generating data. Cluster and simple random sampling techniques were used to select 200 respondents. This research design is appropriate for collecting information from a section of a study population and also allows the use of a selected sample to describe or represents a large population at a given point in time. Sills (1998) opines that survey is proven to be the best methods for studies of attitudinal and behavioural trends. Questionnaire was used as a major instrument for data collection while In-depth interview served as a complementary data.

Two hundred (200) copies of the questionnaire were administered to the respondents. One hundred and sixty-seven (167) copies of the questionnaire were correctly completed and returned. Therefore, this analysis is based on one hundred and sixty-seven (167) returned copies of the questionnaire. Also, included in the analysis are qualitative data collected through IDI with two (2) people selected from each communities.

**Table 1: Demographic Characteristics of Respondents**

<b>Characteristics</b>	<b>Frequency (N)</b>	<b>Percentage (100)</b>
<b>Sex</b>		
Male	70	41.9
Female	97	58.1

Total	167	100.0
<b>Age</b>		
25-35	86	51.5
36-45	41	24.6
46-55	23	13.8
56-65	17	10.2
<b>Total</b>	<b>167</b>	<b>100.0</b>
<b>Education</b>		
No formal education	39	23.4
Primary education	25	15.0
Secondary education	45	26.9
Tertiary education	58	34.7
<b>Total</b>	<b>167</b>	<b>100.0</b>
<b>Occupation</b>		
Civil servant	56	33.5
Business	44	26.3
School teacher	39	23.4
Private servant	18	10.8
Farmer	10	6.0
<b>Total</b>	<b>167</b>	<b>100.0</b>

**Table 2:** Percentage distribution of respondents on the reasons for infidelity among couples

<b>Responses</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent</b>
Childlessness in marriage	46	27.5
Couples living separately due to their jobs	12	7.2
Financial support	29	17.4
Denial of sex by ones' spouse	44	26.3
Early marriage	13	7.8
Lack of care	23	13.8
<b>Total</b>	<b>167</b>	<b>100.0</b>

**Table 3:** Percentage distribution of respondents on the age range that is likely to engage in marital infidelity

<b>Responses</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent</b>
20-34	62	37.1
35-45	47	28.1
45-56	39	23.4
57 and above	19	11.4
<b>Total</b>	<b>167</b>	<b>100.0</b>

**Table 22:** Percentage distribution of respondents on the cultural strategies that can reduce marital infidelity

<b>Responses</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent</b>
Oat taking/swearing	30	18.0
Banishment from the community	22	13.2
Involvement of elders and chiefs of the community	44	26.3

Counseling	8	4.8
Total	104	62.3
System	63	37.7
<b>Total</b>	<b>167</b>	<b>100.0</b>

**Test of Hypotheses**

**Hypothesis One**

Substantive hypothesis: Families who engage in marital infidelity are more likely to experience divorce than those who do not

Null hypothesis: Families who engage in marital infidelity are less likely to experience divorce than those who do not

**Table 4: Common form of infidelity was cross tabulated with families who engage in marital infidelity are likely to experience divorce using a Chi-square at 0.05 significant level**

**Procedure:** In testing the above hypothesis, the respondent’s view on the common form of infidelity that couples engage in was cross tabulated with the data on families who engage in marital infidelity are likely to experience divorce using a Chi-square at 0.05 significant level

Families who engage in marital infidelity are likely to experience Divorce	Common forms of infidelity that couples engage in by families who engage in marital infidelity			
	Sexual Affair	Love Affair	Office Affair	Total
Yes	31(29.8)	48(37.8)	10(21.3)	89(89.0)
No	25(26.2)	23(33.2)	30(18.7)	78(78.0)
<b>Total</b>	<b>56(56.0)</b>	<b>71(71.0)</b>	<b>40(40.0)</b>	<b>167(167.0)</b>

X<sup>2</sup> = 18.803, df = 2, P=.000

**Decision Rule**

The decision rule states that if p < .05 reject the null hypothesis (H<sub>0</sub>), but if p > .05 retain the null hypothesis. Therefore, since the p-value .000 is less than .05, we reject the null hypothesis and accept the substantive hypothesis which states that families who engage in marital infidelity are more likely to experience divorce than those who do not. Therefore, we conclude that families who engage in marital infidelity are more likely to experience divorce than those who do not.

**Hypothesis Two**

**Table 5: Males are more likely to engage in marital instability than female**

Substantive hypothesis: Males are more likely to engage in marital instability than female

Null hypothesis: Males are less likely to engage in marital instability than female

**Procedure:** In testing the above hypothesis, the respondent’s sex was cross tabulated with the data on which gender do you think engage more in marital infidelity using a Chi-square at 0.05 significant level.

Sex	Which gender do you think engage more in marital infidelity		
	Male	Female	Total
Male	38(36.0)	32(34.0)	70(70.0)

Female	48(50.0)	49(47.0)	97(97.0)
<b>Total</b>	<b>86(86.0)</b>	<b>81(81.0)</b>	<b>167(167.0)</b>

$\chi^2 = 3.75, df = 1, P = .540$

**Decision Rule**

The decision rule states that if  $p < .05$  reject the null hypothesis ( $H_0$ ), but if  $p > .05$  retain the null hypothesis. Since the p-value .540 is greater than .05, we reject the substantive hypothesis and accept the null hypothesis which states that males are more likely to engage in marital instability than female. Therefore, we conclude that males are more likely to engage in marital instability than female.

**Table 6: Educated people are more likely to engage in marital infidelity than non-educated ones**

Substantive hypothesis: Educated people are more likely to engage in marital infidelity than non-educated ones

Null hypothesis: Educated people are less likely to engage in marital infidelity than non-educated ones

**Procedure:** In testing the above hypothesis, educational status was cross tabulated with common form of infidelity that couples engage using a Chi-square at 0.05 significant level.

Educational status	Common form of infidelity that couples engage in			Total
	Sexual Affair	Love Affair	Office Affair	
No formal education	14(13.1)	16(16.6)	9(9.3)	39(39.0)
Primary education	12(8.4)	11(10.6)	2(6.0)	25(25.0)
Secondary education	11(15.1)	16(19.1)	18(10.8)	45(45.0)
Tertiary education	19(19.4)	28(24.7)	11(13.9)	58(58.0)
<b>Total</b>	<b>56(56.0)</b>	<b>71(71.0)</b>	<b>40(40.0)</b>	<b>167(167.0)</b>

$\chi^2 = 11.852, df = 6, P = .065$

Since the p-value .065 is less than .05, we reject null hypothesis and accept the substantive hypothesis which states that educated people are more likely to engage in marital infidelity than non-educated ones. Therefore, we conclude that educated people are more likely to engage in marital infidelity than non-educated ones.

**Table 7: Those with financial constraint are more likely to indulge in marital infidelity than those who are not**

Substantive hypothesis: Those with financial constraint are more likely to indulge in marital infidelity than those who are not

Null hypothesis: Those with financial constraint are less likely to indulge in marital infidelity than those who are not

**Procedure:** In testing the above hypothesis, occupation was cross tabulated with on common form of infidelity that couples engage in using a Chi-square at 0.05 significant level.

Occupation	Common form of infidelity that couples engage in			Total
	Sexual Affair	Love Affair	Office Affair	
Civil servant	23(18.8)	21(23.8)	12(13.4)	56(56.0)



Business man/woman	14(14.8)	28(18.7)	2(10.5)	44(44.0)
School teacher	11(13.1)	12(16.6)	16(9.3)	39(39.0)
Private servant	3(6.0)	5(7.7)	10(4.3)	18(18.0)
Farmer	5(3.4)	5(4.3)	0(2.4)	10(10.0)
<b>Total</b>	<b>56(56.0)</b>	<b>71(71.0)</b>	<b>40(40.0)</b>	<b>167(167.0)</b>

$\chi^2 = 32.633$ ,  $df = 8$ ,  $P = .000$

Since the p-value .000 is less than .05, we reject null hypothesis and accept the substantive hypothesis which states that those with financial constraint are more likely to indulge in marital infidelity than those who are not. Therefore, we conclude that those with financial constraint are more likely to indulge in marital infidelity than those who are not.

### Summary of Research Findings

The findings of the study indicated that there was high rate of marital infidelity in the Local Government Area. The practice of this social vice has been shown by the survey to be very rampant among the age brackets of 20-34 and 35-45 who constitute the majority of married couples. Incidentally, these age brackets happen to be the greatest in total number of respondents to the survey. It, therefore, indicates that this ill practice is very much rooted in the Local Government Area. The survey shows that the number of married men and women who are most involved in this trend is not equally distributed rather the males engage more in the act of infidelity. According to the exchange theory each party has something different to offer in the marriage, when one party has nothing to offer in the marriage it leads to marital infidelity. On the causes of marital infidelity in Ihe/Owerre community in Nsukka L.G.A of Enugu State, the survey has shown that this phenomenon is going on in the Local Government Area because most of the marriages in the area lack sincere love and affection among the couples. It also shows that inability of partners to have children in marriage sexual denial by one's spouse often leads one of the partners to seek for assistance outside the marriage and in so doing get involved in marital infidelity.

The survey result showed that the major cause of most divorce and separation cases in the study area was marital infidelity. The research observed that there certainly can be a solution to marital infidelity in the study area. The solution is shown by the survey to be the involvement of Elders and Chiefs in cases of infidelity other solutions shown by the survey are oath taking/ swearing and banishment from the community. The survey finally showed that the public views marital infidelity as social vice and aberration that should not be accommodated. The public frowns with disfavour on cases of marital infidelity.

### Discussion of the Findings

The Ihe/Owerre people engage in marital infidelity as 86% of males form the greater percentage. From the research findings, it could be seen that male engage more in marital infidelity than female as this is in support of the study published in the National Opinion Research Center's (2013) found that while the percentage of men who admitted to infidelity has held constant over the last two decades, the percentage of wives who reported having affairs rose almost 40 percent. A participant in in-depth interview has this to say:

"The society we live in gives males that upper hand thereby supporting infidelity. Some of societies stress on the importance of male issue in the families, so, when there is no male issue in the family, some family members and even friends will encourage the male to go and do what others are doing to get a male issue."

Invariably, the educated ones who should know the basics of good health and contamination of diseases form the greater percentage of women who indulge in this abhorring act. During in-depth interview a participant has this to say:

“Marital Infidelity is a not thing to be proud of because it comes with a lot side effects like infection and diseases, disorganization of the family and the likes. In families where things are done together when, you get diseases like HIV/AIDS he/she is likely to pass it to the partner.”

Another participant is of the opinion that:

“Greater effort should be made by religious and related organizations in continual organization of workshops, seminars etc to give room for a well prepared mind before venturing into marriage.”

Financial constraints have made many married couple to go astray. In the quest to seek material satisfaction, one loses his/her sanity in pursuit of vane glory. From the findings, it is clear that a family where marital infidelity is practiced has no peace. Divorce is certain as sexual affairs, love affair and office affairs are not exempted from common forms of infidelity practiced.

An IDI respondent has this to say:

“It is not entirely about financial problems that lead to marital infidelity but, being insatiable with what one has acquired i.e. greed. He is of the opinion that contentment with what one has will go a long way in helping the situation.”

### **Conclusion**

Based on the above findings, the researcher therefore concludes that married couples who engage in infidelity do so based on early marriage, lack of care and couples living apart from each other and financial support. Marital infidelity is not religiously and culturally tolerated in the study area. Thus, anyone who engages in marital infidelity brings shame and disgrace to his/herself, spouse, kindred, children, the entire family and community. On the part of the family, a number of children have been abandoned by their parents in cases where marital infidelity has resulted in divorce. Such children suffer untold trauma when they find themselves in families where no peace or unity reigns. Their family becomes alien to them. The society is at the receiving end of the ills of marital infidelity. Meager percentage of the respondents supported the idea of counseling while a larger percentage advocated for involvement of elders and chiefs in the community.

### **Recommendation**

Based on the findings of the study, the following recommendations are made:

1. Couples to be should be sensitized about marriage that it is not a child play. Enough symposiums and seminar should be put in place to create awareness on the basis of taking marriage serious and not playing down on its importance and role. Religious societies should put more efforts in making sure that quality marriages course is done in their various Parishes to boost continued harmony after marriage. Marriage course can be extended to one year during courtship.
2. Marriage counseling centers should be functional in communities and rural areas with experienced and well trained marriage counselors seeing to the needs of married couples at such centers when the need arise aside chiefs and elders in the communities.
3. Government at all level should provide job for her citizens and empower them to make ends meet. This will help to reduce much of the sexual practices in the society especially on the part of women.
4. Divorce is not the best option to marital infidelity. This has proven to create more harm to the family affected, children, and society at large rather; elders in the community should be sorted for who are conversant with culture.

Sincere love and affection, honesty and openness to each other are important in marriage. These values once acquired will put every other thing in shape and make their marriage a happy union.

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