

A STUDY ON FACTORS AFFECTING PERSEVERANCE AND COMMITMENT IN
CHRISTIAN MARRIAGES

by

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Liberty University

A Dissertation Presented in Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree

Doctor of Education

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ABSTRACT

The concept of marriage is as old as the world itself and in Christianity, the bond is promised to sustain a lifetime. Current research has presented little insight into the concept of marriage in Christianity and the reasons leading to divorce among Christian couples in developed nations as opposed to underdeveloped nations. The purpose of this study was to understand the role of perseverance, culture, and extended family involvement on Christian practice, marriage, and divorce in developed and underdeveloped nations. The philosophy that guided the study was positivism. A total of 100 participants who regularly attend church were selected to participate in this research. Participants were adults between the ages of 18 and 60 years old. An evidence-based Divorce Propensity scale and attitudes towards divorce scale were distributed among the participants to assess their attitudes and propensity towards divorce under religious norms. Statistical analysis was applied, and technique used for analysis included descriptive statistics, two-way analysis of variance (ANOVA), bivariate analysis, and multivariate analysis. Participants' religious identities were factored into the data analysis. This was to determine what effect culture, extended family, community, and civilization had on the perseverance and commitment of the participants in their marriages regarding issues that could lead to divorce. For the purposes of this research, the standard of scriptural teaching on the topic of marriage was the same for all participants. The results of multivariate analyses and Pearson's test indicated that culture has a strongly significant impact on the Divorce Propensity of Christians in both developed and underdeveloped nations. However, the study revealed that the population of Nigeria was more likely to avoid divorce due to cultural interference and social pressure than those in USA.

Keywords: marriage, divorce, culture, commitment, perseverance, community

Copyright Page (Optional)

Dedication

Acknowledgments (Optional)

Table of Contents

ABSTRACT	3
Copyright Page (Optional)	4
Dedication	5
Acknowledgments (Optional)	6
Table of Contents.....	7
List of Tables	10
List of Figures	12
List of Abbreviations	13
CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION	14
Overview	14
Background	15
Situation to Self	16
Problem Statement	16
Purpose Statement	18
Significance of the Study	18
Research Questions	19
Definitions	21
Summary	21
CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW	23
Overview	23
Theoretical Framework	24
The Church and Marriage	24
Stigma	26
Biblical View & Church Attendance	28
Marriage in African Culture	30
Effects of Culture on Marriage	35
Divorce	41
What About Christian Conservatism?	41
Probable Reasons for Divorce	44
Effects of Divorce	46

Marital Quality Predictor	51
Intimate Partner Violence (IPV)	53
Older Adults Accept Divorce	56
Summary	57
CHAPTER THREE: METHODS	59
Overview	59
Design	60
Research Questions	61
Setting	62
Participants	62
Sampling and Procedures	63
The Researcher's Role	64
Data Collection	65
Online Survey	65
Scoring System for Attitudes towards Divorce Scale	66
Scoring System for Divorce Propensity Scale	67
Gender	70
Marital status	70
Parental status	70
Racial status	70
Regional status	70
Educational level	70
Income per household	70
Data Analysis	71
Measures	73
Variables	74
Validity	74
External Validity	75
Internal Validity	75
Reliability	76
Objectivity	76
Ethical Considerations	77

Summary	77
CHAPTER FOUR: RESULTS	79
Overview	79
Descriptive Results	80
Study Findings	82
ANOVA	82
Summary	120
CHAPTER FIVE: DISCUSSION	122
Overview	122
Summary of Findings	124
Discussion of Findings	127
Implications	130
Limitations	134
Recommendations for Further Research	134
Summary	135
REFERENCES	138
APPENDIX	153

List of Tables

Table 1: Descriptive Statistics of Demographic Data.....	80
Table 2: Frequencies Table for Location.....	80
Table 3: Frequencies Table for Gender.....	80
Table 4: Frequencies Table for Age.....	81
Table 5: Frequencies Table for Education.....	81
Table 6: Frequencies Table for Marital Status.....	81
Table 7: Frequencies Table for Socioeconomic Status.....	81
Table 8: Frequencies Table for Employment.....	82
Table 9: ANOVA Table for Marital Status Against ATD and DP.....	82
Table 10: Correlation Table for ATD and DP in Nigerian and American Population.....	83
Table 11: ATD Correlation Table for Nigeria Vs. US.....	85
Table 12: DF Correlation Table for Nigeria Vs. US.....	87
Table 13: Chi square for Christian Marriage and Age in Nigerian and American Population.....	89
Table 14: Chi square for Christian Marriage and Education in Nigerian and American Population.....	90
Table 15: Chi square for Christian Marriage and Geographical Location in Nigerian and American Population.....	91
Table 16: Chi square for Christian Marriage and Gender in Nigerian and American Population.....	92
Table 17: Chi square for Christian Marriage and Socioeconomic Status in Nigerian and American Population.....	93
Table 18: Chi square for Christian Marriage and Employment in Nigerian and American Population.....	94
Table 19: ATD and DP Correlation Matrix for US and Nigeria.....	95
Table 20: T-test for Attitude Towards Divorce According to Age Group in Nigeria.....	99
Table 21: T-test for Divorce Propensity According to Age Group in Nigeria.....	100
Table 22: T-test for Attitude Towards Divorce for Age Group 1 – US Vs. Nigeria.....	100
Table 23: T-test for Attitude Towards Divorce for Age Group 2 – US Vs. Nigeria.....	101
Table 24: T-test for Divorce Propensity for Age Group 1 – US Vs. Nigeria.....	102

Table 25: T-test for Divorce Propensity for Age Group 2 – US Vs. Nigeria.....	102
Table 26: T-test for Attitude Towards Divorce in the US According to Gender.....	103
Table 27: T-test for Divorce Propensity in the US According to Gender.....	104
Table 28: T-test for Attitude Towards Divorce in Nigeria According to Gender.....	105
Table 29: T-test for Divorce Propensity in Nigeria According to Gender.....	105
Table 30: T-test for Attitude Towards Divorce in Males – US Vs. Nigeria.....	106
Table 31: T-test for Attitude Towards Divorce in Females – US Vs. Nigeria.....	107
Table 32: T-test for Divorce Propensity in Males – US Vs. Nigeria.....	107
Table 33: T-test for Divorce Propensity in Females – US Vs. Nigeria.....	108
Table 34: Regression for Impact of Culture on Divorce Propensity (Total Population)	109
Table 35: Regression for Impact of Culture on Divorce Propensity in Nigeria.....	110
Table 36: Regression for Impact of Culture on Divorce Propensity in the United States.....	111
Table 37: Regression for Impact of Culture on Attitude Towards Divorce.....	112
Table 38: Multivariate and Pearson Results for Impact of Culture and Children on Divorce Propensity.....	113

List of Figures

Figure 1: Correlation Plot for ATD and DP.....	84
Figure 2: ATD Correlation Plot for Nigeria Vs. US.....	86
Figure 3: DP Correlation Plot for Nigeria Vs. US.....	88
Figure 4: ATD and DP Plot for US and Nigeria.....	98
Figure 5: Regression Plot for Impact of Culture on Divorce Propensity (Total Population)	109
Figure 6: Regression Plot for Impact of Culture on Divorce Propensity in Nigeria.....	110
Figure 7: Regression Plot for Impact of Culture on Divorce Propensity in the United States...	111
Figure 8: Regression Plot for Impact of Culture on Attitude Towards Divorce.....	112

List of Abbreviations

American Association of Christian Counselors (AACCC)

Attachment to God Inventory (AGI)

CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY

Introduction

“So they are no longer two but one flesh. What therefore God has joined together, let not man separate.” (*English Standard Version, 2016*, Mathew 19:6; Mark 10:9).

There is generally a consensus among Christians that marriage is for a lifetime (Perry, 2018). Coupled with this consensus is the belief in the statement made by Jesus in the Scriptures, where he said that no one is permitted to put asunder what has been joined in marriage (Mark 10:9). Despite the shared knowledge and agreement that marriage is for a lifetime, research has continued to show a high rate of divorce among Christians (Tuttle & Davis, 2015). This seems like a general problem all over the world as divorce increases globally. If Christians believe God’s Word to be true and believe that following God’s instruction is important, this should translate to a low divorce rate among Christians across the world. However, this is not the case, as illustrated by several research studies over the years. What these research studies did note was a significant parity between divorce rates among non-Christians and Christians in the United States of America (McGoldrick et al., 2016). This is not a common phenomenon across the globe, as there are places where the divorce rate for Christians is much lower. Some of those countries include underdeveloped nations like Nigeria in West Africa.

Research on the topic of divorce in Africa has shown that the divorce rate is generally low when compared with countries like the USA. Ademiluka (2019) stated that “the traditional African perception of the subservience of women is inherited by the church” (p. 4). The difference between the rate of divorce among Christians in the western world and those in developing nations like Nigeria seems to be driven by factors peculiar or in relation to the country in consideration.

This present study took a quantitative research approach to study the factors that inform the decision to divorce among Christians living in these two nations, the United States and Nigeria. Each nation represents a pattern of divorce noticed in similar nations in their category, developed and underdeveloped. An equal number of participants from each of the two countries were used for the study. The administered questionnaire was designed to provide the lived experience of the participants for data analysis.

Background

Catholic and Protestant Christians agree that marriage is to be a contract between a man and a woman (Perry, 2018). Most Christians agree that divorce is not approved by God and that God hates it (Malachi 2:16). In the past, many Catholic couples have stayed with their partners, not because they were entirely satisfied with their marriage but because they did not want to go against the will of God (Afifi et al., 2013). This used to be the stance of the Church and her members on the issue of divorce, but it seems to have changed recently. Numerous researchers have found divorce to be on the rise in the world and unfortunately, the same goes for the Church.

This research found a plethora of studies on the causes of the rise in the divorce rate in the Church and the reasons for such, as well as a possible solution to the problem. The rise in the rate of divorce as shown in various research studies varies from place to place. In countries like the United States, the divorce rate among Christians was found to be the same as it was among non-church goers (Tuttle & Davis, 2015). However, this report is not the same all over the world. Clark and Brauner-Otto (2015) found that in underdeveloped nations, such as on the African continent, the divorce rate is not increasing that much among Christians or in the Church. There exists in the literature a gap regarding the difference in the rate of divorce among Christians of

different geographical locations.

Situation to Self

A Christian is mandated by Scripture to live out a life in adherence to God's will. This may become a challenge with daily hurdles that must be crossed to become the best they can for Christ. Marriage in a peaceful environment between loving partners will, for obvious reasons, be an especially important factor of influence for success. Anything that threatens such an important factor should and must be a concern. As people grow and discover self, they look around for greener pastures where they can flourish and accomplish that which they desire. The search for such pastures can at times lead one to move from one region to another. This migration presents other challenges that may or may not be like what have been experienced in the region of one's birth. The difference in divorce rates and other cultural norms and belief systems are all made apparent to the immigrant and decisions must be made to either live by the newly-found world paradigm or not. Acculturation is truly an expectation in the life of every immigrant, but the immigrant must answer the question about what they would like to adhere to in the new world. As a Christian, the issue of the high divorce rate among American immigrants is such a concern for an African immigrant committed to living a life of total commitment to the true standard of scriptural teachings. Therefore, a study of the reasons that contribute to this problem and possible solutions to the problem are of great importance.

Problem Statement

Earlier in this chapter, it was mentioned that the divorce rate in the Church is on the rise. This continues to be a great concern among Christians and pastoral counselors who struggle with the pain of irreconcilable differences among couples despite their efforts at reconciling them. The problem is that there is a large gap in the literature regarding the reasons for the discrepancy

between the high rate of divorce among Christians in developed nations as compared to their counterparts in the underdeveloped nations of the world, despite the constant of the Word of God (which is the same globally).

As clearly shown in the next chapter, numerous researchers have concluded that divorce is on the rise globally as well as in the Church (Kostenberger, 2010; Clark & Brauner-Otto, 2015; Tuttle & Davis, 2015; Ademiluka, 2019; Perry, 2018). Research conducted among Protestant Christians in the US showed that divorce, though not biblically acceptable, is seen as an option among Christians and that the rate is at par with the rate present among non-Christians (Perry, 2018). Other research has shown a growing divorce rate among Nigerian Christians, though a far lower rate than among non-Christians in the same area (Ademiluka, 2019). These researchers did show common issues that divorcees in both areas face, including stigmatization, shame, and exclusion from certain groups or functions (Ademiluka, 2019).

A Christian divorcee in the U.S. does not want to be the reason for the breakdown of a marriage and tends to cover this up among other Christians in their community (Perry, 2018). This is also common among African divorcees who face stigmatization and arguably more severe isolation in their community (Odimegwu et al., 2017). Both Perry's (2018) and Odimegwu et al.'s (2017) research showed consistency in factors of resiliency, perseverance, and culture among divorced Christians, especially concerning extended family and community involvement. It is important to determine if these reasons are in fact responsible for the low rate of divorce among African Christians compared with Christians in the U.S.

Purpose Statement

The purpose of this study was to understand the role of perseverance, culture, and extended family involvement on Christian practice and marriage and divorce in developed and underdeveloped nations. For the purposes of this research, divorce was generally defined as a legal end to a constituted marriage. The research philosophy that guided this study was positivism, which has its roots in the work of Comte (1975). By using this research philosophy, the influence of culture, civilization, and scriptural interpretation in decisions leading to divorce among Christians both in developed and undeveloped nations of the world was interpreted.

Significance of the Study

The significance of this study is to contribute to the knowledge base in discerning how best to interpret the rising rate of divorce among Christians. Pastoral counselors need to be equipped with enough research to make informed decisions to diagnose and help address the presenting problems relating to marriage. Results from this research clarified what role culture plays in marriage and divorce decisions, especially regarding how extended family and community involvement could sway the decision-making process.

A couple in the U.S. may have a different level of extended family involvement in their marriage and may therefore not consider such before deciding to divorce compared to someone from Africa who may regard extended family involvement a central factor to consider. This research, in many ways, can provide counselors with the tools to interpret how civilization and development affects marriage based on geographical location. Familusi (2019) reported that it is generally accepted that the Church does not consider divorce as an option. However, this does not seem to be the deciding factor for Christians considering divorce, as it does not account for the high rate of divorce among Christians (Perry, 2018). Dimka and Dien (2013) found that

community isolation and stigma is one significant issue that keeps women committed to reconciling with their spouse, but such isolation is not as pronounced in developed nations like the U.S. (Paul, 2019). The same research also concluded that marriage is viewed more as an extension of an already extended family in underdeveloped nations as compared to the popular view of autonomy for nuclear families in the western world (Paul, 2019).

Research Questions

The role of researcher in interpretive quantitative research, is data collection and interpretation of same from different perspectives. In quantitative research with an interpretive approach, research findings are generally quantifiable and observable. Interpretive method depends on quantifiable observations and data that leads to statistical analysis and modelling of same into a holistic process of discovery (McGoldrick et al., 2016). To help investigate the perceptions of the participants and understand the phenomenon, the following questions were drafted as the research questions for this study:

RQ1. Does culture play a part in interpreting the Scriptures regarding divorce decisions?

RQ2. How did the participants describe the application of culture to their marriage?

RQ3. How did the participants describe family intervention?

RQ4. Does technological development and/or civilization aid divorce among Christians in developed countries?

The goal was to conduct a quantitative analysis of people's responses and perceptions of the research problem. As much as possible, all ethical rules of primary data collection were strictly adhered to, so as not to cause the participants any harm. The research was aimed at proffering solutions to understanding the problem of divorce rates among Christians. The goal was to gather as much information as possible that captured the perceptions of the respondents.

The set of questions (See Appendix A) contains questions targeted at participants' responses and perceptions of their marriages. Since responses were personal and reflective of the role culture plays, they depicted what participants believed to be their culture at the time of the survey. As much as possible, this research set out to get the exact perceptions of the participant, free of societal influence and intellectual constructs. The researcher distributed a 5-point Likert scale questionnaire among the participants using online surveying methods to ask questions and apply the right instruments in data analysis. Personal assumptions, predefinitions, and prejudices regarding why or how the participant experienced what they experienced were reduced or completely removed if possible. A 5-point Likert-type scale ranging from 0 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree) was distributed among the targeted population of participants. There were couples answering the set of questions in the survey. If necessary, follow-up questions clarified responses to make them completely individualistic. Ambiguous responses also needed follow up. Since these survey questions were administered to participants via the internet and results were received through the same medium, the participants were handpicked by resident ministers.

This research set out to be interpretive, which means the researcher looked to gain a deeper understanding of the subject matter of the research to be able to reach an informed conclusion (Adams & Anders van Manen, 2017). This method allowed the researcher to investigate the meaning of a perception or response related to issues that may have had implications or informed the reasons for the research. This method is geared towards discovering the insights of the participants as they relate to the subject of the research phenomenon of interest. The researcher examined all data from all possible angles to understand the full essence of the phenomenon.

Definitions

Below are the terms pertinent to this study.

1. *Marriage* – This is the legal union of two people, publicly and permanently (McGoldrick et al., 2016).
2. *Divorce* – This is a legal end to a constituted marriage (McGoldrick et al., 2016).
3. *Perseverance* – This is the persistency of the spouse in continuing with the marriage despite odds or challenges (Perry, 2016).
4. *Culture* – This is the set of customs, habits, or beliefs of a group of people or social gathering in a community (McGoldrick et al., 2016).
5. *Commitment* – This is the dedication to the cause of the marriage (Perry, 2016).

Summary

The focus of this paper was the high rate of divorce among Christians. A significant difference was observed between the rate of divorce among Christians in developed and underdeveloped nations. This chapter introduced the research problem, presenting the background, problem statement, and purpose statement. The chapter also highlighted the significance of this study among Christian communities and why this investigation needed to be conducted. A large gap is present in current literature regarding the increasing rate of divorce among Christian communities in developed nations as compared to underdeveloped nations. The study was essential as it highlights the roles of perseverance, culture, and extended family involvement on Christian marriages and divorce in developed and underdeveloped nations.

The investigation adopted a quantitative approach with positivistic philosophy. The goal of this investigation was to assess the research problem through the perceptions and insights of a targeted population of participants, including Christian couples who are either currently divorced

or remarried. The literature has highlighted various reasons associated with the increasing rate of divorce among Christian couples; however, most of this literature lacks a quantitative analysis. This investigation intended to fill the literature gap by using a quantitative approach, aiming to identify possible solutions to divorce presented in Scripture and the teachings of Jesus. By using a close-ended questionnaire survey-based approach, the researcher aimed to collect as much information as possible from the targeted participant population. The goal was to gather quantitative information that captured the experiences of the interviewees. The next chapter presents scholarly evidence through a literature review, highlighting past studies investigating reasons for the disparity in Christian marriages in developed vs. underdeveloped nations.

CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW

Overview

The concept of marriage is as old as the world itself, and according to Scripture, it is an idea that was fully God's (Genesis 2:18-25). The Bible made it clear that after Creation was completed, God saw that everything was good but that man had no companion. So, He made provision in the form of a woman and placed them with one another in the Garden. The concept of marriage has undergone many reformations, laws have been enacted, and different views of marriage have moved the original concept of marriage towards mainstream ideas. The world has witnessed a high rate of divorce, which unfortunately is not different in the Church. Perseverance and commitment are subjective, as different people seem to define the words and their limits in ways that seem fit to their personal situations. Even in the Christian community, there are different standards applied by different cultures and groups of people in defining these terms as they pertain to marriage. Jesus reaffirmed the position of God concerning marriage when He stated in Mathew (19:4-6) that a man will leave his parents and cleave unto his wife, and the two will be together for life. Some literature has examined how culture affects marriage and how conservative Christians try to cover the shame of divorce. There seems to be a large disparity between the rate of divorce among Christians in developing nations and those in underdeveloped nations, but this disparity has not been fully researched. The reason for the gap is unknown, but there is a common factor, which is Christianity based on the truth of the Scriptures. Many differences exist in the areas of culture, perception of marriage, and the role of families in developed and underdeveloped nations. The gaps found in the reviewed literature are discussed, as they led to the focus of this research.

Theoretical Framework

According to the Bible, divorce is forbidden except in the act of adultery (Mathew 5:32). The teachings on divorce among Christians differ significantly between denominations. As in other religions, marriage is considered a sacrament as the couple makes a promise in front of God to stay together for life. Divorce is therefore recognized in scriptures as a despicable act that must be committed only under extreme conditions. The Christian teachings on divorce emphasize that marriage is for life, as the bride and groom make a sacred promise to remain faithful to each other for life and that only death can drive them apart. God spiritually unites the couple, and husband and wife become ‘one flesh’ when they get married (Styles, 2014). Homer (2015) quoted role collaboration theory, which implies that the risk of divorce increases when the wife’s income is remarkably high or low. The role collaboration theory addresses the implications and probability of divorce from socioeconomic perspectives. Role collaboration theory suggests that when the perceptions of equality between the couple are similar, marriage stability is strongest and a fair division of labor is assumed (McGoldrick et al., 2016).

The Church and Marriage

Much of the research on this topic has concluded that the Church views marriage as an institution of God that it is supposed to be a permanent structure. Marriage is the most significant and powerful unit of a family (McGoldrick et al., 2016). Kostenberger (2010) stated that “family is indeed of vital importance for the survival and flourishing of human society, and families that pattern themselves after God’s revealed will in his Word are absolutely critical for sustaining a vibrant church and a morally intact society” (p. 256). Perry (2018) emphasized that conservative Christians in the United States agreed and adhered to the teaching of the Bible, saying that God does not approve of divorce. But when it happens, they are “ashamed” of the act and push the

blame on their partner (Perry, 2018). Perry stated, "...Religiously committed Americans in my study were more likely to portray their former spouse as the initiator of the divorce and blame their former spouse's faults, while also being less likely to cite their own contribution to the divorce" (p. 14). This act of shifting blame attempts to shield Christians from stigmatization (Perry, 2018). The reason(s) for a high rate of divorce among Christians is one of the many gaps noticed in the existing literature. It is important to mention that the divorce rate is not high among Christians in underdeveloped nations. If divorce is biblically wrong, and Christians adhere to this value then there must be a reason for the discrepancy between the divorce rates of Christians in developed versus underdeveloped nations.

As noted above, research has indicated that many divorced Christians experience shame within their Christian communities and the Church. Christians are aware of what Jesus said about divorce, and when they do it, they try to cite adultery as the reason for their divorce and blame their spouse as the one who committed the sinful act (Perry, 2018). The researcher noted a discrepancy in the responses given by the participants in this study. Even though many mentioned that their spouse committed the offense that is permissible for divorce, according to the teachings of Jesus, they still asserted that their partner initiated the divorce. Perry (2018) stated that "specifically, men and women who attend religious services more frequently are more likely to say that their former spouse initiated the divorce rather than them" (p. 14). After committing the act, they try to cover the act up with excuses.

It is generally accepted among Christians that the teaching of Jesus on marriage is standard for all Christians. Marriage is said to be a covenant in the Scriptures (Familusi, 2019). It is therefore not acceptable for couples to be divorced. If divorce becomes unavoidable, the couple cannot be remarried (Tuttle & Davis, 2015). Familusi (2019) stated that "it is argued that

Jesus in Matthew 19:9 only permitted divorce but not remarriage” (p. 30). These are clearly stated facts known to exist and be believed by the Church. Research has also pointed to stigmatization in the Church against divorcees. Familusi stated that “from the above, one can see commitment on the part of the man to the woman to an everlasting covenant. Therefore, divorce for whatever reason is a grave breach of covenant” (p. 29). Marriage is seen here as a covenant and not a contract. The literature attests to the fact that marriage is believed to be for a lifetime among Christians. It is therefore surprising to continue to see a high rate of divorce in the Church. What could be the reason for this high rate of divorce, and what are other factors contribute to it? Although the high rate of divorce is peculiar to developed nations, there continues to be a gap in the literature regarding reasons for such rates of divorce among Christians in different cultures.

Stigma

A set of standards of values for living agreed upon by a set of people as bounding could be a reason for stigmatization against those who fall below the set standard. The Bible is the standard for Christians, and despite its various interpretations, certain Scriptures are not disputed. Jesus said except for in cases of adultery, divorce is unacceptable (Matthew 19:9). The statement is a direct teaching and is not ambiguous to interpreters even in this generation. Perry (2018) stated, “... Sexual infidelity is often thought of as one of the only ‘biblical’ grounds for divorce within conservative Protestant communities. Jesus cited marital unfaithfulness as the only exception clause to the rule...” (p. 15). Not meeting the standard of Scripture by divorcing is a reason for stigma within the Church. It is so much so, that Christian divorcees must find a way of deflecting blame to stay relevant in the community of believers. Perry stated that “while conservative Protestants might worry about community stigma, traditional Catholics might need

to deflect blame for the divorce for the sake of avoiding explicit exclusion from their faith community” (p. 15). Divorce is detestable among Catholics (Perry, 2018). Considering this, it would be expected that divorce rates should be low among Catholic Christians, but they are not.

Afifi et al. (2013) quoted one of their research participants as saying:

I think it goes back to religion, I mean everyone in my family was raised Catholic, so it is just like, nowhere in the Catholic religion does it say it is okay to get a divorce ... which is why my parents never did. (p. 247)

The above statement explains why marriage was more stable among past generations of Christians and their divorce rate was very low (not because there were no issues in their marriages, but because they stayed married to avoid the stigma and seclusion they could suffer should they chose to become divorced). To these past generations of Christians, the former was a better choice. This presents an open area for exploration in this research.

Stigmatizing divorcees is not just specific to the western world. In a research study conducted by Odimegwu et al. (2017), it was found that in Sub-Saharan Africa, divorced women are subjected to high levels of stigmatization. Odimegwu et al. (2017) advocated for various stakeholders to embark on a campaign that would protect women from stigmatization, as well as enact laws that could target men who sustain such stigmas. These stigmas were found in the research to be perpetrated by men who usurp power over women in that part of the world (Odimegwu et al., 2017). Stigmatization is a worldwide problem and possibly the reason why rates of divorce are higher among Christians in underdeveloped nations and cultures.

Divorce is not the only factor of stigmatization as it relates to marriage in Africa. Infertility in marriage is also a significant issue. Unfortunately, women suffer in this area much more than men. Dimka and Dein (2013) stated that “women were more likely to suffer verbal

and physical abuse as a consequence of their infertility though it was not denied that men suffer significantly also” (p. 112). This stigma and shame make such marriages susceptible to a breakup. After the breakup, the attack becomes a double assault. Such women, therefore, try to make their marriage work despite their infertility. This situation can lead to polygamy (Dimka & Dein, 2013). Dimka and Dein found that the participants in their study considered children a blessing from God and believed that the absence of such blessing meant disapproval of the relationship. This situation can lead to divorce in certain circumstances and may lead the man to get married to another woman, thereby promoting polygamy.

Biblical View and Church Attendance

A well-researched reason for an enduring marriage is the spousal biblical view and church attendance. It has been the focus of some Christian researchers to uncover reasons for the high rate of divorce in the Church, as it is at par with the secular world (McGoldrick et al., 2016). More than half of marriages consummated end in divorce (McGoldrick et al., 2016).

Research has revealed that church attendance is a factor in marriage satisfaction and rate of divorce in Europe. McDonald et al. (2018) stated that their “...findings show[ed] significant direct effects of religious service attendance and spousal empathy on marital adjustment among married men and women, and of forgiveness among European American married women” (p. 411). The application of what was learned in the Bible and the show of virtues like forgiveness and empathy through church attendance was reflected in marriages and reduced divorce among the Christians considered (McDonald et al., 2018).

In a research study conducted in the United States, a somewhat similar result was obtained. Li et al. (2018) stated that there is “evidence that in...[a] cohort of US nurses, frequent service attendance is associated with lower risk of becoming divorced in mid- and late- life, and

increased likelihood of remarriage among widowed nurses, but not among divorced or separated nurses” (p. 1). The same researchers followed up with those interviewed after a 14-year period and found that “frequent religious services attendance halved the risk of divorce among married women” (Li et al., 2018, p. 13). In other words, frequent religious service attendance and reduced rate of divorce are proportional if the constant of biblical application of church scriptural teaching applies. This is vital information for this research. Despite the high rate of divorce among Christians in developed nations, marital satisfaction and church attendance work well in reducing the probability of divorce (Li et al., 2018). There must be a link between this assertion and the rate of divorce, which is known to be high in the Church.

In Africa, the issue of polygamy is quite common, and it is not seen as wrong, especially among the older and uneducated population of the continent. There were well-documented, remarkable advancements made by missionaries in Africa, especially in the areas of stillbirth, polygamy, and death rate (Dimka & Dein, 2013). Polygamy was reduced through informed education that targeted the children and young adults of the time (Fenske, 2015). In a recent study, Fenske (2015) stated, “...Reduced polygamy rates are a legacy of colonial education in Africa, but...recent expansions of education have had no effect on polygamy rates” (p. 71). A low quality of education and ineffective and impractical biblical teachings in school all contribute to the ineffectiveness of education on the polygamy rate in Africa (Fenske, 2015). Church attendance increases the level of knowledge and education and reduces the rate of polygamy (Dimka & Dein, 2013). The level of such transformation in knowledge yielding to reduced polygamous affinity may have effects on lowering divorce rates, which is a gap noticed in the literature. Women who engage in polygamy are more likely to be at a disadvantage in terms of age, status, and education.

Marriage in African Culture

There are different types of marriage, and marriage itself means different things and connotes different meanings to different people in various cultures. In Africa, marriage is important and helps one attain status in the community. Until very recently, it was impossible to appoint a female into a political position or leadership role in Africa if she was divorced, a single parent, or unmarried (Akanle et al., 2019). Akanle et al. (2019) stated that “weddings in the context are indication and legitimation of identity and existences and these have strategic implications for social change, cultural systems and population” (p. 4686). It is not just one type of marriage that is recognized in Africa, but many. Chae (2016) stated that “many African societies recognize a variety of marriage forms, including free unions, consensual unions, customary marriages, and religious and civil marriages” (p. 15). All these marriages are recognized in the African community as well. In Malawi, a country in Southeastern Africa, Bertrand-Dansereau and Clark (2016) stated that “each form of marriage reflects different social, educational, and material circumstances. The first is based on the collective knowledge of a community, while the other is based on a more intimate knowledge acquired through time by individuals” (p. 51).

Marriage ceremonies can be expensive and energy-consuming for Africans. They do not believe in a marriage consummated secretly, as the whole community, much larger than the nuclear and extended families, is involved. The couple and their immediate families bear the onus of the money spent; at times, they go into debt for the purpose of a society wedding. Akanle et al. (2019) found this to be of a form of advantage because according to the research, “...when couples consider the amount of energy, fanfare and money spent on their marriages, they tend to

have reasons to be committed to the marriage” (p. 4695). This was not causally linked to lower divorce rates among Christians in the area and is worth being explored.

Africans consider marriage as a process involving stages and different steps. Each one is calculatedly a move to secure the bond between two families and enhance community approval. Chae (2016) stated that “in many parts of Sub-Saharan Africa, marriage is perceived as a process composed of multiple stages, including the exchange of gifts, initiation of sexual relations, provision of bride wealth, and birth of the first child” (p. 14). Even though education and western influence is powerful on the continent, polygamy is still a common issue. Often, couples find themselves in the situation of polygamy not for personal interest, but due to community influence (Behrman, 2019)). Behrman (2019) stated that “multivariate analyses indicated that Nigerians who entered polygynous unions were more likely to be from socioeconomically disadvantaged backgrounds and members of certain religions (e.g., Muslim, other religion) or ethnic groups (e.g., Hausa, Fulani, Yoruba)” (p. 916). Poverty is a significant contributor to the issue of polygamy in Africa.

An impoverished economy is a common denominator in most African homes, and it is a well-known factor that this is not due to a lack of resources, but the hijack of the resources by the opportune few on the continent. A research study conducted on the influence of polygamy on economic well-being found that “monogamous marriages tend to reduce poverty in Nigeria” (Anyanwu, 2014, p. 133). Many women of marriageable age are avoiding marriage for economic reasons. The number of such people who remain single despite their ripe age is on the rise. Adebowale et al. (2012) stated that “Nigeria, a poverty-stricken nation, is currently facing economic difficulties, and as a result age at marriage has been on the increase” (p. 96). This economic situation is affecting many and preventing them from getting married. Ntoimo and

Isiugo-Abanihe (2014) also stated, “Even though the norm of universal marriage is still widely prevalent, the percentage of women who are single from age 30 years and above is increasing” (p. 1991). Income and poverty level or economic viability of the family also dictates the health care of the family. Olasehinde and Olaniyan (2017) stated that “household characteristics like income, household size, headship and other controlled variables equally influence healthcare expenditure in both locations (rural and urban areas) but were each stronger in rural areas” (p. 1707). There must be a reason for the disparity in divorce rates in developed versus underdeveloped nations that may or may not be connected to the economic situation of the country, which is yet another gap identified in the existing literature.

In many homes where polygamy is prevalent, women must do extra labor and become heroes of a sort to their children and spouses. One of the reasons for this is that the man in the home may not be able to provide for all the children from the different wives at the same rate. Akanle et al. (2018) stated that women are “...[u]ncelebrated social martyrs for their families in the face of excruciating social and economic urban survival realities. Yet ... are unnoticed in the patriarchal systems that weakly acknowledge women’s roles even in the face of real social change” (p. 110). Despite the heroic roles these women play in their homes and in society at large, they are never recognized for such roles due to the patriarchal nature of the African continent. Some of the men who engage in polygamy do so with the belief that it will enhance the economical standard of the family, as there will be more hands working and producing food (Behrman, 2019).

Education is a factor identified in many research studies, addressing and suggesting ways to combat the menace of poverty in Africa. Omotayo et al. (2018) found that “an additional year of education was realized to increase the likelihood that a household will be food secured in the

study area. Therefore, farming households should be educated in order to enhance their production and food security” (p. 35). Education and monogamy are beneficial to food production and help to alleviate poverty. This research demonstrates that it is a misplaced priority to think otherwise.

The rate of divorce is low in Africa compared with the other continents like Europe and North America. Clark and Brauner-Otto (2015) stated that “...contrary to references in both the media and academic research to the rising rates of divorce across the sub-continent, divorce is not increasing in sub-Saharan Africa” (p. 602). Despite the research that the divorce rate is relatively low in Africa, these researchers found that “divorce, not widowhood, is the primary driver of union dissolution and a key contributor to family instability in sub-Saharan Africa” (Clark & Brauner-Otto, 2025, p. 602). It may be low when compared with other places, but divorce is the reason for most marriage dissolutions in Africa. Chen and Yip (2018) stated that the divorce rate is reduced only in Australia and that the perceived reduction in countries like the UK and Taiwan is just due to a shrink in marriage rates in those countries at the time.

The effect of cohabitation on marriage is the same in Africa as it is in other countries of the world. In a research study conducted by Endurance and Nkechi (2017), cohabitation was investigated in Africa and was found to have a positive effect on divorce rate. Endurance and Nkechi stated, “Cohabitation to a large extent is an outgrowth of the sexual revolution that started in the 1960s, a revolution which significantly gave premarital sex a social imprint of approval” (p. 54). Another research study pointed out that “[t]he findings revealed [a] negative impact of premarital cohabitation on stability of marriage. Variables such as age, gender and educational qualification were also found to affect respondents’ views on how premarital union impact stability of marriage” (Mustapha et al., 2017, p. 112). Mustapha et al. (2017) also found

that “[f]emales experienced more negative influence of premarital cohabitation on marital stability than males. It is therefore important to note that females bear the consequences of premarital cohabitation more than males” (Mustapha et al., 2017, p. 119). Endurance and Nkechi (2017) further noted, “...The finding has made it clear that the increase in cohabitation is not because of the high rate of divorce. It is the decision an individual makes according to the views of society” (p. 62). Even though cohabitation is becoming more acceptable among Africans like it is in other countries, it is not because the divorce rate is increasing.

Other issues like early marriage and couples living separately should be discouraged unless there is a conflict that necessitates such (Lekan, 2017). Lekan (2017) stated that “[b]ased on the findings of the study, it has been recommended that early marriage, couples living in separate apartments and polygyny should be discouraged in order to promote stable nuptial relationships in the study location” (p. 27). The research location in this study is in Nigeria, the western part of Africa. Lekan’s study fell short of identifying if the low divorce rate in the Church in Nigeria is comparable with churches in developing nations.

The western world’s influence on Africa affects every part of the continent. Marriage is no exception. Paul (2019) concluded that the western view of marriage as a relationship between two people drawn together by love has influenced Africa but added that “African cultures emphasize that the union of two individuals must fit into the larger picture of social networks known as kinship, clan or tribal groups” (p. 250). Marriage has more of an influence on extended family and community in Africa than in other parts of the world. Knowing that extended and nuclear family in the western world does not have such influence on marriage, there may be a reason to conduct research to determine the effects of extended families on marriages. Perhaps it

could unveil or explain the reasons for the different rates of divorce among Christians of different cultures.

Effects of Culture on Marriage

There is a growing knowledge about the role culture plays in marriage. Researchers are becoming more open to the idea that certain cultural values play a bigger role than they earlier thought possible in determining other factors that directly impact marriage decisions, especially as they concern divorce. Afifi et al. (2013) stated that “in many cultures, religion plays an extremely influential role in people’s perception of divorce and their willingness to initiate a divorce” (p. 247). It is important to note that religion does not necessarily mean Christianity in this sense.

Women are restricted in Africa, and until recently, it was taboo for a woman to file for divorce. Women are not considered for inherited landed properties; such women are regarded as high handed and uncontrollable. Adegoke et al. (2016) stated that “women are often looked down upon regarding access to family land and landed property just because they are women, because people think that women should not be allowed to have lands or houses of their own” (p. 68). The family influence on marriage in Africa is extraordinarily strong and makes it almost completely impossible for a single partner (either male or female) to single-handedly decide to pursue divorce. In fact, in some of the cultures, research has shown that couples have to consult with the larger extended family and that their approval or disapproval determines if the marriage can end or not (Adegoke et al., 2016).

Ayodapo et al. (2017) stated, “There is a strong religious and/or cultural tie in family settings in Nigeria ... findings for intervention or prevention programs are enormous. The extended family remains a respected authority in resolving marital issues in the Nigerian culture”

(p. 71). This research illustrated that the joint decision of the extended family is of the utmost importance. It is important to note here that men are dominant in such settings and meetings. The rule is that a woman must respect and obey her husband no matter what she is going through (Behrman, 2019). There are circumstances where the man may face punishment from the family and such a man is bound to obey, but such situations are exceedingly rare.

Lazarus et al. (2017) said:

In Nigerian society, the fact of women being generally seen as subordinate to men is chiefly hinged on two planks: The African cultural practice that places a man above a woman in any socio-cultural intercourse such as marriage and other cultural arrangements ... The second plank is the widespread influence of foreign religions, Christianity and Islam, both of which preach absolute submissiveness to men. (p. 360)

The oppression or rulership of men to women in Africa is not a new development.

Lazarus et al. (2017) further went on to state, "... [F]eminism is un-African...[and] gender equality aspects of Nigerian socio-legal policies are merely reflections of Western cultural and socio-political hegemon" (p. 355). The idea of a woman being equal to a man is strange to African culture. It is still not acceptable even among the educated elites. Anhange et al. (2017) showed that "... [e]motional intelligence was not a significant predictor of marital satisfaction among married people in Makurdi metropolis" (p. 9762). Emotional intelligence is less applicable in marriage in this northern part of Nigeria. It is not about how intelligent the woman is, but rather what society expects of her.

In another research study of a dominant Yoruba ethnic group in Nigeria, it was found that extended family influence is much greater than that of a nuclear family, and that nuclear family is almost non-existent. Lekan (2017) stated, "[In] Nigeria, where Yoruba society is domicile, is a

transitional society with many social and economic challenges that have a direct effect on marital stability. Some of these problems are traditional practices that are against women” (p. 51). Lekan went on to identify domestic violence against women as one such problem. In these circumstances, even though violence against women exists, they must still listen to and obey extended family decisions. Failure to do so may result in stigmatization and the suffering of their children (Lekan, 2017) . It is not clear if this is part of the reason for low divorce rates on the African continent, but this is part of the identified gap in the literature.

Research has demonstrated that the involvement of extended families in marriages has been a contributing factor leading to a lower divorce rates. In their study, Bertrand-Dansereau and Clark (2016) found “that traditional unions, in which families are involved . . . , are more stable than modern, companionate unions” (p. 71). The influence of such extended families serves as a mediating point where couples can express their worries and seek support. Women benefit greatly from the support they get from older women in such families (Clark, 2016).

Education and western influence have played a pivotal role in loosening the grip of the culture in many areas of the African people’s lives. Adeyemi (2017) stated, “It is evident that education has played an important role in recent times in changing women’s attitudes towards marriage, age at marriage, childbearing and union formation” (p. 690). There are changing views about roles in marriage all around the globe. Africa is no exception to this development. Furtado et al. (2013) confirmed, “Countries in which inhabitants have more liberal attitudes toward divorce enact liberal divorce policies. At the same time, more liberal divorce policies can generate attitudes that are more accepting of divorce” (p. 1014). A liberal view of divorce is what leads lawmakers in such countries to enact laws that may be more liberal than those in other countries (Furtado et al., 2013). In most countries of Africa, such liberal views are not common.

In countries like the USA where liberal laws could become enacted in liberal states, it has become easier for people to get divorced. Kneip et al. (2014) said, “We find that UDL (Universal Divorce Law) in total increased the incidence of marital breakdown by about 20 %” (p. 2103). Such liberal pronouncements influence the African communities in such states and countries. Endurance and Nkechi (2017) stated that “[m]odernization is the vehicle behind the increased rates of divorce and cohabitation has introduced pressure on customary marriage practices also, such as arranged marriage, early marriages, morality, etc.” (p. 55). These effects find their way back to Africa as families bring western ideals to the African continent. Arugu (2014) stated, “The African society is one that encourages freedom in her constitutional enactments for example, freedom of choice, freedom of worship, and freedom of association exist in the Nigerian constitution” (p. 379). Even though the freedom is less effective compared to what is obtainable in the western world, it is a factor when considering how western education influences the educated elites in African society.

Research that has been subject to more of an in-depth look is the effect of immigration on divorce. In this research, Ippoliti (2018) affirmed that “...[a] statistically significant positive relation between the influx of female immigrants and household dissolution was detected, based on the idea that opportunities might drive males to infidelity” (p. 753). An increase in intermarriage correlating to an influx of immigrants affirms that immigrant influx has increased the divorce rate in Africa. However, the research fell short of relating this to the divorce rate in the Church.

In considering immigration as a factor affecting the divorce rate in Africa, research has affirmed that the institution of marriage is affected by immigration. Shobola (2010) continued, “[the] [m]arriage institution is most affected by human circumstances (e.g., migration). However,

migration has become inevitable” (p. 234). Many families are affected by this movement from one culture to another and such transference affects everyone in the family, including the children. Learning about the new culture changes the views of the couple about almost every issue of life. Therefore, “...[f]or couples to achieve the objectives of marriage, it all depends on how committed they were before migration takes place, and the strategies that are put in place before embarking on such a journey” (p. 234). In situations where only one of the couples migrates into another country for whatever reason, the effect has been nothing but shattering for such families. Shobola stated that “...[t]here is a negative psychological effect of spouse migration on the family, especially the nuclear family (wife and children in the case of husband)” (p. 230).

There are many factors in African culture vis a vis marriage rules that are strong, impactful, and a rallying point for those who benefit from them. Akanle et al. (2018) stated:

The women perceive that the male’s involvement in domestic chores is too marginal, inconsequential and trivial compared to the domestic workload. The women may also refuse to acknowledge publicly that they allow their spouses to do chores—as a taboo. (p. 106)

It is a taboo for a woman to let her husband do house chores in Africa. This is quickly becoming obsolete among the elites, though, as some men out of courtesy and determination to make a difference help their wives with house chores (Adeyemi, 2017). Another cultural norm is how childlessness is perceived in marriage. Dimka and Dein (2013) stated that “Sub-Saharan Africa is well known for its pronatalist cultural tradition, and sub fertile and childless women are often seen as social deviants” (p. 103). These researchers did not conclude or explore if these factors

directly impact decisions about divorce among African Christians. This is a gap in the literature that needs to be explored.

A man is expected to provide for the family, and that makes him the automatic bread winner of the family, from whom all directives and commands are issued. Ezeah (2013) stated, “The observed positive association between women’s financial contributions to the household and the odds of domestic violence may again reflect in the balance of power between husband and wife that leads to violence” (p. 99). In other research, Ntoimo and Isiugo-Abanihe (2014) found that “[p]ossession of economic resources by single women played a dual role in limiting marriage opportunities for...women...because the society is still largely patriarchal” (p. 2001). Income level is relative to Intimate Partner Violence (IPV) and is related to divorce probability (Ezeah, 2013). Fagbamigbe and Erhabor (2016) researched determinants of First Birth Interval (FBI) and stated that “[e]mpowering women will delay first marriage and shorten FBI as well as lower number of births” (p. 2001). A single woman who owns properties and is influential or economically buoyant is not seen as suitable marriage material in Africa. This research did not make suggestions regarding the effects of FBI on divorce, even though it clearly enumerated factors responsible for late or delayed marriage and first births.

There exist gaps in the literature regarding what aspects of cultural beliefs or practice (if any) are related to lower divorce rates among African Christians and Christians in the United States. Does the conservative nature of culture in Africa affect Africans’ religious beliefs, causing them to endure marriage differently than Christians in the United States? Do Christian African immigrants who tend to see marriage and divorce more liberally than their counterparts in Africa adopt the culture of their resident states? Furtado et al. (2013) concluded that children of immigrants who have been immersed in their parents’ culture may change when they are “...

also exposed to U.S. laws and institutions. We interpret the positive estimated effect of home-country divorce rates on their divorce probabilities as evidence of the role of culture” (p. 1035). This assertion must be explored further to determine if exposure to a new culture influences divorce rates among Christians in the western world.

Despite all of what will be referred to as odd in the African culture, marriage is much more of a stable and resolute institution in this country than many other places in the world. Are there things in the culture that aid in keeping the divorce rate at the current low level? Finding answers to this question formed the centerpiece of this research.

Divorce

The feminist movement has contributed to the divorce rate in the world and Church. According to research conducted on this subject, Familusi (2019) concluded that “...[f]eminism and women liberation movements...have led to the dissolution of many marriages” (p.27). In the same vein, Clark and Brauner-Otto (2015) stated in their research that “results from [their] random-effects models show that urbanization is significantly positively correlated with divorce” (p. 598). Urbanization in and of itself is not detrimental to human development, but certain factors that come along with it are less supportive of enduring marriage.

What About Christian Conservatism?

A research study conducted in predominantly conservative states in the United States showed that Christianity did not have the expected impact on divorce rates across the board (Glass and Levchak, 2014). The effect of the Christian faith on Protestants was positive, as it reduced instances of divorce. Glass and Levchak (2014) stated that “[t]he proportion of conservative Protestants in a county is also independently and negatively associated with both the divorce rate in that county and an individual's likelihood of divorcing” (p. 1002).

These researchers found that the economic situation of these couples may have contributed to divorce rates and may continue to lead many into early marriage, even though the system only rewards those who wait to get married until later in life.

Glass and Levchak (2014) said:

While religious or moral traditionalism may have been more effective in reducing divorce rates in the past and may continue to do so in strong local or isolated subcultures (e.g., Amish communities), the contemporary economic context within which most young people form unions and bear children materially rewards those who wait the longest to choose lifetime partners and accept the responsibilities of parenthood. (p. 1010)

Christianity has a positive impact on divorce to some extent in the conservative U.S. states considered in this research work, but the economic situation in which the couples found themselves may have contributed to the impact felt. The implication of this is that Christians who wait longer before getting married are more highly rewarded. Glass and Levchak (2014) later concluded their research saying:

One plausible interpretation of the results is that as conservative Protestant presence increases, elite conservative Protestant influence grows stronger, which results in policies and programs that do little to reduce divorce, but only increase early marriage.

Conservative Protestant community norms and the institutions they create seem to increase divorce risk for themselves as well as others as their proportions grow in U.S. counties. (p. 1035)

This may be why the divorce rate among Christians in these conservative states is still high despite the conservative base. The Church is therefore not making the expected impact on divorce rate. The gap in the literature resurfaces here, showing that Christianity may not be

making the expected impact in western countries as it is in underdeveloped nations, as illustrated by divorce rates. This finding is very much connected to this research, which is to explore what drives the divorce decisions of Christian couples in developed nations.

Other research conducted on the influence of conservatism on divorce in the USA showed similar results (Stokes & Ellison, 2010). Stokes and Ellison (2010) found that identification with the Church and Christian faith beliefs resulted in clamoring for stricter divorce laws but did little to address divorce. Stokes and Ellison stated, “We find that frequency of religious attendance and belief that the Bible is the Word of God are strong predictors of support for stricter laws governing divorce. Indeed, these religious indicators are much more important than conservative affiliation” (p. 1279). Raising the cost of obtaining divorce may in turn hurt the institution of marriage because it could make it only affordable for the highest bidder. This could turn low-income earners or the middle class away from marriage altogether. Again, this does not address the high divorce rate among Christians in America.

MacDonald and Dildar (2018) stated that “[g]iven how momentous the laws were, and their coincidence with industrialization as well as women’s movements, there is good reason to argue that the laws may have also made it easier for wives to obtain a divorce” because “[w]e found evidence to support this framework: The MWPA (Married Women’s Property Act) increased divorce rates in those states that passed it relative to those that did not” (p. 625). Some of these laws that are passed by the states may influence the divorce rate, according to this research. How much effect this has on divorce rates has been discussed in other research throughout this review, but how it affects the Christian’s divorce rate may need more exploration.

Smith (2010) found that culture and Christian faith are at two ends of the divorce issue in the United States and stated that “[w]hile the plain words of the Bible could provide adequate rhetorical ammunition for Christians generally and evangelicals specifically to fight for legislation to restrict divorce, culture has ultimately trumped scripture in shaping public policy” (p. 84). Culture has a greater influence in shaping the way people see and perceive things in the land. The culture in this case is not supportive of conservatism but encourages liberalism. This may have an enormous effect on why the divorce rate is higher among Christians in developed nations, but how much of an effect remains to be seen. Most Christians believe it is easier to influence good with evil than the reverse.

Probable Reasons for Divorce

There has been concerted effort at finding the reasons for divorce, causes of marriage dissolutions, and what leads to unresolvable differences between couples. Chowdhury (2013) showed that divorce is pro-cyclical, meaning that “[t]he higher the level of transitory income, the higher the incidence of divorce” (p. 260). A higher income may lead to higher probability of divorce. Olajumoke’s (2018) study indicated that “the level of income a career woman has [has] a direct correlation with divorce proneness. As the level of income increases, divorce proneness increases as well” (p. 10997). Olajumoke also found that high levels of education did not result in higher divorce rates, since higher education does not necessarily translate to higher income for the women examined in Nigeria.

A study conducted among Jewish women in Israel by Kaplan and Herbst (2015) showed that “[a] wife who out-earns her husband increases the log odds of divorce more so in the upper tertile than in the lower tertile” (p. 969). A woman that is earning low has a higher risk of divorce in Israel. Weaker socioeconomic groups are at higher risks of divorce. This shows that

the income effect on divorce may be per given area and the culture of the people in consideration. Chowdhury (2013) found:

When an economy is in crisis and people's incomes are low, the cost of divorce will prevent a couple from divorcing irrespective of the quality of their marriage. In this case, divorce is not an effective option for a couple. (p. 260)

In the same vein, Cohen (2014) confirmed that “[s]upplementary analysis raises the possibility that economic conditions have disparate effects on divorce depending on levels of education” (p. 626). People may have different reactions to economic pressure as it pertains to marriage and divorce consideration, as research has confirmed different results for different cultures.

Another factor to consider is the issue of cohabitation before marriage. Rosenfeld and Roesler (2019) concluded that “[p]remarital cohabitation has short-term benefits and longer-term costs for marital stability” (p. 42). The first year of marriage is the only year found to be positive for premarital cohabitation. After the first year of marriage, the risk of dissolution is higher for couples who cohabited before marriage (Lekan, 2017). After a marriage is consummated, it is found that couples must start living together, as failure to do so increases the possibility of dissolution. Lekan (2017) stated:

The living arrangement of couples after marriage should be encouraged to be together as couples living in a separate apartment after marriage are more likely to experience marital dissolution than those who live together immediately after the consummation of their marital unions. (p. 51)

In other research, family involvement, especially as practiced in Africa, was examined for its effects on divorce rate. Bertrand-Dansereau and Clark (2016) stated conclusively that women who are married to “... [s]omeone they have known for a short time and whose

relationship is not embedded in family ties are more likely to divorce early. These impulsive marriages reflect characteristics that are borrowed from both modern and traditional cultural repertoires” (p. 47). Family involvement and length of courtship before marriage were found to synonymously affect marriage positively (Bertrand-Dansereau & Clark, 2016).

There were other factors found to contribute to divorce rates, such as mental health and emotional disorders. Shephard et al. (2019) stated that “[p]atients at highest risk for marital disruption need to be identified early and provided with counseling...” (p. 311). Another group of researchers, Breslau et al. (2011), concluded their research and data analysis by saying, “Taken together, mental disorders account for a small but meaningful reduction in the proportion of people who marry and increase in the proportion of people in their first marriage who divorce” (p. 484). Not every mental health condition may directly affect marriage, but some play a significant role. Breslau et al. stated that “[n]otably, about half of the societal impact of mental disorders on divorce is attributed to two disorders: major depression and alcohol abuse” (p. 484).

One myth about divorce is to say that same sex marriage has a direct impact on divorce rates, as this was found by Dillender (2014) to be false. Dillender found that legalizing same sex marriage did not affect the rate of marriage for heterosexuals, nor did it reduce the value of heterosexual marriage (p. 582).

Effects of Divorce

Marriage dissolution and divorce have ripple effects on both partners involved in the divorce, as well as the children of the marriage. There are also effects on the extended families of such partners. Arugu (2014) stated that “divorce has serious adverse effects on both the children and parents. The children lack parental love and affection and run the risk of discontinuity in their emotional and intellectual development” (p. 382). One of the participants interviewed by

Adebusuyi (2018) said, "...Because I don't like the type of life I am living as a result of my parents' divorce, our education is seriously suffering, we are no longer concentrating in our studies" (p. 11894). Adebusuyi continued, "The effects are across board most especially on the academic performance of the vulnerable children provided the nexus between the parents and the children is very strong" (p. 11906).

In research among Nigerians, the effect of divorce was found to extend to all families. Arugu (2014) stated, "It results in crisis for family members and causes loss of an intimate relationship that also brought security and support. It also signifies a loss of hopes and dreams as well as feelings of failure" (p. 374). These are damning reports of the effects of divorce on children. Familusi (2019) also affirmed that "[d]ivorce has psychological effects on both divorcees, their children and in some cases their parents. When a marriage is dissolved, can there be absolute happiness again? Victims may be [so] emotionally disturbed that their productivity will decline at work" (p. 28). These ranges of effects are concerning enough, but no research has been done to understand how much these feelings contribute to the low rate of divorce among Christians in underdeveloped countries.

The ties that bind together are broken in divorce; the center no longer holds. Divorce courts may give sole custody to one parent while the other party may be kept far away. Bianchi (2014) stated that "[t]he 'ties that bind' weaken under a regime of increased family disruption. Changes in marriage, divorce, and childbearing complicate the intergenerational picture, as financial and care obligations no longer necessarily depend on biological or marital ties" (p. 42). At times, such ruling from the court may also include a no contact order if warranted due to domestic violence. All rulings cause a deeper sense of separation for children, especially if they love both parents.

Gähler et al. (2015) found that “respondents from dissolved childhood families exhibit a lower psychological well-being and shorter education as adults than their peers from intact families” (p. 619). Kim (2011) concluded by stating, “To summarize, I found (1) setbacks among children of divorce in math test scores during and after the experience of parental divorce (i.e., significant combined effects of the in- and post-divorce effect” (p. 506). The research also found negative effects of divorce on interpersonal skills and internalizing behavior of the children interviewed.

Some of the children from divorced homes may also become vulnerable to bad behaviors, gang activity, and become more likely to get arrested and subsequently sentenced. Regarding underage alcohol use, Jackson et al. (2016) stated that “[t]here was no evidence for developmental specificity of the divorce/separation effect based on when it occurred nor in timing of first drink. However, the effect of parental divorce/separation on initiation was magnified at higher levels of parental drinking” (p. 450). The habit of drinking alcohol or underage consumption of alcohol was not directly found to be tied to divorce in this research. Therefore, this may not have a significant effect on the disparity between the divorce rates among Christians of different cultures.

Research has suggested that divorce affects women more than men (Hamid & Sanusi, 2016). A study by Hamid and Sanusi (2016) revealed that “the challenges and negative effects of divorce are usually much stronger on the woman and her offspring than the man” (p. 13). Hamid and Sanusi specifically pointed out “...[s]ome of the negative effects of divorce on the Muslim women in Northern Nigeria such as economic hardship, psychological trauma, poor performance in...life activities, immoral behavior etc.” (p. 23). Other research has affirmed the negative effect of divorce on women. Lazarus et al. (2017) stated:

Data shows that economic power, youth and polygamy, broadly speaking have positive effect on divorcees. But in terms of economic power, unlike men, whose positionality has a linear impact to their needs, for women it has [a] diverse impact on them. (p. 361)

These results are not just for non-Christians but apply to Christian divorcees as well. The economic power might be a factor that influences the decision to stay married or be divorced among Christians in Nigeria.

Divorce also affects spirituality and religion (Handal & Lace, 2017). Handal and Lace (2017) stated that where it concerns women, "...[p]arental marital status did significantly relate to their reported levels of religion and spirituality. Women with married parents scored significantly higher than women with divorced parents on every measure of religion and spirituality included in the present study" (p. 1367). The same research showed that men react differently (Handal & Lace, 2017). Light and Ahn (2010) concluded that their findings were "consistent with the risk premium interpretation and with the notion that divorce entails a greater income gamble for women than for men" (p. 917). They recommended that payment of child support is needed to help alleviate women's financial difficulties following divorce. The adverse effects enumerated here may also influence the decision to stay married.

Another researcher examined the economic effects of divorce on women as they pertain to single motherhood (Ntoimo & Odimegwu, 2014). Ntoimo and Odimegwu (2014) said:

Single motherhood poses a challenge to a child's health and survival chances, but the challenges can be minimized if never married, divorced and separated single mother families have access to more economic resources, and improve their parental resources and health behaviors. (p. 10)

Researchers have been unanimous in stating that divorce affects women more than it affects men, especially economically, which in turn affects children of divorced parents. Odimegwu et al. (2017) stated, “The woman, who naturally maintains guardianship of the children, usually suffers a significant decline in financial and psychological well-being after dissolution” (p. 730). This significant decline should be studied to determine if it is a factor that influences the negative view of married couples on divorce despite odd conditions among Christians in underdeveloped nations. Some researchers suggested divorced women face the same hard economic situation in developed nations, but it appears not to have impacted the divorce rate as much in these places (Odimegwu et al., 2017).

The effects of governmental policies and practices analyzed by researchers in Africa led to recommendations for specific governmental policy for assisting divorced women. Smith-Greenaway and Clark (2017) concluded their research on sub-Saharan Africa by saying, “The results confirm that divorced mothers are in need of supportive policies and assistance in contexts where divorce is less common. These are the very settings in Africa where such policies and programs are unlikely to exist” (p. 483). The absence of programs to assist divorced women due to the massive domination of the polity by men may also be a contributory factor for Christian women when they decide whether to remain married. More research is needed in this area..

The effect of divorce is not just felt by divorcees and their families, but by society in general. In their 2014 study, Isiugo-Abanihe and Chizomam Ntoimo found that “[t]he effect of other women’s marriage experience on the marital decisions and opportunity of never married women underscores the importance of enhancing gender equality” (p. 395). Single womanhood is a deviation from cultural norms. Negative experiences of married women influence the

decisions of single women who are avoiding getting married (Rotz, 2016). Rotz (2016) stated that "... [a]fter first causing the divorce rate to rise, decreases in the relative value of marriage caused an increase in age at marriage, which in turn caused the divorce rate to decrease from 1980 to 2004" (p. 992). In other words, the negative effects of divorce on divorcees as seen by single women causes them to delay marriage. This may or may not be a direct reason for the disparity between Christian divorce rates in developed and undeveloped countries.

Divorce can also lead to mental health concerns irrespective of gender or age. Paul (2019) stated, "Divorce can be accompanied by an almost endless range of emotions, anxiety, guilt, fear, sadness, depression (sometimes accompanied by thought of suicide), anger, bitterness, and frustration" (p. 253). After an expansive research study, Stack and Scourfield (2015) found that "[t]he present inquiry controlled for depression levels and still found that recent divorce increased the risk of suicide. Depression had, as expected, an independent impact on the odds of suicide" (p. 710). Depression can lead to divorce and suicide. In Slovenia and the United States, the recently divorced are mostly at immediate risk of suicide (Stack & Scourfield, 2015).

Marital Quality Predictor

It is important to consider factors that predict marital satisfaction. The predictors of marital satisfaction have been thoroughly researched and well documented. Prior research found religiosity, ethnic background, race, and culture as factors that improve the quality of marriage. Perry (2016) asserted the present findings demonstrate that "[p]erceived spousal religiosity is a strong predictor of marital quality across the four most prominent racial or ethnic groups in the United States" (p. 337).

People who are married to a spouse who regularly talks about faith as extremely important to them are likely to view their spouse as deeply religious. Perry (2016) found that

“[t]his sort of intimacy and trust, as well as the pro-marriage behavior that often accompanies sincere religious commitment, will naturally enhance marital quality” (p. 338). This study could have meant the same thing to every Christian since the topics discussed here are general Bible themes, but the effects of how it is perceived or practiced in belief are yet to be fully explored in research studies.

Anhange et al. (2017) stated, “Happiness had a significant influence on marital satisfaction among married people. Similarly, hope had a significant influence on marital satisfaction... Finally, there was a significant joint influence of emotional intelligence, happiness and hope on marital satisfaction among married people” (p. 9752). These factors —joy, happiness, and hope —were found to have a significant effect on marital satisfaction, which in turn affects divorce rate. The dynamics that lead to the above-mentioned factors, like satisfactory employment, status, and income, may directly or indirectly affect the decision to stay married or be divorced. Anhange et al. (2017) concluded that “[t]he findings imply that a couple's interpersonal skill of understanding their partner's emotional needs does not have any bearing on perceived satisfaction with their marriage, but other factors such as hope and happiness in marriage do” (p. 9763). Hope in the marriage and in one’s partner, as well as overall happiness, were found to be effective factors in predicting marital quality and satisfaction.

In families where farming is the typical family business, the success of a harvest results in happiness, which in turn positively affects the marriage. Anyanwu (2014) affirmed that the “results show that paid household work has a significant negative effect on the level of poverty in Nigeria while self-employment farming has a significant positive effect on poverty” (p.132). The income brings satisfaction to the couples, and they appeared happy in this research study

(citation needed). This is a common phenomenon in underdeveloped nations and may be a contributing factor to the low divorce rate in such countries.

Ellison et al. (2011) discovered that “[s]anctification was linked with overall marital quality ... Spouses who regard their unions as sacred and who sense God's presence in their relationships tended to report more good feelings and fewer negative emotions toward their partners” (p. 415). Conversely, Ellison et al. also found that “[s]tress and strain can lead to feelings of exhaustion and despair, making it more difficult for partners to communicate effectively, resolve conflicts, and engage or bond with their spouses” (p. 415). This leads to marital dissatisfaction.

As certain factors positively affect marriage and create satisfaction for couples, negative factors also have adverse effects. One such negative factor is Intimate Partner Violence (IPV).

Intimate Partner Violence (IPV)

Even though it is illegal to beat one’s spouse, domestic abuse is one of the leading causes of divorce in the world (Ayodapo et al., 2017). Ayodapo et al. (2017) stated that “Intimate Partner Violence (IPV) is a public health issue of significant importance all over the world” (p. 67). In Nigeria, it has been found that cases of IPV are on the rise; however, IPV is highly reported in the media and has been on the rise in every part of the country (Ayodapo et al., 2017). Adebowale (2018) asserted that “Intimate Partner Violence remains an issue of concern for both researchers and government in Nigeria because there has been an increase in the number of reported cases ... [A] high number of marriages dissolve as a result of IPV” (p. 10).

Adebowale noted that one of the reasons for IPV is a larger family size and stated, “The chance that a woman would experience violence from her intimate partner was found to increase as...family size increased” (p. 11). Adebowale did not specify if this was specifically among

Christians, but it may be safe to conclude that violence influences one's decision to stay married or get divorced in general terms.

Women may suffer in silence in Nigeria but remain committed to their marriages, and may be poor but remain committed to educating their children (Ajuwon & Brown, 2012). Poverty level is relative to the IPV level in families in Nigeria (Adebowale, 2018). Adebowale (2018) stated, "This is evident in the relationship between household wealth and IPV that was found in this study, which revealed that IPV fell consistently as the household wealth increased" (p.13). Income has a direct impact on IPV. It is therefore logical to conclude that IPV is much more associated with poverty. But IPV is also a common factor in developed countries, where the per capita income of each family is far higher compared with underdeveloped countries. Smith (2017) affirmed Adebowale's (2018) research regarding IPV and its association with divorce in developed nations. IPV may or may not be a factor in the disparity in divorce rates among Christians of different cultures.

It is impossible to go without misunderstandings in a marriage. When two people have different opinions about certain things, there is bound to be friction. Alozieuwa and Aguezeala (2017) stated that "[c]onflict is an inevitable aspect of human co-existence because of the pursuit, oftentimes, of incompatible goals. As has been widely acknowledged, conflict may connote negativity. It can also be positive, especially when it creates the opportunity to manage differences" (p. 46). But with biblical standards as their guide, one would expect Christians to be able to handle their differences and resolve issues amicably. If this is the standard, it should naturally imply that Christians will have more stable marriages, but statistical data do not support such a conclusion, especially in developed nations. This area needs to be explored further.

Female infertility is a leading factor of IPV in Africa. Aduloju et al. (2015) stated that “[t]he prevalence of domestic violence against women with infertility in this study was 31.6%” (p. 68). This shows that infertility leads to increased IPV. In their work, Dimka and Dein (2013) also stated that “[i]nfertility in several cases resulted in strained or failed marriages. Usually, the way[s] women (more so than men) were treated, not uncommonly by the husband or mother-in-law, were the underpinnings for their divorces” (p. 113). Such women become emotionally abused by the family and in some cases, the spouse also joins in abusing the woman. In countries where the law is partially effective, as is the case in many underdeveloped nations, it is safe to conclude that such abuse will be common and many cases of such may never be addressed. Little is known if this is common among Christians in these underdeveloped nations, as research has yet to focus on this area. However, infertility may have a direct impact on divorce rate.

Behrman (2019) stated, “Rosenbaum’s bounds analysis suggested it was highly plausible that unobserved selectivity into polygyny played a role in explaining the association between polygyny and IPV” (p. 916). Many of the women who end up in polygamous relationships are from poor family backgrounds (Behrman, 2019). Through this review, IPV was causally related to the level of poverty among the people in the area researched.

Ezeah (2013) stated that “[a]ccording to the qualitative data, women with more education and income are less vulnerable to domestic violence. The findings further show that early marriage and low income made women more vulnerable to violence in marriage” (p. 92). This affirms the relationship between poverty and IPV. Olatunji (2017) continued, “There is a significant relationship between the income of women and their involvement in wife-battering” (p. 101). A lower income signifies a higher probability for being battered. Olatunji found that men who are unable to financially exert authority do so physically through wife battering. Also,

women who are unable to support their husbands financially are continually battered at the slightest provocation (Olatunji, 2017).

Children who witness Intimate Partner Violence (IPV) often grow into adults with a positive view of violence against women (Behrman, 2019). It was also found that TV and Nollywood movies contributed to IPV (Fakunmoju & Rasool, 2018). Fakunmoju and Rasool (2018) stated that boys who watched these movies were found to "...[h]ave more opportunities to re-enact violence in their own relationships and perform traditionally oppressive roles and behaviors against women that they have learned from their role models or from exposure to [other] media/films" (p. 10).

The issue of IPV is mostly kept secret so it does not become a matter for gossip and stigmatization in the community (Ayodapo et al., 2017). In their work, Ayodapo et al. (2017) stated, "This study showed that reporting to family members and religious leaders [is] the most common means of abuse disclosure. This is mainly because of the pedigree of the institution of marriage in this part of the country" (p. 70). Despite the high prevalence of IPV in Africa, how is it that the divorce rate is still low? There may be some other reasons why the divorce rate is not as high as the rate of IPV in Africa.

Older Adults Accept Divorce

Research has shown that older adults are more accepting of divorce in the second half of life (Brown & Wright, 2019). Brown and Wright (2019) stated, "In recent years, older adults have become much more accepting of divorce...[and] shifting meanings of marriage have contributed to increasing acceptance of divorce" (p.1035). Furthermore, the researchers concluded that "[t]he rise in gray divorce coupled with the increasing acceptance of divorce

among older adults signals the mounting salience of divorce during the second half of life” (Brown & Wright, 2019, p. 1034).

In their work on divorce in the United States, Kennedy and Ruggles (2014) stated that “[t]here have been striking changes in the age pattern of divorce over the past three decades” (p. 596). This research affirmed that older adults are becoming more accepting of divorce. But this may be because of late marriages and lower rates of marriage among younger age groups.

The points raised in this review were connected to divorce and suggest possible reasons to either stay married or get divorced. Christians in developed nations and underdeveloped nations must be appropriating the reasons differently and at a different rate; this is the focus of this research.

Summary

Existing literature substantially discusses the topic of marriage and divorce from religious perspectives. Several reasons have been highlighted in the current literature that contribute to divorce. Some reasons that have been recognized as possible contributors to the divorce ratio include feminism and the women’s liberation movement, women’s careers and income levels, mental health and emotional disorders, and marriages in weaker socioeconomic groups. Despite increasing marriage rates, little is known about the disparity in the divorce rates of Christian couples in developed nations in current literature. Some conservative Christian groups practice the teachings of the Bible and refrain from divorce; nevertheless, the ratio is small. This research was aimed at filling the gap in the literature by focusing on Christian communities and the reasons for divorce among developed nations compared to underdeveloped nations. The research also fills in the gap by addressing the effects of culture, extended family, community influence,

and civilization on divorce. These factors affect commitment and perseverance among Christians and non-Christian couples.

Furthermore, this chapter discussed the factors that predict marital satisfaction. Factors analyzed in past studies include ethnic background, religiosity, culture, race, happiness, emotional intelligence, employment, status, income, a couple's interpersonal skill of understanding their partner's emotional needs, and sanctification. Several negative factors also affect the quality of marital relationships and have been discussed in past literatures. These include stress and strain, which can lead to feelings of exhaustion and despair, poverty, and Intimate Partner Violence (IPV). The ratio of divorce varies in different aged populations, with research highlighting that older adults are more accepting of divorce in the second half of life. The next chapter presents a detailed research methodology used for data collection and data analysis.

CHAPTER THREE: METHODS

Overview

This chapter presents the methodology for data collection and analysis adopted for the current investigation. A quantitative research design with a positivistic approach was employed to explore the factors affecting perseverance and commitment in Christian marriages. This chapter will cover research design, research questions, research setting, participants, sampling and procedures, the role of researcher, data collection, data analysis, measures of data analysis, validity, trustworthiness, and ethical considerations. This research focused on the impact of culture and family interference on the marriage relationship and how Christians apply them in developed and underdeveloped nations. Various gaps were identified in the literature regarding marriage and divorce, which can be seen in the previous chapter. The quantitative research design for this research helped to determine if the prevailing culture in a community plays a role in how Christian faith is applied to divorce for people considering it. A quantitative research design was utilized to create understanding and generate knowledge about the research problem in focus. Quantitative research is generally used by social scientists to observe occurrences or phenomena affecting individuals (Hepner et al., 2015). Such social research revolves around and is concerned with the people. Dimka and Dein (2013) found that among Africans, their view of stigma, culture, and family interference were influential factors that reduced the probability of divorce, even among women facing different hardships in their marriages in Africa. Conversely, Perry (2018) found that among Protestant Christians in the USA, divorce is still remarkably high despite high levels of stigmatization. Given these differences, it is important to explore how the prevailing culture of a given group of people or country affects Christian marriages within the culture. By administering a close-ended questionnaire to participants in both countries and

exploring their life experiences, the information gleaned was relevant to how culture and community interference affect decision-making regarding issues of divorce. This research compared marriages among Christians in developed nations (the USA) with marriages among Christians in underdeveloped nations (Nigeria).

Design

A quantitative research design was adopted for this research, and a positivistic approach was employed. Positivistic philosophy employs quantitative research methods such as structured or semi-structured questionnaires, surveys, and official statistics. These techniques offer good reliability and representativeness (Goduka, 2012). A major tenet of logical positivism is its “thesis of the unity of science” (Lee, 1991, p. 343). Positivists believe that an individual’s actions are shaped by social facts, and they speculate that society shapes the individual (Davoudi, 2012). A phenomenological approach could not be used in this study, as it prefers and supports qualitative research methods such as interviews. The phenomenological approach is accessible for qualitative studies, where the experiences of the targeted population of participants are required to be investigated and studied (Hepner et al., 2015). On the contrary, the positivistic domain supports quantitative analysis of a range of data gathered in the form of responses of the participants through close-ended surveys (Davoudi, 2012). According to Ryan (2018), “epistemologically, positivists believe that the researcher and the world are separate, with the world existing regardless of the researcher’s presence” (p. 16), Data collection, the management of quantitative data and its analysis, are central and critical for any research examining social dilemma and require valid and reliable tools (Nardi, 2018). This study aimed to gather quantitative data in the form of responses and analyze the information gathered to the best use possible.

Research Questions

In quantitative research with a positivistic approach, research findings are generally quantifiable and observable, analyzed through statistical tools (Antwi & Hamza, 2015). Positivism depends on quantifiable observations and data that lead to statistical analysis (Davoudi, 2012). The following research questions were addressed in this study:

RQ1. Does culture play a part in interpreting the Scriptures regarding divorce decisions?

The hypothesis for RQ1: There will be a statistically significant relationship between culture and the importance of Scripture on whether couples decide to divorce. The variables for this include culture, marital status, parental status, racial status, and regional status as independent variables, and Christian marriage as the dependent variable.

RQ2. Do the participants describe the interference of culture in their marriages?

The hypothesis for RQ2: There will be a statistical relationship between cultural interference and family regarding the Christian divorce decision-making process. The variables for this include culture, marital status, parental status, racial status, and regional status as independent variables, and Christian marriage as the dependent variable.

RQ3. Do the participants describe family intervention in divorce decisions?

The hypothesis for RQ3: There will be a statistical relationship between family intervention and divorce decisions in interpreting biblical views about divorce. The variables for this include culture, marital status, parental status, racial status, and regional status as independent variables, and Christian marriage as the dependent variable.

RQ4. Does technological development and/or civilization aid divorce among Christians in developed countries?

The hypothesis for RQ4: There will be a statistical relationship between cultural interference and the Christian divorce decision-making process. The variables for this include culture, gender, marital status, parental status, racial status, regional status, educational level, and income per household as independent variables and Christian marriage as the dependent variable.

Primary data was collected from a targeted population's responses to the close-ended questions. Scales were then developed, and the responses of the participants were scored.

Setting

Christians in Nigeria and the USA were selected as the targeted population for this research. The sample population was carefully selected based on research questions to represent the targeted population in a way that conclusions could be drawn respective to the research problem. The Nigerian participants represented an underdeveloped population, while participants from the USA represented the developed population. Therefore, a comparison could be quickly drawn between the two populations.

Participants

Survey questionnaires were administered with the help of Church ministers. Their participation was necessary to ascertain the credibility of the participants since they were selected based on the knowledge of the Church resident minister. The participants included married couples and those who are divorced. The selection included more than one church but from the same geographical location. It was expected that due to the closeness of the pastors, there would be minimal unwilling participants. The selection process removed all bias that could surface through demographics among participants. There were specific conditions/criteria to be met for participation in this study, which will be discussed under 'Sampling.' The conditions ensured that participants were appropriate candidates for the research study. The set of questions

(See Appendix) contained questions targeted at participants' perceptions in their marriages. Since responses were personal and reflective of the role culture plays on divorce, they illustrated what participants believed to be their culture. As much as possible, this research set out to get the exact opinion of the participant, free of societal influence and intellectual constructs. The researcher distributed the questionnaire online among the selected participants using available online survey methods and applied the suitable instruments in data analysis. Personal assumptions, predefinitions, and prejudices regarding why or how the participant experienced what they experienced were reduced or completely removed if possible.

Snowballing, a situation where a researcher uses a participant to recruit further participants (Etikan et al., 2016), was removed by strictly instructing the pastors in charge of a congregation to select participants through adequate knowledge of church members. This further removed the researcher's personal bias in the selection process. Personal knowledge of the participant before selection may be grounds for bias and/or snowballing. Participants were instructed not to influence one another's responses as much as possible as part of the ethical rules in the research.

Sampling and Procedures

A simple random sampling approach was selected as the sampling strategy. In such a strategy, every item in the population has the likelihood of being selected in the sample (Acharya et al., 2013). The selection of items in simple random sampling depends on probability or luck (Acharya et al., 2013). Participants must have experienced the said phenomenon and expressed such experience either in writing or telling (Hepner et al., 2015). The participants for this study were therefore limited to self-proclaimed Christians known to be regular church worshippers. The reason for the participant self-identifying for clarification was that sampling criteria do not

have to include citizenship of either country. Still, participants must have been living in the country for more than five years to allow for adaptations to the style of living in the country and acculturation. This number was arrived at upon considering the required years of legal status as a resident in the United States to be eligible for citizenship. It was assumed that immigrants would be accustomed to the rules and regulations of the land by that time (US Government, 2011).

Simple random sampling provided a more straightforward method to extract a research sample from a larger population (Acharya et al., 2013). The researcher started with a list of every single element or member to draw a simple random sample. Each element was then numbered sequentially, and the researcher randomly selected the elements from which to collect the data.

During random selection, the researcher ensured that the participant was part of a married couple, a divorcee, or part of a remarried couple. The final number of participants were provided informed consent that would debrief the study objectives and criteria. Any confidential information of the participants was protected under research ethics.

The Researcher's Role

As principal investigator, the researcher developed the questionnaire. The questions were logically arranged, with each question pertaining to a scale. The survey questionnaire contained close-ended questions so that statistical analysis could be conducted using responses for these questions. The researcher also ensured application of the appropriate quantitative data analysis technique with an integrative approach to ascertain that the survey findings were analyzed quantitatively and interpreted appropriately. Surveys were distributed online after the consent of participants.

Data Collection

Data collection is the most critical part of a research study, and in this study, a quantitative approach was selected. A survey was used as a tool for quantitative data collection. Close-ended questionnaires were used for data collection. Outcomes of the study were measured under two scales: Attitude Towards Divorce and Propensity Towards Divorce, both of which were developed by Sadeghi and Agadjanian (2019). However, additional questions were added to these scales to develop relevant responses from the targeted population of participants. To ensure that enough quantitative data has been collected, close-ended questionnaires were used. Surveys are widely used for quantitative research and quantitative data collection in large amounts (Nardi, 2018).

Online Survey

Online surveys are a widely used tool for quantitative research, and this technology is young and evolving (Nardi, 2018). Developing questionnaires, contacting the targeted population sample, gathering responses, visualization and analysis of survey results, and interpretation of results can all be done online. Online surveys are beneficial in the preparation of questionnaires, data gathering and storage, data visualization and analysis, and for the collaboration of work (Nayak & Narayan, 2019). To ensure sufficient quantitative data was collected, close-ended survey questions were developed and distributed online as a data-collection strategy (Nayak & Narayan, 2019). There were couples answering the same set of questions in the survey. If there were reasons to follow up with specific questions to clarify, follow-up was done to make the responses completely individualistic. Ambiguous responses also required follow-up.

The two scales —Attitudes Towards Divorce and Propensity Towards Divorce —were constructed based on a set of items that assessed them. Attitudes towards divorce were assessed by 12 items used by Sadeghi and Agadjanian (2019) and are as follows:

1. The personal happiness of an individual is more important than putting up with a bad marriage.
2. Good divorce is better than bad marriage.
3. It is alright for a couple with an unhappy marriage to get a divorce.
4. When a couple realizes that they no longer love each other, they should get a divorce.
5. It is better to get a divorce for a couple who has conflict and is dissatisfied together.
6. Divorce is a life event that may happen to anyone.
7. Divorce laws in the country should be easier.
8. Marriage is a lifetime relationship and should never be ended.
9. Divorce is a negative and anti-values phenomenon.
10. Couple should tolerate each other and remain in marriage.
11. Divorce is not good for parents who have children.
12. A woman will go to her husband's house with her veil and come out with her white kafan (shroud).

Scoring System for Attitudes Towards Divorce Scale

A 5-point Likert scale was used for the scoring of participants' responses ranging from 0 (strongly disagree) to 4 (strongly agree). Scores were coded in such a way that higher scores indicated greater acceptability of the divorce. For the Attitude Towards Divorce scale, responses were reverse coded for the last five items so that greater acceptability of divorce was represented by a higher score. The internal consistency of the scale was very good (i.e., $\alpha = 0.83$). Moreover,

the mean of the standardized score of the scale was 49, the range was 0–100, and the SD was 18.2 (Sadeghi & Agadjanian, 2019). The score was split at the theoretical midpoint in addition to the score of the scale. This splitting helped to categorize the respondents into two dominant types of divorce attitude: positive (approval) and negative (disapproval).

The Divorce Propensity Scale was developed utilizing 12 other items. The researcher used 10 questions that were initially integrated in the original scale, while the last two questions were developed by the researcher. The questions are as follows:

1. I consider divorce as a probable event in my life.
2. I have talked with my close friends about getting divorced from my spouse.
3. I have talked with my parents about getting divorced from my spouse.
4. I have no happiness in this marital life and am thinking about getting divorced.
5. I feel my marriage was wrong and is in trouble now.
6. If I did not have to, I would not even stay in this marital life for a moment.
7. I feel that if I get divorced, my life will be better.
8. I am ready to get divorced, even if I have to leave my property.
9. I am ready to get divorced, even if I don't have any chance to remarry.
10. I am ready to get divorced, even if I have to leave my child/children.
11. My family —nuclear or extended —can prevail on me not to divorce.
12. My culture is a determining factor in making a decision about my divorce.

Scoring System for Divorce Propensity Scale

Similar to the Attitude Towards Divorce scale, responses of the participants for the Divorce Propensity Scale were encoded on 5-point Likert-type scale ranging from 0 (strongly disagree) to 4 (strongly agree). In this scale, the internal consistency was excellent (i.e., $\alpha =$

0.92). Higher scores represented a greater propensity towards divorce. Furthermore, for the standardized score of the scale, the mean was 29.5, the range was 0-100, and the SD was 23.0 (Sadeghi & Agadjanian, 2019). The measure of the scale was also separated into two categories in addition to the score of the scale. These categories include those who have a low propensity to divorce and those who have a high propensity to divorce based on the midpoint of the scale.

The survey was administered through the internet, and responses were collected from the same medium. Responses were recorded through a questionnaire, where responses ranged from 0 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). Responses were coded so that a higher response score would represent a greater propensity towards divorce among the participants. Statistical analysis tools were applied for the analysis of data. Additionally, the following predictors were used in the scale.

Sadeghi and Agadjanian (2019) conducted a survey in Tehran City, Iran, in 2014. The survey was entitled the Divorce Among Iranian Youth Survey and helped to develop a scale based on Attitude Toward Divorce and Divorce Propensity to measure the influences of different factors. Whitton et al. (2013) defined attitude toward divorce as perceived acceptability of divorce as a solution to marital distress. The questions provided by Sadeghi and Agadjanian (2019) about attitude toward divorce are meant to assess one's positive and negative attitude toward divorce. They also associated attitude toward divorce with three ideational factors of interest: religiosity, individualism attitudes, and gender role attitudes (Sadeghi & Agadjanian, 2019). Sadeghi and Agadjanian assessed links between divorce and bad marriage, personal happiness, unloving marriage, dissatisfied marriage, divorce laws in country, divorce as negative and anti-values phenomenon, impact on children, and norms for women to live their lives bound in marriage. In the Divorce Propensity Scale, the researcher assessed the natural tendency of

people to divorce. Since this research is culture specific, two questions were added to the 10 questions on the original scale (Sadeghi & Agadjanian, 2019). The two questions are more inclined towards cultural norms on divorce and consider culture as a determinant factor in one's decision for divorce.

Sadeghi and Agadjanian (2019) developed the Attitude Toward Divorce scale by using data from Whitton et al.'s (2013) study, which concluded that relatively positive attitudes toward divorce may raise the risk of marital disruption among adults in remarriages. Sadeghi and Agadjanian (2019) also employed the findings of Rijken and Liefbroer (2012), who concluded that divorce attitude is also linked with assessment of people in relation to the consequences of divorce for the children involved.

Since Sadeghi and Agadjanian (2019) developed questions that were based on non-cultural aspects and more on personal aspects contributing to positive or negative attitudes towards divorce, their study fails to address the cultural influences on divorce (which is why the researcher added questions to the Divorce Propensity Scale). It was necessary to add items in one of the scales so that the aim of this study could be achieved and to recognize the influence of culture on divorce attitude and propensity. Sadeghi and Agadjanian (2019) developed the Attitude Towards Divorce scale from Whitton et al.'s (2013) work. However, the items for the Divorce Propensity Scale were developed by Sadeghi and Agadjanian (2019) themselves. It was significant to use the Divorce Propensity Scale and Attitudes Towards Divorce Scale in current research, as they comply sufficiently with the needs and objectives of the research. A dummy was created following this pattern: Respondents were asked their general religious affiliation. Those who chose 'Protestant' were given options of 'fundamentalist,' 'evangelical,' 'mainline,' 'liberal,' 'Pentecostal,' or 'none of these.' All the participants who identified as 'fundamentalist,'

‘evangelical,’ or ‘Pentecostal’ were grouped into one ‘conservative Protestant’ and scored 1. All others were scored 0. The role of culture and extended family consideration were grouped and scored from 0 to 5. Data was controlled by variables, including gender, marital status, parental status, race, and region.

Gender

For males, the score was 0, and for females, the score was 1.

Marital Status

For marital status, married was scored 0 and unmarried was scored 1.

Parental Status

Under parental status, having children was scored 1 and no children was scored 0.

Racial Status

Under racial status, white scored 1 and other races scored 0.

Regional status

Under regional status, USA residents scored 1 and Nigerian residents scored 0.

Educational Level

The educational level of the participants was scored from 1 = less than high school to 4 = bachelor’s degree or higher.

Income Per Household

The income per household was scored with three values from 1 = below the poverty level to 3 = comfortably above poverty level or more.

Statistical analysis of the relationship between these items was adjusted as variables helped identify the impacts of parental status, race, region, income per household, and educational level on marriage.

Data Analysis

Statistical analysis involves stages in which statistical methods carry out planning, collecting, designing, analysis of data, interpretation of the results, and reporting the findings of the research (Hepner et al., 2015). The techniques used in the statistical analysis provide meanings to meaningless numbers (Ali & Bhaskar, 2016). If proper statistical tests are used, the results and inferences are precise (Hepner et al., 2015). Descriptive statistics describe the basic features of the data in the study (Kaur et al., 2018). Descriptive statistics were applied in this study to provide simple summaries about the measures and the sample. Analytical findings of descriptive statistics form the basis of virtually every quantitative analysis together with a simple graphic analysis (Kaur et al., 2018).

A statistical method, two-way analysis of variance (ANOVA), was used to identify the relationships between dependent and independent variables. ANOVA separates observed variance data into different components and enables the use of additional tests. Two-way ANOVA is generally used to estimate how the mean of a quantitative variable changes according to the levels of two categorical variables. It establishes the correlation and depicts how two independent variables affect, in combination, a dependent variable (Bertani et al., 2018). In the current study, attitudes towards divorce and propensity to divorce were independent variables, while Christian marriage was the dependent variable.

Statistical analysis began with bivariate analysis. Bivariate analysis is one of the simplest forms of statistical analysis. Bivariate analysis determines the empirical relationship between two variables by analyzing them and is generally applied for testing the simple hypothesis of association (Bertani et al., 2018). The relationship between attitude and propensity towards divorce was identified using bivariate analysis. In addition to bivariate analysis, multivariate

analysis was performed (Denis, 2018). Multivariate analysis is recognized and described as a statistical study of experiments in which multiple measurements are made on each experimental unit (Denis, 2018). It further pertains to the relationship between the multivariate measurements as well as their structure (Denis, 2018). Identification of this structure and relationship is essential for the experiment's understanding (Johnson & Wichern, 2014).

In addition to bivariate and multivariate analysis, the chi-square test was performed to compare two variables and identify whether they were related or not. A tremendous chi-square test value suggests that the data does not fit very well, reflecting no relationship. A minimal chi-square test value suggests that observed data fits the expected data very well, reflecting the relationship between the data (Denis, 2018).

For this study, the chi-square analysis involved a chi-square of gender, marital status, parental status, racial status, regional status, educational level, and income per household as independent variables and Christian marriages as the dependent variable. This analysis was done to determine if the difference between the expected data and observed data was due to chance or if there was any relationship between the independent and dependent variables under study. An ANOVA was then conducted with gender, marital status, parental status, racial status, regional status, educational level, and income per household as the independent variables and Christian marriage as the dependent variable. ANOVA was used to determine whether there were statistically significant differences between the means of adjusted independent variables against the dependent variable. These were the main statistical analyses conducted for the purpose of addressing the factors affecting perseverance and commitment in Christian marriages.

Measures

Data was gathered through online survey distribution among the targeted population of participants. The participants were previously identified by ministers who affirmed their church attendance and sent their email IDs to the researcher. Questionnaires were developed online and distributed after gaining the informed consent of the participants. Participants were then contacted through their email IDs and questionnaires sent to these IDs. Participants were given sufficient time to complete the questionnaire and were supported to comprehend the questionnaire as much as possible. During the data-gathering stage, compliance with research ethics was ensured. Data was gathered and analyzed statistically using the above mentioned statistical analytical techniques. Findings gathered after analysis were interpreted and counter-analyzed with the scholarly literature and evidence.

Quantitative research requires statistical analysis techniques. Objective and fair conclusions can be made using appropriate statistical tests and implications can be efficiently analyzed and interpreted from the dataset (McPherson, 2013). Statistical tests help in providing sufficient means for the interpretation of the dataset. They help the researcher make unbiased decisions regarding what the data is saying (Ali & Bhaskar, 2016). Statistics are also a great way of condensing and communicating a large number of quantitative datasets into bite-sized, digestible pieces of information that can be understood by everyone (McPherson, 2013). Statistical analysis guides how the researcher communicates the results and provides reliability and validity of why these statistical tests were chosen and appropriate for analysis (Ali & Bhaskar, 2016). For quantitative research, statistical analysis helps the researcher arrive at the best explanation based on the series of numbers (McPherson, 2013). The summary of statistics helps the participants provide an immediate idea of the big picture and validates the conclusions

(McPherson, 2013; Ali & Bhaskar, 2016). Using a statistical analysis approach satisfies the need for flexibility in data analysis and interpretation for a quantitative protocol. It helps the researcher identify what factors have been emphasized by the participants regarding marriage and divorce. The interpretation of participants' responses further needed to be counter-analyzed with Scripture, which required flexibility in data analysis.

Variables

Variables or constructs are an essential part of any research, as they guide the researcher to pursue their study while articulating around a pivot or focal point (Mehta, 2015). The function of variables in any research is dynamic, and in general, they determine the cause and effect in research (Mehta, 2015). This study used certain variables to keep the focus of the study adjusted. Variables are essential to understand as these are discrete units of information, and the findings of any research project are interpreted by analyzing the relationship, cause, and effects of different variables (Kaur et al., 2018). Predictors used in this research include gender, marital status, parental status, racial status, regional status, educational level, and income per household. These predictors and their scoring have been discussed in the section titled Data Collection.

Validity

Validity refers to the accuracy of the strategy used for the measurement of certain aspects (Lee, 1991). High validity research corresponds to the fact that research has produced results that correspond to real characteristics, properties, and variations in the social or physical world (Lakshmi & Mohideen, 2013). High reliability of the data is the indicator that the measurement method is valid and refers to reliable findings (Mohajan, 2017). Measurement of validity ensures that the method and tool used in the research are high quality and targeted to measure precisely what the researcher wants to know. Such measurement methods must be based on existing

knowledge and thoroughly researched (Lakshmi & Mohideen, 2013). To ensure validity, participants were encouraged to individualize responses as much as possible. All information pertaining to the research purpose and procedures was disclosed to all participants, and their responses were kept private.

External Validity

External validity refers to the generalizability of the outcomes of a study. The outcomes of the study must be applicable to other settings (Yilmaz, 2013; Andrade, 2018). Such findings are called generalizable findings. One such example of external validity is ecological validity, which refers to whether the findings can be generalized to the real world (Yilmaz, 2013). In the current investigation, external validity was evaluated by assessing the application of findings on other populations, such as non-Christians and other religions and ethnicities. The concept of external validity is essential in quantitative research. The generalizations can be made across settings, time, and populations and may provide many significant insights to the identified research problem (Yilmaz, 2013; Andrade, 2018).

Internal Validity

Internal validity refers to the extent of the study to establish a trustworthy cause and effect relationship between the dependent and independent variables of the study (Yilmaz, 2013; Andrade, 2018). It also reflects that a given study's findings eliminate the alternative explanations for a certain problem (Yilmaz, 2013). In the current investigation, the researcher intended to identify the effect of cultural influences, religious perspectives, and other societal influencers on marriage and how they lead to or affect divorce decision.

Reliability

Reliability refers to the accuracy of the instrument used in the study (Yilmaz, 2013). This study intended to investigate the influence of culture, civilization, and scriptural interpretation in decisions leading to divorce among Christians both in developed and undeveloped nations of the world under a positivistic approach. A close-ended questionnaire was developed to conduct the survey among a targeted population of participants. Since the study was designed to assess a wide perspective of a community of Christians, a survey was recognized as a suitable instrument for data collection from a large population (Hepner et al., 2015; Korstjens & Moser, 2018). It allowed the researcher to gather enough quantitative data for a successful study. Moreover, it allowed for the application of a quantitative data analysis strategy (Hepner et al., 2015; Korstjens & Moser, 2018).

Objectivity

Objectivity refers to the extent to which the researcher reduces the level of biases in quantitative research (Letherby et al., 2012). To maintain the quality and integrity of the research, personal viewpoints and biases needed to be controlled and reduced as much as possible (Letherby et al., 2012; Yilmaz, 2013). To ensure objectivity, the researcher assessed any conflict associated with the study's findings. Researchers tend to remain objectively separated from the subject matter in quantitative research. This is because quantitative research is generally objective in approach as it explores and seeks only precise measurements and applies statistical analysis on target concepts to answer the query. Similarly, during interpretation, the researcher stayed objective with a positivistic approach.

Ethical Considerations

Ethical considerations refer to the principles and values that address good and bad questions with respect to human affairs (Cacciattolo, 2015). Ethics search the reasons for approving or not approving the conduct; acting or refraining from acting; and for denying or believing something about the vicious or virtuous conduct or specific bad or good rules (Cacciattolo, 2015). Research involving human participants is compelled to ascertain ethics at each stage (Vanclay et al., 2013). Similar attributes were approached in this research. All the participants in this research were subject to their voluntary decisions and willingness to participate. After signaling interest to participate, a written notice of privacy and a consent form was provided electronically for each participant to read, print, and endorse by entering their name, signature, and date. The form was then be sent back either electronically or by mail. The researcher ensured that the participants had an assurance of privacy and that all information was kept confidential. Each participant was anonymous and their identity has not been revealed. The researcher also intended to be clear in presenting the aim of the research without ambiguity. This research project was not funded by any private or corporate body. The issue of conflict of interests was verified and completely removed if any existed. Every aspect of the guiding ethical rules in the school and of the profession were strictly adhered to for this research (Code of Ethics APA, 2010; AAPC, 2012; AACC, 2020). The researcher ensured that the ethics of anonymity, confidentiality, beneficence, and informed consent were maintained. Transparency was also ensured in data presentation.

Summary

This study adopted a quantitative approach with a positivistic philosophy, investigating the reasons for disparity in divorce rates among Christian couples in developed nations and

underdeveloped nations. Data was collected through an online survey using a 5-point Likert scale questionnaire. Christian couples from the USA and Nigeria were targeted as the study population. Statistical data analysis was performed through SPSS using bivariate analysis, multivariate analysis, and a chi-square test. Factors like culture, extended family, civilization, and community influence were considered for their divorce roles. Moreover, this study focused on biblical interpretations and Scripture on the topic of divorce. A quantitative positivistic approach was recognized as suitable for this study since it allowed for data collection from a large population. The interpretation of information gathered from participant insights and perceptions in relation to divorce helped in highlighting the probable solutions regarding the current research problem. Furthermore, each aspect of data collection and analysis were validated, and the elements of trustworthiness (i.e., external validity, internal validity, objectivity, and reliability) were integrated to ascertain the quality of findings. Compliance with ethical considerations is necessary for the research process, and it was approached in this study as well. Under ethical compliance, the researcher ensured that data was presented in a non-biased manner and with all honesty and transparency.

CHAPTER FOUR: RESULTS

Overview

The purpose of this study was to understand the role of perseverance, culture, and extended family involvement on Christian practice, marriage, and divorce in developed and underdeveloped nations. A survey was used as a tool for quantitative data collection. Close-ended questionnaires were used for data collection. Outcomes of the study were measured under two scales: Attitude Towards Divorce and Propensity Towards Divorce, developed by Sadeghi and Agadjanian (2019).

To help investigate the perceptions of the participants and understand the phenomenon, the following questions were drafted as the research questions of this study: Does culture play a part in interpreting the Scriptures regarding divorce decisions? How did the participants describe the application of culture to their marriage? How did the participants describe family intervention? Does technological development and/or civilization aid divorce among Christians in developed countries?

The goal was to conduct a quantitative analysis of people's responses and perceptions of the research problem. Data was controlled by variables including gender, marital status, parental status, race, and region. To ensure that enough quantitative data was collected, questionnaires were used. Surveys are widely used for quantitative research and quantitative data collection in large amounts (Nardi, 2018).

Descriptive Results

Table 1:

Descriptive Statistics of Demographic Data

Descriptive Data							
	Location	Gender	Age	Education	Marital Status	Socioeconomic Status	Employment
N	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
Missing	2	2	2	2	2	2	2

Table 2:

Frequencies Table for Location

Frequencies of Location			
Levels	Counts	% of Total	Cumulative %
Nigeria	50	50.0 %	50.0 %
United States	50	50.0 %	100.0 %

Table 3:

Frequencies Table for Gender

Frequencies of Gender			
Levels	Counts	% of Total	Cumulative %
Female	51	51.0 %	51.0 %
Male	49	49.0 %	100.0 %

Table 4:*Frequencies Table for Age*

Frequencies of Age			
Levels	Counts	% of Total	Cumulative %
20-30	42	42.0 %	42.0 %
20-31	3	3.0 %	45.0 %
20-32	1	1.0 %	46.0 %
31-45	54	54.0 %	100.0 %

Table 5:*Frequencies Table for Education*

Frequencies of Education			
Levels	Counts	% of Total	Cumulative %
Educated	100	100.0 %	100.0 %

Table 6:*Frequencies Table for Marital Status*

Frequencies of Marital Status			
Levels	Counts	% of Total	Cumulative %
Married	82	82.0 %	82.0 %
Unmarried	18	18.0 %	100.0 %

Table 7:*Frequencies Table for Socioeconomic Status*

Frequencies of Socioeconomic Status			
Levels	Counts	% of Total	Cumulative %
Upper Class	83	83.0 %	83.0 %

Frequencies of Socioeconomic Status			
Levels	Counts	% of Total	Cumulative %
Upper Middle Class	17	17.0 %	100.0 %

Table 8:

Frequencies Table for Employment

Frequencies of Employment			
Levels	Counts	% of Total	Cumulative %
Employed	87	87.0 %	87.0 %
Unemployed	13	13.0 %	100.0 %

Study Findings

ANOVA

Table 9:

ANOVA Table for Marital Status Against ATD and DP

ANOVA - Marital Status					
	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	P
Attitude Towards Divorce	0.00	NaN			
Divorce Propensity	-6.66e-15	0			
Attitude Towards Divorce * Divorce Propensity	6.22	43	0.145		0.345
Residuals	2.30	19	0.121		

Table 10:*Correlation Table for ATD and DP in Nigerian and American Population*

Correlation Matrix			
		Attitude Towards Divorce	Divorce Propensity
Attitude Towards Divorce	Pearson's r	—	0.353 ***
	p-value	—	< .001
	Spearman's Rho	—	0.445 ***
	p-value	—	< .001
	Kendall's Tau B	—	0.320 ***
	p-value	—	< .001
Divorce Propensity	Pearson's r	0.353 ***	—
	p-value	< .001	—
	Spearman's Rho	0.445 ***	—
	p-value	< .001	—
	Kendall's Tau B	0.320 ***	—
	p-value	< .001	—

Note. * $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$

Figure 1: Correlation Plot for ATD and DP

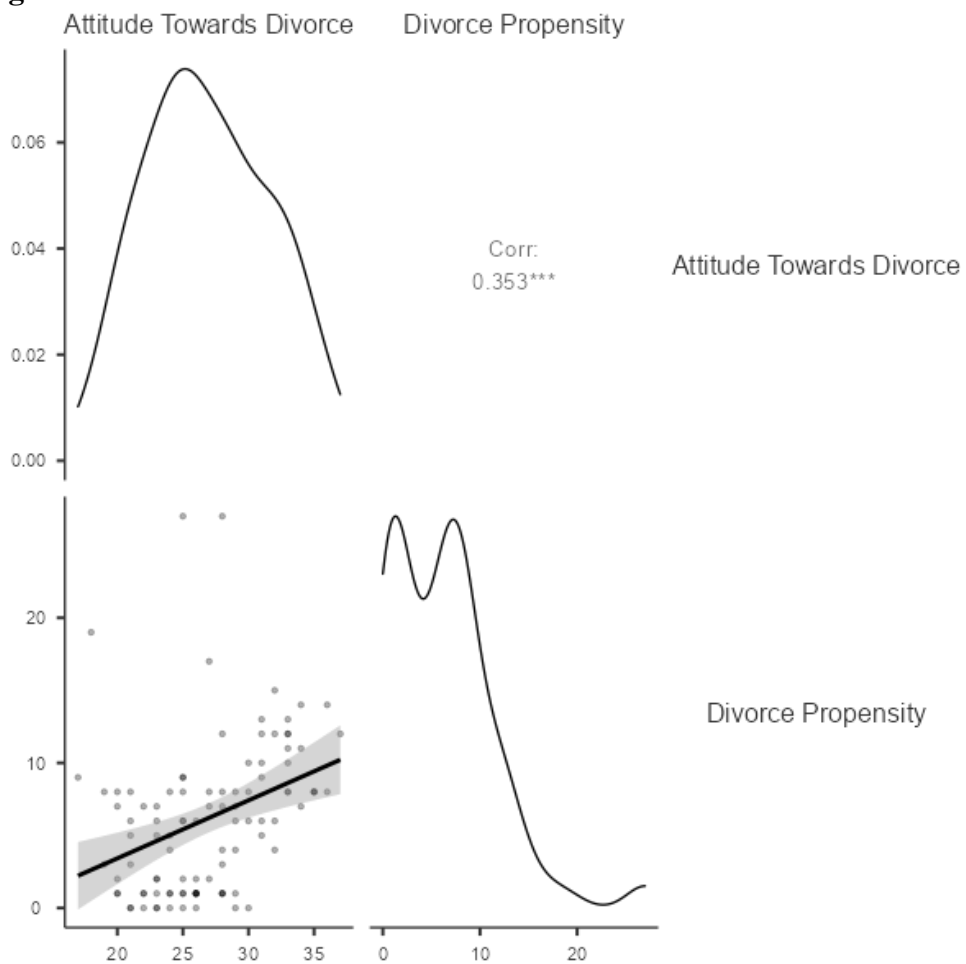


Table 11:*ATD Correlation Table for Nigeria Vs. US*

Correlation Matrix			
		Attitude Towards Divorce (US)	Attitude Towards Divorce (Nigeria)
Attitude Towards Divorce (US)	Pearson's r	—	
	p-value	—	
	Spearman's Rho	—	
	p-value	—	
	Kendall's Tau B	—	
	p-value	—	
	Attitude Towards Divorce (Nigeria)	Pearson's r	-0.114
p-value		0.430	—
Spearman's Rho		-0.087	—
p-value		0.547	—
Kendall's Tau B		-0.059	—
p-value		0.571	—
Note. * p < .05, ** p < .01, *** p < .001			

Figure 2:

ATD Correlation Plot for Nigeria Vs. US

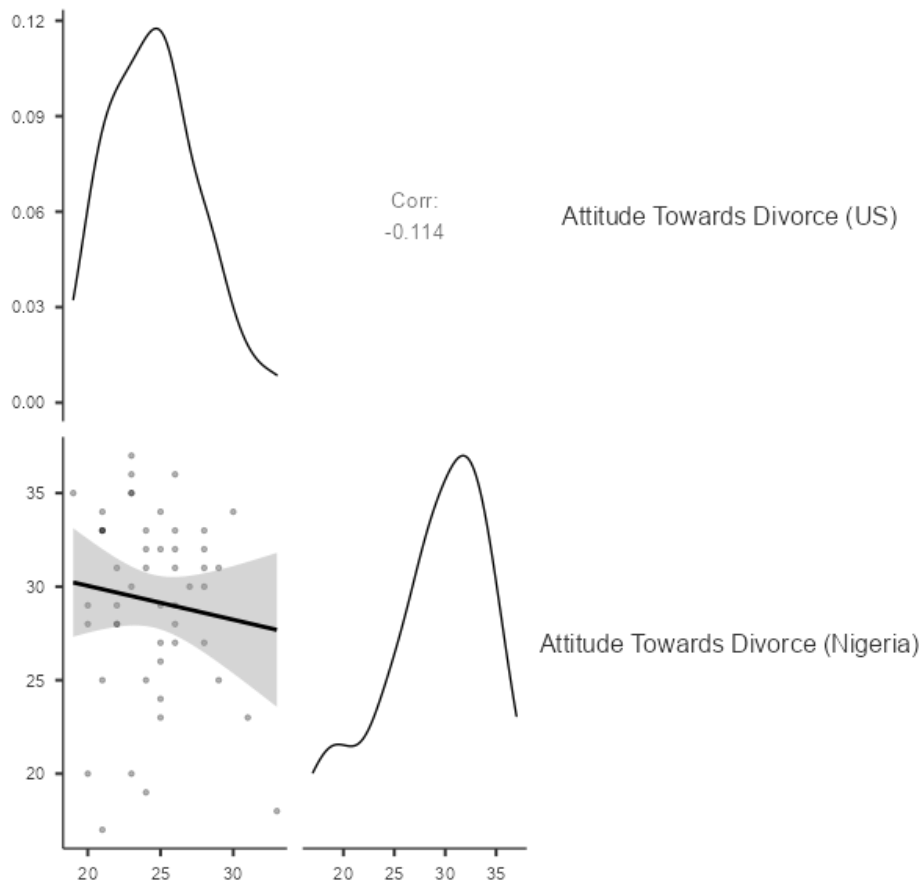


Table 12:*DF Correlation Table for Nigeria Vs. US*

Correlation Matrix			
		Divorce Propensity (Nigeria)	Divorce Propensity (US)
Divorce Propensity (Nigeria)	Pearson's r	—	0.002
	p-value	—	0.987
	Spearman's Rho	—	-0.014
	p-value	—	0.923
	Kendall's Tau B	—	-0.004
	p-value	—	0.972
	N	—	50
	Divorce Propensity (US)	Pearson's r	0.002
p-value		0.987	—
Spearman's Rho		-0.014	—
p-value		0.923	—
Kendall's Tau B		-0.004	—
p-value		0.972	—
N		50	—

Note. * $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$

Figure 3:
DP Correlation Plot for Nigeria Vs. US

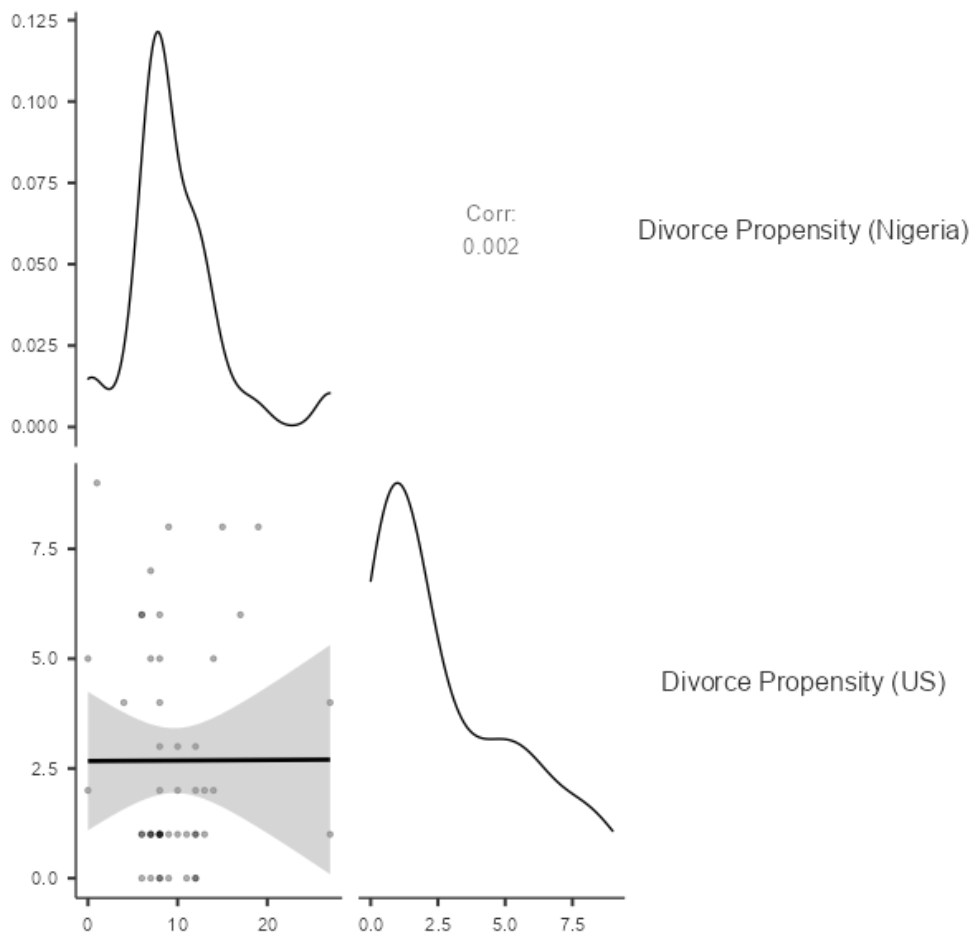


Table 13:*Chi Square for Christian Marriage and Age in Nigerian and American Population*

Marital Status		Age				Total
		20-30	20-31	20-32	31-45	
Married	Observed	33	2	1	46	82
	Expected	34.44	2.460	0.820	44.28	82.0
Unmarried	Observed	9	1	0	8	18
	Expected	7.56	0.540	0.180	9.72	18.0
Total	Observed	42	3	1	54	100
	Expected	42.00	3.000	1.000	54.00	100.0

χ^2 Tests			
	Value	df	p
χ^2	1.40	3	0.705
N	100		

Table 14:*Chi Square for Christian Marriage and Education in Nigerian and American Population*

Marital Status	Education			Total
	Observed	Educated	Uneducated	
Married	Observed	69	13	82
	Expected	70.5	11.48	82.0
Unmarried	Observed	17	1	18
	Expected	15.5	2.52	18.0
Total	Observed	86	14	100
	Expected	86.0	14.00	100.0

χ^2 Tests			
	Value	df	p
χ^2	1.30	1	0.254
N	100		

Table 15:

Chi Square for Christian Marriage and Geographical Location in Nigerian and American Population

Marital Status		Location														
		Nigeria	United States	Total												
Married	Observed	40	42	82												
	Expected	41.00	41.00	82.0												
Unmarried	Observed	10	8	18												
	Expected	9.00	9.00	18.0												
Total	Observed	50	50	100												
	Expected	50.00	50.00	100.0												
χ^2 Tests																
<table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th></th> <th>Value</th> <th>df</th> <th>p</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>χ^2</td> <td>0.271</td> <td>1</td> <td>0.603</td> </tr> <tr> <td>N</td> <td>100</td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> </tbody> </table>						Value	df	p	χ^2	0.271	1	0.603	N	100		
	Value	df	p													
χ^2	0.271	1	0.603													
N	100															

Table 16:*Chi Square for Christian Marriage and Gender in Nigerian and American Population*

Marital Status		Gender			
		Female	Male	Total	
Married	Observed	42	40	82	
	Expected	41.82	40.18	82.0	
Unmarried	Observed	9	9	18	
	Expected	9.18	8.82	18.0	
Total	Observed	51	49	100	
	Expected	51.00	49.00	100.0	
χ^2 Tests					
		Value	df	P	
		χ^2	0.00878	1	0.925
		N	100		

Table 17:

Chi Square for Christian Marriage and Socioeconomic Status in Nigerian and American Population

Marital Status		Socioeconomic Status		
		Upper Class	Upper Middle Class	Total
Married	Observed	67	15	82
	Expected	68.1	13.94	82.0
Unmarried	Observed	16	2	18
	Expected	14.9	3.06	18.0
Total	Observed	83	17	100
	Expected	83.0	17.00	100.0

χ^2 Tests			
	Value	df	P
χ^2	0.540	1	0.463
N	100		

Table 18:

Chi Square for Christian Marriage and Employment in Nigerian and American Population

Marital Status		Employment		Total
		Employed	Unemployed	
Married	Observed	74	8	82
	Expected	71.3	10.66	82.0
Unmarried	Observed	13	5	18
	Expected	15.7	2.34	18.0
Total	Observed	87	13	100
	Expected	87.0	13.00	100.0

χ^2 Tests			
	Value	df	p
χ^2	4.24	1	0.040
N	100		

Table 19:*ATD and DP Correlation Matrix for US and Nigeria*

		Attitude Towards Divorce (Nigeria)	Attitude Towards Divorce (US)	Divorce Propensity (Nigeria)	Divorce Propensity (US)
Attitude Towards Divorce (Nigeria)	Pearson's r	—			
	p-value	—			
	95% CI				
	Upper	—			
	95% CI				
	Lower	—			
	Spearman's Rho	—			
	p-value	—			

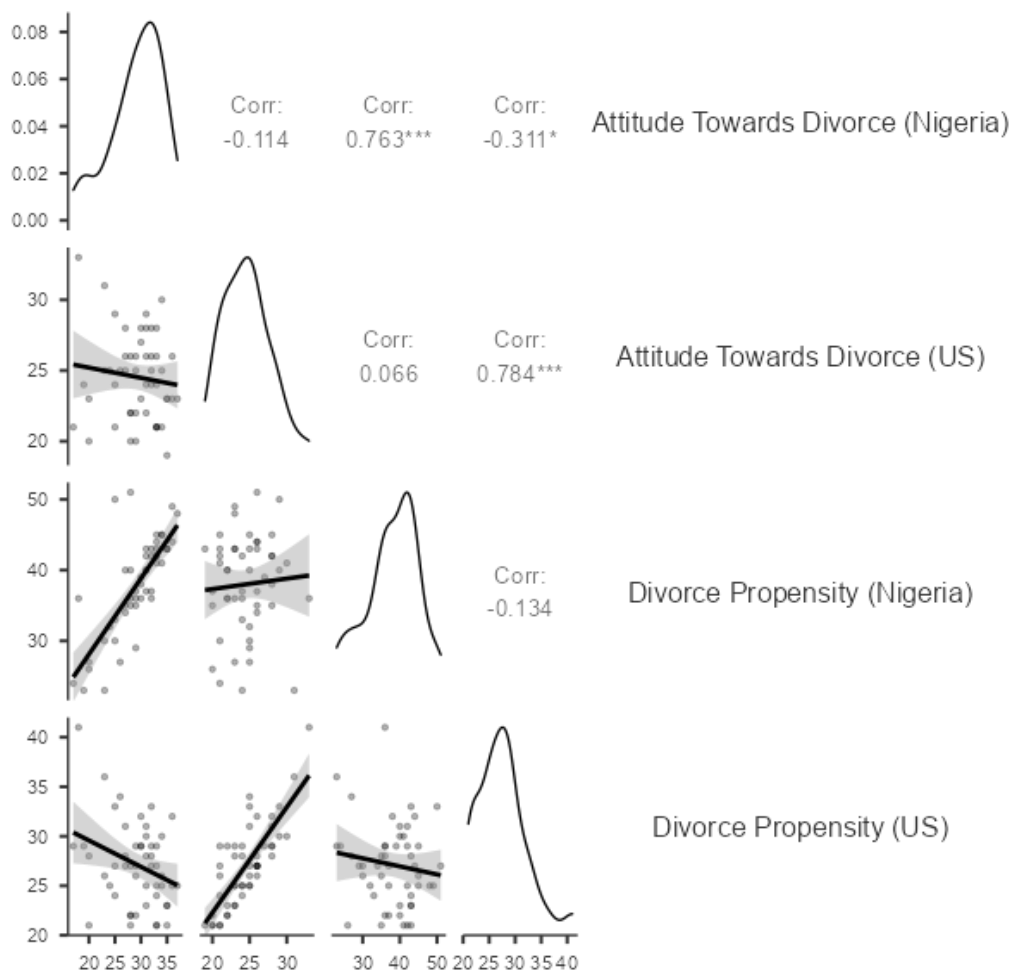
		Attitude Towards Divorce (Nigeria)	Attitude Towards Divorce (US)	Divorce Propensity (Nigeria)	Divorce Propensity (US)
Attitude Towards Divorce (US)	Pearson's r	-0.114	—		
	p-value	0.430	—		
	95% CI Upper	0.170	—		
	95% CI Lower	-0.380	—		
	Spearman's Rho	-0.087	—		
	p-value	0.547	—		
Divorce Propensity (Nigeria)	Pearson's r	0.763 ***	0.066	—	
	p-value	< .001	0.649	—	

		Attitude Towards Divorce (Nigeria)	Attitude Towards Divorce (US)	Divorce Propensity (Nigeria)	Divorce Propensity (US)
	95% CI	0.859	0.338	—	
	Upper				
	95% CI	0.615	-0.216	—	
	Lower				
	Spearman's Rho	0.775 ***	0.088	—	
	p-value	< .001	0.542	—	
Divorce Propensity (US)	Pearson's r	-0.311 *	0.784 ***	-0.134	—
	p-value	0.028	< .001	0.354	—
	95% CI	-0.036	0.872	0.150	—
	Upper				
	95% CI	-0.542	0.647	-0.397	—
	Lower				
	Spearman's Rho	-0.246	0.736 ***	-0.085	—

	Attitude Towards Divorce (Nigeria)	Attitude Towards Divorce (US)	Divorce Propensity (Nigeria)	Divorce Propensity (US)
p-value	0.086	<.001	0.559	—

Note. * $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$

Figure 4: ATD and DP Plot for US and Nigeria

**Table 20:**

T-test for Attitude Towards Divorce According to Age Group in Nigeria

Treatment 1	Treatment 2	T-value Calculation
N1: 22	N2: 28	$s2p = ((df1/(df1 + df2)) * s21) +$
$df1 = N - 1 = 22 - 1 = 21$	$df2 = N - 1 = 28 - 1 = 27$	$((df2/(df2 + df2)) * s22) =$
M1: 30.18	M2: 28.46	$((21/48) * 22.73) + ((27/48) *$
SS1: 477.27	SS2: 680.96	$25.22) = 24.13$
		$s2M1 = s2p/N1 = 24.13/22 = 1.1$

$s_{21} = SS1/(N - 1) =$ $477.27/(22-1) = 22.73$	$s_{22} = SS2/(N - 1) =$ $680.96/(28-1) = 25.22$	$s_{2M2} = s_{2p}/N2 = 24.13/28 = 0.86$ $t = (M1 - M2)/\sqrt{(s_{2M1} + s_{2M2})} =$ $1.72/\sqrt{1.96} = 1.23$
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The t-value is 1.22725. The p-value is .112857. The result is not significant at $p < .05$.

Table 21:

T-test for Divorce Propensity According to Age Group in Nigeria

Treatment 1	Treatment 2	T-value Calculation
N1: 22	N2: 28	$s_{2p} = ((df1/(df1 + df2)) * s_{21}) +$
$df1 = N - 1 = 22 - 1 = 21$	$df2 = N - 1 = 28 - 1 = 27$	$((df2/(df2 + df2)) * s_{22}) =$
M1: 39	M2: 37.21	$((21/48) * 56.48) + ((27/48) *$
SS1: 1186	SS2: 1144.71	$42.4) = 48.56$
$s_{21} = SS1/(N - 1) =$	$s_{22} = SS2/(N - 1) =$	$s_{2M1} = s_{2p}/N1 = 48.56/22 = 2.21$
$1186/(22-1) = 56.48$	$1144.71/(28-1) = 42.4$	$s_{2M2} = s_{2p}/N2 = 48.56/28 = 1.73$
		$t = (M1 - M2)/\sqrt{(s_{2M1} + s_{2M2})} =$
		$1.79/\sqrt{3.94} = 0.9$

The t-value is 0.89948. The p-value is .186443. The result is not significant at $p < .05$.

Table 22:

T-test for Attitude Towards Divorce for Age Group 1 – US Vs. Nigeria

Treatment 1	Treatment 2	T-value Calculation
-------------	-------------	---------------------

N1: 22 df1 = N - 1 = 22 - 1 = 21 M1: 30.18 SS1: 477.27 s21 = SS1/(N - 1) = 477.27/(22-1) = 22.73	N2: 24 df2 = N - 1 = 24 - 1 = 23 M2: 24.75 SS2: 226.5 s22 = SS2/(N - 1) = 226.5/(24-1) = 9.85	s2p = ((df1/(df1 + df2)) * s21) + ((df2/(df2 + df2)) * s22) = ((21/44) * 22.73) + ((23/44) * 9.85) = 15.99 s2M1 = s2p/N1 = 15.99/22 = 0.73 s2M2 = s2p/N2 = 15.99/24 = 0.67 t = (M1 - M2)/√(s2M1 + s2M2) = 5.43/√1.39 = 4.6
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The t-value is 4.60144. The p-value is .000036. The result is significant at $p < .05$.

Table 23:

T-test for Attitude Towards Divorce for Age Group 2 – US Vs. Nigeria

Treatment 1	Treatment 2	T-value Calculation
N1: 28 df1 = N - 1 = 28 - 1 = 27 M1: 28.46 SS1: 680.96 s21 = SS1/(N - 1) = 680.96/(28-1) = 25.22	N2: 26 df2 = N - 1 = 26 - 1 = 25 M2: 24.35 SS2: 245.88 s22 = SS2/(N - 1) = 245.88/(26-1) = 9.84	s2p = ((df1/(df1 + df2)) * s21) + ((df2/(df2 + df2)) * s22) = ((27/52) * 25.22) + ((25/52) * 9.84) = 17.82 s2M1 = s2p/N1 = 17.82/28 = 0.64 s2M2 = s2p/N2 = 17.82/26 = 0.69 t = (M1 - M2)/√(s2M1 + s2M2) = 4.12/√1.32 = 3.58

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The t-value is 3.58151. The p-value is .000751. The result is significant at $p < .05$.

Table 24:

T-test for Divorce Propensity for Age Group 1 – US Vs. Nigeria

Treatment 1	Treatment 2	T-value Calculation
N1: 22	N2: 24	$s^2_p = ((df_1/(df_1 + df_2)) * s^2_1) +$
$df_1 = N - 1 = 22 - 1 = 21$	$df_2 = N - 1 = 24 - 1 = 23$	$((df_2/(df_1 + df_2)) * s^2_2) =$
M1: 39	M2: 27.62	$((21/44) * 56.48) + ((23/44) *$
SS1: 1186	SS2: 575.62	$25.03) = 40.04$
$s^2_1 = SS_1/(N - 1) =$	$s^2_2 = SS_2/(N - 1) =$	$s^2_{M1} = s^2_p/N_1 = 40.04/22 = 1.82$
$1186/(22-1) = 56.48$	$575.62/(24-1) = 25.03$	$s^2_{M2} = s^2_p/N_2 = 40.04/24 = 1.67$
		$t = (M_1 - M_2)/\sqrt{(s^2_{M1} + s^2_{M2})} =$
		$11.38/\sqrt{3.49} = 6.09$

The t-value is 6.09059. The p-value is $< .00001$. The result is significant at $p < .05$.

Table 25:

T-test for Divorce Propensity for Age Group 2 – US Vs. Nigeria

Treatment 1	Treatment 2	T-value Calculation

N1: 28	N2: 26	$s^2_p = ((df_1/(df_1 + df_2)) * s^2_1) +$
$df_1 = N - 1 = 28 - 1 = 27$	$df_2 = N - 1 = 26 - 1 = 25$	$((df_2/(df_1 + df_2)) * s^2_2) =$
M1: 37.21	M2: 26.65	$((27/52) * 42.4) + ((25/52) * 11.6)$
SS1: 1144.71	SS2: 289.88	$= 27.59$
$s^2_1 = SS_1/(N - 1) =$	$s^2_2 = SS_2/(N - 1) =$	$s^2_{M1} = s^2_p/N_1 = 27.59/28 = 0.99$
$1144.71/(28-1) = 42.4$	$289.88/(26-1) = 11.6$	$s^2_{M2} = s^2_p/N_2 = 27.59/26 = 1.06$
		$t = (M_1 - M_2)/\sqrt{(s^2_{M1} + s^2_{M2})} =$
		$10.56/\sqrt{2.05} = 7.38$

The t-value is 7.38222. The p-value is < .00001. The result is significant at $p < .05$.

Table 26:

T-test for Attitude Towards Divorce in the US According to Gender

Treatment 1	Treatment 2	T-value Calculation
N1: 12	N2: 14	$s^2_p = ((df_1/(df_1 + df_2)) * s^2_1) +$
$df_1 = N - 1 = 12 - 1 = 11$	$df_2 = N - 1 = 14 - 1 = 13$	$((df_2/(df_1 + df_2)) * s^2_2) =$
M1: 23.5	M2: 25.07	$((11/24) * 10.09) + ((13/24) *$
SS1: 111	SS2: 118.93	$9.15) = 9.58$

$s_{21} = SS1/(N - 1) = 111/(12-1) = 10.09$	$s_{22} = SS2/(N - 1) = 118.93/(14-1) = 9.15$	$s_{2M1} = s_{2p}/N1 = 9.58/12 = 0.8$ $s_{2M2} = s_{2p}/N2 = 9.58/14 = 0.68$ $t = (M1 - M2)/\sqrt{(s_{2M1} + s_{2M2})} = -1.57/\sqrt{1.48} = -1.29$
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The t-value is -1.29054. The p-value is .104579. The result is not significant at $p < .05$.

Table 27:

T-test for Divorce Propensity in the US According to Gender

Treatment 1	Treatment 2	T-value Calculation
N1: 12	N2: 14	$s_{2p} = ((df1/(df1 + df2)) * s_{21}) + ((df2/(df2 + df2)) * s_{22}) =$
$df1 = N - 1 = 12 - 1 = 11$	$df2 = N - 1 = 14 - 1 = 13$	$((11/24) * 15.84) + ((13/24) * 8.88) = 12.07$
M1: 26.75	M2: 26.57	$s_{2M1} = s_{2p}/N1 = 12.07/12 = 1.01$
SS1: 174.25	SS2: 115.43	$s_{2M2} = s_{2p}/N2 = 12.07/14 = 0.86$
$s_{21} = SS1/(N - 1) = 174.25/(12-1) = 15.84$	$s_{22} = SS2/(N - 1) = 115.43/(14-1) = 8.88$	$t = (M1 - M2)/\sqrt{(s_{2M1} + s_{2M2})} = 0.18/\sqrt{1.87} = 0.13$

The t-value is 0.13066. The p-value is .448568. The result is not significant at $p < .05$.

Table 28:*T-test for Attitude Towards Divorce in Nigeria According to Gender*

Treatment 1	Treatment 2	T-value Calculation
N1: 14	N2: 14	$s^2_p = ((df_1/(df_1 + df_2)) * s^2_1) +$
$df_1 = N - 1 = 14 - 1 = 13$	$df_2 = N - 1 = 14 - 1 = 13$	$((df_2/(df_2 + df_2)) * s^2_2) =$
M1: 25.86	M2: 31.07	$((13/26) * 27.67) + ((13/26) *$
SS1: 359.71	SS2: 130.93	$10.07) = 18.87$
$s^2_1 = SS_1/(N - 1) =$	$s^2_2 = SS_2/(N - 1) =$	$s^2_{M1} = s^2_p/N_1 = 18.87/14 = 1.35$
$359.71/(14-1) = 27.67$	$130.93/(14-1) = 10.07$	$s^2_{M2} = s^2_p/N_2 = 18.87/14 = 1.35$
		$t = (M_1 - M_2)/\sqrt{(s^2_{M1} + s^2_{M2})} =$
		$-5.21/\sqrt{2.7} = -3.18$

The t-value is -3.17576. The p-value is .001913. The result is significant at $p < .05$.

Table 29:*T-test for Divorce Propensity in Nigeria According to Gender*

Treatment 1	Treatment 2	T-value Calculation
N1: 14	N2: 14	$s^2_p = ((df_1/(df_1 + df_2)) * s^2_1) +$
$df_1 = N - 1 = 14 - 1 = 13$	$df_2 = N - 1 = 14 - 1 = 13$	$((df_2/(df_2 + df_2)) * s^2_2) =$
M1: 34.43	M2: 40	

SS1: 731.43 $s_{21} = SS1/(N - 1) = 731.43/(14-1) = 56.26$	SS2: 196 $s_{22} = SS2/(N - 1) = 196/(14-1) = 15.08$	$((13/26) * 56.26) + ((13/26) * 15.08) = 35.67$ $s_{2M1} = s_{2p}/N1 = 35.67/14 = 2.55$ $s_{2M2} = s_{2p}/N2 = 35.67/14 = 2.55$ $t = (M1 - M2)/\sqrt{(s_{2M1} + s_{2M2})} = -5.57/\sqrt{5.1} = -2.47$
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The t-value is -2.4681. The p-value is .01024. The result is significant at $p < .05$.

Table 30:

T-test for Attitude Towards Divorce in Males US Vs. Nigeria

Treatment 1	Treatment 2	T-value Calculation
N1: 12 $df1 = N - 1 = 12 - 1 = 11$ M1: 23.5 SS1: 111 $s_{21} = SS1/(N - 1) = 111/(12-1) = 10.09$	N2: 14 $df2 = N - 1 = 14 - 1 = 13$ M2: 25.86 SS2: 359.71 $s_{22} = SS2/(N - 1) = 359.71/(14-1) = 27.67$	$s_{2p} = ((df1/(df1 + df2)) * s_{21}) + ((df2/(df2 + df2)) * s_{22}) = ((11/24) * 10.09) + ((13/24) * 27.67) = 19.61$ $s_{2M1} = s_{2p}/N1 = 19.61/12 = 1.63$ $s_{2M2} = s_{2p}/N2 = 19.61/14 = 1.4$ $t = (M1 - M2)/\sqrt{(s_{2M1} + s_{2M2})} = -2.36/\sqrt{3.04} = -1.35$

The t-value is -1.35295. The p-value is .094341. The result is not significant at $p < .05$.

Table 31:

T-test for Attitude Towards Divorce in Females – US Vs. Nigeria

Treatment 1	Treatment 2	T-value Calculation
N1: 14	N2: 14	$s^2_p = ((df_1/(df_1 + df_2)) * s^2_1) +$
$df_1 = N - 1 = 14 - 1 = 13$	$df_2 = N - 1 = 14 - 1 = 13$	$((df_2/(df_1 + df_2)) * s^2_2) =$
M1: 25.07	M2: 31.07	$((13/26) * 9.15) + ((13/26) *$
SS1: 118.93	SS2: 130.93	$10.07) = 9.61$
$s^2_1 = SS_1/(N - 1) =$	$s^2_2 = SS_2/(N - 1) =$	$s^2_{M1} = s^2_p/N_1 = 9.61/14 = 0.69$
$118.93/(14-1) = 9.15$	$130.93/(14-1) = 10.07$	$s^2_{M2} = s^2_p/N_2 = 9.61/14 = 0.69$
		$t = (M_1 - M_2)/\sqrt{(s^2_{M1} + s^2_{M2})} =$
		$-6/\sqrt{1.37} = -5.12$

The t-value is -5.12084. The p-value is .000012. The result is significant at $p < .05$.

Table 32:

T-test for Divorce Propensity in Males – US Vs. Nigeria

Treatment 1	Treatment 2	T-value Calculation
N1: 12	N2: 14	$s^2_p = ((df_1/(df_1 + df_2)) * s^2_1) +$
$df_1 = N - 1 = 12 - 1 = 11$	$df_2 = N - 1 = 14 - 1 = 13$	$((df_2/(df_1 + df_2)) * s^2_2) =$

M1: 26.75	M2: 34.43	$((11/24) * 15.84) + ((13/24) *$
SS1: 174.25	SS2: 731.43	$56.26) = 37.74$
$s_{21} = SS1/(N - 1) =$	$s_{22} = SS2/(N - 1) =$	$s_{2M1} = s_{2p}/N1 = 37.74/12 = 3.14$
$174.25/(12-1) = 15.84$	$731.43/(14-1) = 56.26$	$s_{2M2} = s_{2p}/N2 = 37.74/14 = 2.7$
		$t = (M1 - M2)/\sqrt{(s_{2M1} + s_{2M2})} =$
		$-7.68/\sqrt{5.84} = -3.18$

The t-value is -3.17736. The p-value is .002028. The result is significant at $p < .05$.

Table 33:

T-test for Divorce Propensity in Females – US Vs. Nigeria

Treatment 1	Treatment 2	T-value Calculation
N1: 14	N2: 14	$s_{2p} = ((df1/(df1 + df2)) * s_{21}) +$
$df1 = N - 1 = 14 - 1 = 13$	$df2 = N - 1 = 14 - 1 = 13$	$((df2/(df2 + df2)) * s_{22}) =$
M1: 26.57	M2: 40	$((13/26) * 8.88) + ((13/26) *$
SS1: 115.43	SS2: 196	$15.08) = 11.98$
$s_{21} = SS1/(N - 1) =$	$s_{22} = SS2/(N - 1) = 196/(14-$	$s_{2M1} = s_{2p}/N1 = 11.98/14 = 0.86$
$115.43/(14-1) = 8.88$	$1) = 15.08$	$s_{2M2} = s_{2p}/N2 = 11.98/14 = 0.86$
		$t = (M1 - M2)/\sqrt{(s_{2M1} + s_{2M2})} =$
		$-13.43/\sqrt{1.71} = -10.27$

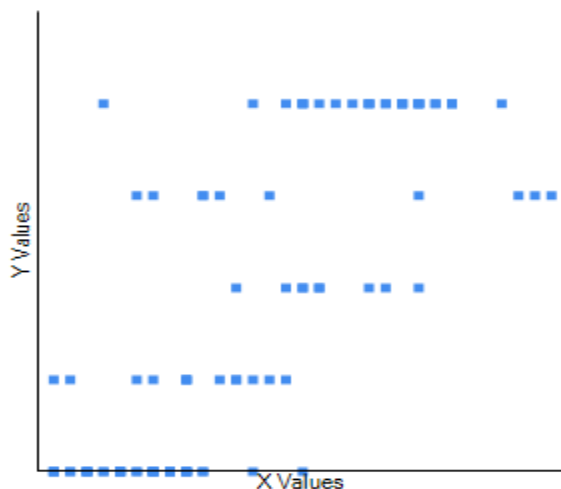
The t-value is -10.26565. The p-value is < .00001. The result is significant at $p < .05$.

Table 34:

Regression for Impact of Culture on Divorce Propensity (Total Population)

Result Details & Calculation	Mean = 32.56	R Calculation
X Values	$\sum(Y - My)^2 = SSy = 6206.64$	$r = \frac{\sum((X - Mx)(Y - My))}{\sqrt{(SSx)(SSy)}}$
$\sum = 173$	X and Y Combined	$r = \frac{1042.12}{\sqrt{(287.71)(6206.64)}} = 0.7799$
Mean = 1.73	N = 100	Meta Numerics (cross-check)
$\sum(X - Mx)^2 = SSx = 287.71$	$\sum(X - Mx)(Y - My) = 1042.12$	$r = 0.7799$
Y Values		
$\sum = 3256$		

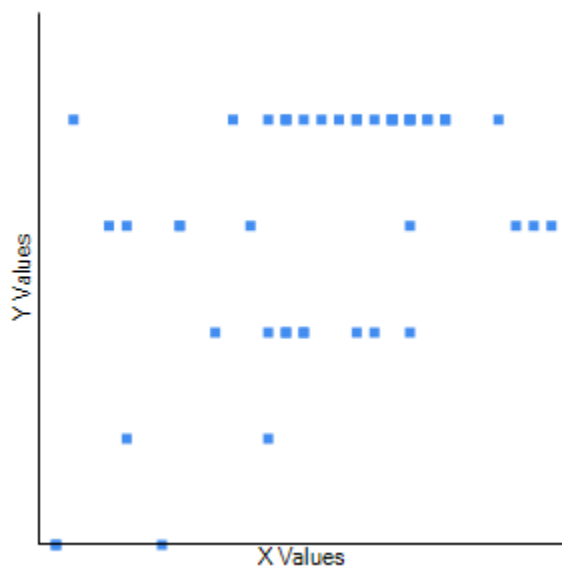
Figure 5: Regression Plot for Impact of Culture on Divorce Propensity (Total Population)



The value of R is 0.7799. This indicates a strong positive correlation, which means that culture scores go with high Divorce Propensity scores (and vice versa). The value of R², the coefficient of determination, is 0.6082. The p-value is < .00001, and the result is significant at $p < .05$.

Table 35:*Regression for Impact of Culture on Divorce Propensity in Nigeria*

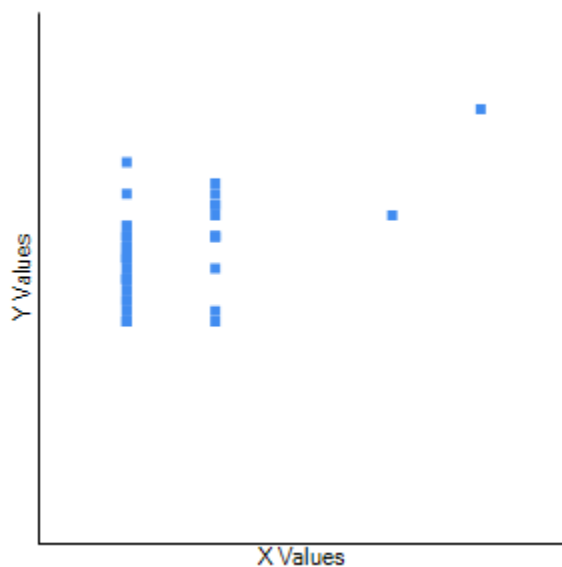
Result Details & Calculation	Mean = 3.1	R Calculation
X Values	$\sum(Y - My)^2 = SSy = 70.5$	$r = \frac{\sum((X - Mx)(Y - My))}{\sqrt{(SSx)(SSy)}}$
$\sum = 1900$	X and Y Combined	$r = 210 / \sqrt{((2370)(70.5))} = 0.5137$
Mean = 38	N = 50	Meta Numerics (cross-check)
$\sum(X - Mx)^2 = SSx = 2370$	$\sum(X - Mx)(Y - My) = 210$	$r = 0.5137$
Y Values		
$\sum = 155$		

Figure 6: Regression Plot for Impact of Culture on Divorce Propensity in Nigeria

The value of R is 0.5137, indicating a moderate positive correlation, which means there is a tendency for high culture scores to go with high Divorce Propensity scores. The value of R², the coefficient of determination, is 0.2639.

Table 36:*Regression for Impact of Culture on Divorce Propensity in the United States*

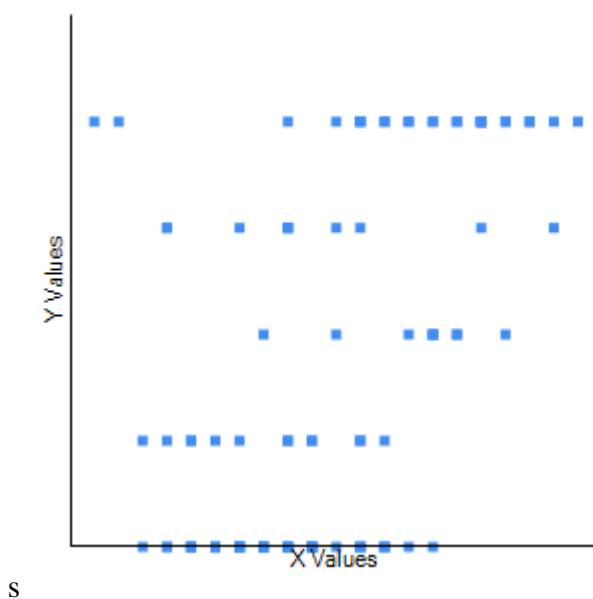
Result Details & Calculation	Mean = 27.12	R Calculation
X Values	$\sum(Y - My)^2 = SSy = 877.28$	$r = \frac{\sum((X - Mx)(Y - My))}{\sqrt{(SSx)(SSy)}}$
$\sum = 18$	X and Y Combined	$r = 86.84 / \sqrt{((29.52)(877.28))}$
Mean = 0.36	N = 50	= 0.5396
$\sum(X - Mx)^2 = SSx = 29.52$	$\sum(X - Mx)(Y - My) = 86.84$	Meta Numerics (cross-check)
Y Values		r = 0.5396
$\sum = 1356$		

Figure 7: Regression Plot for Impact of Culture on Divorce Propensity in the United States

The value of R is 0.5396, which shows that there is a moderate positive correlation, implying that there is a tendency for high culture scores with high Divorce Propensity scores. The value of R², the coefficient of determination, is 0.2912.

Table 37:*Regression for Impact of Culture on Attitude Towards Divorce*

Result Details & Calculation	Mean = 1.73	R Calculation
X Values	$\sum(Y - My)^2 = SSy = 287.71$	$r = \frac{\sum((X - Mx)(Y - My))}{\sqrt{(SSx)(SSy)}}$
$\sum = 2688$	X and Y Combined	$r = \frac{428.76}{\sqrt{(2216.56)(287.71)}} = 0.5369$
Mean = 26.88	N = 100	Meta Numerics (cross-check)
$\sum(X - Mx)^2 = SSx = 2216.56$	$\sum(X - Mx)(Y - My) = 428.76$	r = 0.5369
Y Values		
$\sum = 173$		

Figure 8: Regression Plot for Impact of Culture on Attitude Towards Divorce

The value of R is 0.5369. This is a moderate positive correlation, which means there is a tendency for high culture scores with high scores for Attitude Towards Divorce. The value of R², the coefficient of determination, is 0.2883.

Table 38:*Multivariate and Pearson Results for Impact of Culture and Children on Divorce Propensity*

Model Coefficients - Divorce Propensity				
Predictor	Estimate	SE	T	p
Intercept ^a	29.682	1.954	15.189	< .001
Impact of Culture	3.129	0.505	6.194	< .001
Impact of Children	1.813	0.814	2.227	0.028
Location:				
United States – Nigeria	-3.232	1.733	-1.866	0.065
Gender:				
Male – Female	-1.640	1.008	-1.626	0.107
Age:				
20-31 – 20-30	1.922	2.987	0.643	0.522
20-32 – 20-30	-5.262	5.000	-1.052	0.295
31-45 – 20-30	-1.196	1.007	-1.188	0.238
Education:				
Uneducated – Educated	0.362	1.476	0.245	0.807
Marital Status:				
Unmarried – Married	-1.286	1.326	-0.970	0.335

^a Represents reference level

Model Coefficients - Divorce Propensity					
Predictor	Estimate	SE	T	p	
		Divorce Propensity	Impact of Culture	Impact of Children	Attitude Towards Divorce
Divorce Propensity	Pearson's r	—			
	p-value	—			
Impact of Culture	Pearson's r	0.780 **	—		
	p-value	<.001	—		
Impact of Children	Pearson's r	-0.180	-0.352 ***	—	
	p-value	0.073	<.001	—	
Attitude Towards Divorce	Pearson's r	0.825 **	0.537 ***	-0.133	—
	p-value	<.001	<.001	0.188	—
Note. * p < .05, ** p < .01, *** p < .001					
Model Fit Measures					
Model	R	R ²	Adjusted R ²		
1	0.811	0.658	0.624		

The total number of participants was 100. The participants ranged in ages from 20 to 45 years. The purpose of this study was to quantitatively analyze the factors in the lives of these participants that lead to satisfaction or dissatisfaction in their marriages. This study was designed

to assess Christian participants only. It was ensured that an equal number of samples was taken from the two study areas targeted in this study. Consequently, 50 samples in this study were taken from Nigeria, and the remaining 50 were from the United States. Among these participants, the survey included both females and males. The number of females in the study was 51, representing 51% of the total population, while the number of males in the study was 49, representing 49% of the total population. Forty-six percent of the candidates belonged to the first age group (i.e., 20-32 years) and the remaining 54% belonged to the second age group (i.e., 31-45 years). In terms of education, all the participants representing 100% of the total population have a minimum of a bachelor's degree. In terms of marital status, many of the candidates (82%) were married. Eighteen percent of the candidates were single. In addition, 13% were unemployed and 87% were either employed or self-employed. In terms of socioeconomic profile, most of the participants (83%) belonged to the upper class. Seventeen percent represented the upper-middle class. All the participants belonged to a relatively elite group of people in both countries.

The results were analyzed for the entire population via Pearson correlation, Coefficient analysis and Spearman's Rho, as the two correlations are roughly the same and nearly equivalent as they correlate normally distributed data. The Spearman's Rho value was found to be 0.445, significant at $p < .001$. According to the results, a positive relationship was found between Divorce Propensity and Attitude Towards Divorce. The Pearson's r -value of 0.353 was found to be significant at $p < .001$. To verify the results, a Spearman's Rho test was conducted to see if the results could be validated. A significant relationship was found in the second test. It was concluded that in the entire population sample, there was a relationship between Divorce Propensity and Attitude Towards Divorce in relationships of the Christian couples that were tested.

The results were further evaluated based on age groups to see if there was a difference between the two age groups or if age had anything to do with how people felt about their marriages and getting a divorce.

After that, the population was tested in each study area using Pearson and Spearman's correlation individually to see if there was a significant difference between the Attitude Towards Divorce among the populations of the two study areas (i.e., Nigeria and the United States). A negative correlation was identified between the results of Nigeria and the United States. The *r*-value for Pearson correlation Coefficient was found to be -0.300, while the Spearman's Rho test results showed a value of -0.114. This implies that the results from the two study areas were quite different and in no way related to each other. People who are in Nigeria demonstrated a different perception of divorce compared to the people in the United States. This also served the purpose of studying the two areas and conducting a comparative analysis of the two. This may be due to the fact that culture, geographical location, and upbringing can impact the way people think about divorce.

The results also identified if the two population samples divided geographically were correlated in terms of Divorce Propensity by using the same method. Like the results from first scale, the Attitude Towards Divorce? Scale, no significant relationship was found between the results of the two samples for the second scale, the Divorce Propensity Scale. The *r*-value for the Divorce Propensity in this case was 0.002, indicating that there is no substantial correlation between the results of the two population samples (i.e., two geographical samples were not significantly correlated on Attitude Towards Divorce and Divorce Propensity).

In this study, several variables were tested against the dependent variable using Chi Square to see if there was a significant association or whether the two variables are independent

of one another. The following variables were tested in this method: age, gender, employment, education, geographical location, and socioeconomic status.

According to the results for age, the χ^2 value was 1.40 against the p-value of 0.705, indicating that there was a significant association between the two regions. For the variable of education, the results indicated similar observations with statistically significant results, where χ^2 was 1.30 against the p-value of 0.254.

No significant association was noted in terms of geographical location, so it failed to reject the null hypothesis, which specified that perception of marriage among Christians was significantly correlated among the populations of the US and Nigeria. Further tests were conducted over this observation to confirm these results using a t-test in the later stages of the study. With an χ^2 value of 0.271 against a p-value of 0.603, the perception of marriage among Christians in a Nigerian population was significantly different from that of Christians in the United States.

Similarly, no significant association was found when tested for gender, with the χ^2 value of 0.00878 against the p-value of 0.925. It also indicates a difference in perception based on gender.

For socioeconomic status and employment, the Chi Square value of 0.540 against the p-value of 0.463 and χ^2 value of 4.24 against the p-value of 0.040 were observed respectively.

The regression analysis was used to identify correlation between Attitude Towards Divorce and Divorce Propensity to compare the results using four different data sets, i.e., Attitude Towards Divorce for the US, Attitude Towards Divorce for Nigeria, Divorce Propensity for the US, and Divorce Propensity for Nigeria. This analysis allowed the researcher to identify any correlation between the several subsets, i.e., ATD US – ATD Nigeria, ATD US – DP US,

ATD US – DP Nigeria, DP US – DP Nigeria, and ATD Nigeria – ADP Nigeria. A significant correlation was identified between Divorce Propensity (Nigeria) and Attitude Towards Divorce (Nigeria), i.e., 0.763. A significant correlation was also found between Divorce Propensity (US) Attitude Towards Divorce (Nigeria) and Attitude Towards Divorce (US), i.e., -0.311 and 0.784 respectively. The remaining variations were not correlated, highlighting various differences between the results of each data set.

This study categorized the population according to two age groups, 20-32 and 33-45. It was intended to find out whether there was a significant relationship between the population's Attitude Towards Divorce for the two study areas. The young population (20-32) was considered as age group 1 and the middle-aged population (33-45) as age group 2.

The study ran a series of tests to identify if the Attitude Towards Divorce and Divorce Propensity in different population samples differed based on age group, gender, and geographical location. The results for the two different population samples were analyzed via T-test analysis as well. To verify the results, a Spearman's Rho test was further conducted to validate the results. A test was conducted to identify differences in Attitude Towards Divorce according to age group in Nigeria, at $p < .05$. According to the results, the t-value was 1.22725, while the p-value was .112857. It can be concluded that the result was not significant and there were no major differences in Attitude Towards Divorce in Nigeria among different age groups.

Another test was conducted to identify differences in Divorce Propensity according to age group in the United States, at $p < .05$. According to the results, the t-value was 1.22725, while the p-value was .112857. This indicates that the result is not significant and there were no major differences in Divorce Propensity according to age group in the United States. When a difference in either country or geographical location was tested in terms of Attitude Towards

Divorce for age group 1, the t-value of 4.60144 was observed, while the p-value was .000036. This indicates that the result was significant, at $p < .05$, and there was a significant difference in the Attitude Towards Divorce between the young population of the two countries. After comparing the Attitude Towards Divorce of both the countries for age group 2, the t-value was found to be 3.58151 and the p-value was .000751. The result in this case was significant, at $p < .05$.

For difference in Divorce Propensity between the two countries for age group 1, significant results were identified with the t-value of 6.09059 and p-value of $< .00001$. Similarly, the results were significant for Divorce Propensity among age group 2, with a t-value of 7.38222 and a p-value of $< .00001$.

Attitude Towards Divorce in the US according to gender was further measured, and it did not indicate any significant value, i.e., the t-value was -1.29054 and the p-value was .104579. Similarly, the results were also not significant for Divorce Propensity in the US based on gender, recording a t-value of 0.13066 and a p-value of .448568.

To observe things further, Attitude Towards Divorce was calculated in Nigeria according to gender, and it was found that the results were significant, with the t-value of -3.17576 and a p-value of .001913. The study observed similar results when tested for Divorce Propensity in terms of gender in Nigeria and found significant results, where the t-value was -2.4681 and the p-value was .01024.

Moving further, the candidates of the two countries were compared by gender. Attitude Towards Divorce in Males for US and Nigeria had no significant difference, hinting that males have similar perceptions regarding divorce in both countries. The t-value was -1.35295 and the p-value was .094341. However, when Attitude Towards Divorce in Females was compared for

the two countries (US and Nigeria), similar results were observed, with a t-value of -5.12084 and a p-value of .000012. To further support the observations made in this study, the Divorce Propensity was analyzed in females between the two countries, demonstrating the results were significant this time too and further strengthening the results of Attitude Towards Divorce in females in the two countries. The t-value was -10.26565 and the p-value was $< .00001$, bearing significant results at $p < .05$.

Summary

The total number of participants was 100. The participants ranged in ages from 20 to 45 years. The number of females in the study was 51, representing 51 % of the total population, while the number of males in the study was 49, representing 49 % of the total population. This study categorized our population according to two age groups, i.e., 20-32 and 33-45. It was intended to find out whether there is a significant relationship between the population's Attitude Towards Divorce for the two study areas. The data was analyzed to find how the overall data varies or relates to one another for the two scales chosen to test our study. The goal was to identify if there is a significant relationship between the results that were obtained from Divorce Propensity scale and Attitude Towards Divorce scale. The results helped evaluate if the answers for the two scales are in line with each other. They can also help to identify whether there is a significant difference between the Divorce Propensity scale and Attitude Towards Divorce scale or if these scales should be treated differently. A regression analysis was conducted to compute the correlation between the two scales.

The results for the entire population were analyzed via Pearson correlation Coefficient analysis and Spearman's Rho. No strong relationship was observed between the two variables. The study also identified if the Nigerian population and American population samples were

correlated in terms of Divorce Propensity by using the same method. In this study, several variables were tested against our dependent variable using Chi Square to see if there is a significant association or whether two variables are independent of one another. The following variables were tested in this method: age, gender, employment, education, geographical location, and socioeconomic status.

Chapter 5: Discussion

Overview

The study analyzed quantitative data to identify the factors that lead to perseverance and commitment in Christian marriages. The analysis provided some interesting results that can help to identify factors that can improve the relationships of couples. The study aimed to evaluate the roles of perseverance, culture, and extended family involvement on Christian practice, marriage, and divorce in developed and underdeveloped nations. The study was based on quantitative analysis and a survey was designed to collect the data, consisting of close-ended questionnaires. Sadeghi and Agadjanian's (2019) Attitude Towards Divorce and Propensity Towards Divorce were the two scales used to measure the outcome.

To help investigate the perceptions of the participants and understand the phenomenon, the following questions were drafted as the research questions for this study: Does culture play a part in interpreting the Scriptures regarding divorce decisions? How did the participants describe the application of culture to their marriage? How did the participants describe family intervention? Does technological development and/or civilization aid divorce among Christians in developed countries?

The goal was to conduct a quantitative analysis of people's responses and perceptions of the research problem. Data was controlled by variables including gender, marital status, parental status, race, and region. Surveys are widely used for quantitative research and quantitative data collection in large amounts (Nardi, 2018).

In the United States, an optimal work-life balance is a growing issue, which does not allow many couples to spend enough time with each other and bond with their partner. Moreover, it can create doubtfulness in couples about their partners, their sincerity, their loyalty,

and their commitment, all of which can directly impact the trust an individual has in their partner and drastically impact a marriage relationship. Along with this, anxiety is also a growing problem. It is known to impact the marriage experience of partners and can ultimately result in a negative impact on a relationship (Tuttle & Davis, 2015).

Previous studies have analyzed the variables chosen for this study. For instance, couples who marry older tend to have longer-lasting relationships. This also applies to couples who move in together in their teens. Similarly, there is demographic data available that highlights some important findings (Wilcox, 2009). According to data from the Center for Disease Control, education and religion are factors that can predict the duration of a relationship.

College-educated Americans have seen their divorce rates drop by about 30% since the early 1980s, whereas Americans without college degrees have seen their divorce rates increase by about 6% (Wilcox, 2009). According to a study, Americans who have gone to college are 30% less likely to divorce now compared to in the 1980s. In contrast, Americans who do not go to college are 6% more likely to divorce now compared to in the 1980s (Wilcox, 2009). Infidelity is also considered an important factor regarding success in marriages. Tuttle and Davis (2015) reported that religiosity can reduce the chances of infidelity and a feeling of “Divorce Propensity,” or possibility of a separation and a greater occurrence of doing it.

Contempt over the things that signal one is upset with their partner are toxic to a relationship, like hostile humor, name calling, and more (Wilcox, 2009). Similarly, many other factors play a crucial role in determining commitment in marriages, which were discussed in this study.

Summary of Findings

T-tests were conducted to identify differences in Attitude Towards Divorce according to age group in Nigeria at $p < .05$. According to the results, the t-value is 1.22725, while the p-value is .112857. Another test was conducted to identify differences in Divorce Propensity according to age group in the United States at $p < .05$. According to the results, the t-value is 1.22725, while the p-value is .112857. It indicates that the result is not significant and there are no major differences in Divorce Propensity according to age group in the United States. When difference in either country or geographical locations in terms of Attitude Towards Divorce for age group 1 was tested, it was observed that the t-value of 4.60144, while the p-value was .000036. It indicates that the result is significant at $p < .05$, and there is a significant difference in the Attitude Towards Divorce between the young population of the two countries. After comparing the Attitude Towards Divorce of both the countries for age group 2, it was found that the t-value to be 3.58151 and the p-value was .000751. The result in this case was significant at $p < .05$.

Attitude Towards Divorce in Nigeria according to gender was further calculated, and it was found that the results were significant with the t-value of -3.17576 and the p-value of .001913. Similar results were observed when the Divorce Propensity in terms of gender in Nigeria was tested, and significant results where the t-value is -2.4681 and the p-value is .01024 were found.

Moving further, the study compared the candidates of the two countries by gender. Attitude Towards Divorce in Males when compared US and Nigeria had no significant difference, hinting that the males have similar perception in both countries. The t-value was -1.35295 and the p-value was .094341. However, when Attitude Towards Divorce in Females for

the two countries (US and Nigeria) were compared, similar results with the t-value of -5.12084 and the p-value of .000012 were observed. To further back the observations, the Divorce Propensity in females between the two countries was analyzed, and the results were significant this time too, further strengthening the results of Attitude Towards Divorce in females compared in the two countries. The t-value was -10.26565 and the p-value was $< .00001$, bearing significant results at $p < .05$.

Several variables were tested against the dependent variable using Chi Square to see if there was a significant association or whether two variables are independent of one another. The following variables were tested in this method: age, gender, employment, education, geographical location, and socioeconomic status.

According to the results for age, the χ^2 value was 1.40 against the p-value of 0.705, indicating that there is a significant association between the two. For the variable of education, similar observations with statistically significant results were found.

For socioeconomic status and employment, significant association was found with the Chi Square value of 0.540 against the p-value of 0.463 and χ^2 value of 4.24 against the p-value of 0.040 respectively.

The regression analysis was further used to identify correlation between Attitude Towards Divorce and Divorce Propensity to compare the results using four different data sets, i.e., Attitude Towards Divorce for the US, Attitude Towards Divorce for Nigeria, Divorce Propensity for the US, and Divorce Propensity for Nigeria. It allowed the researcher to identify any correlation between the several subsets, i.e., ATD US – ATD Nigeria, ATD US – DP US, ATD US – DP Nigeria, DP US – DP Nigeria, and ATD Nigeria – ADP Nigeria.

A significant correlation was identified between Divorce Propensity (Nigeria) and Attitude Towards Divorce (Nigeria), i.e., 0.763. A significant correlation was also found between Divorce Propensity (US) Attitude Towards Divorce (Nigeria) and Attitude Towards Divorce (US), i.e., -0.311 and 0.784 respectively. The remaining variations were not correlated, highlighting various difference between the results of each data set.

This study categorized the population according to two age groups, i.e., 20-32 and 33-45. It was intended to find out whether there is a significant relationship between the population's Attitude Towards Divorce for the two study areas. Young population (20-32) was considered as age group 1 and the population in their middle-ages (33-45) as age group 2.

The data collected was analyzed to find how the overall data varies or relates to one another for the two scales that were chosen to test the study. The goal was to identify if there is a significant relationship between the results that were obtained from Divorce Propensity scale and Attitude Towards Divorce scale. The results will help evaluate if the answers received for the two scales are in line with each other.

The results also identified whether there was a significant difference between the two scales or if these scales should be treated differently. A regression analysis was conducted to compute the correlation between the two scales.

The results for the entire population were analyzed via Pearson correlation, Coefficient analysis and Spearman's Rho. According to the results, a positive relationship was found between Divorce Propensity and Attitude Towards Divorce. The Pearson's r - value of 0.353 was found to be significant at $p < .001$.

A negative correlation was identified between the results of Nigeria and the United States.

Discussion of Findings

The results of multivariate analyses and Pearson's test indicate that culture has a strongly significant impact on the Divorce Propensity in both countries. Both for the US and Nigeria, people who felt that their culture plays an important role in making decisions about their divorce tended to have a lower Divorce Propensity. The Nigerian population showed relatively lower propensity towards divorce than people in the United States. Similarly, people who have a greater propensity towards divorce believe that having children is less likely to reduce their Divorce Propensity, while the majority of people in both countries studied reported that having children was likely to reduce their Divorce Propensity.

The research was aimed at identifying whether culture plays a part in interpreting the Scriptures regarding divorce decisions. The hypothesis set for this research question explored if there was a statistically significant relationship between culture and the importance of Scripture on whether couples decide to divorce. The variables for this included culture, marital status, parental status, racial status, and regional status as independent variables and Christian marriage as the dependent variable. Similarly, in H2 the participants described the interference of culture in their marriage. According to the results, people are significantly impacted by their culture when it comes to deciding about divorce and the interference of culture in their marriage in both populations. Therefore, the null hypothesis for H1 and H2 can be rejected. It is important to note that the population of Nigeria was more likely to avoid divorce due to cultural interference and social pressure. For H3, the research question aimed to explore if there was a statistical relationship between cultural interference and family regarding the Christian divorce decision making process. The variables for this included culture, marital status, parental status, racial status, and regional status as independent variables and Christian marriages as the dependent

variable. According to the results, it can be concluded that children are likely to impact their parents' decision about getting a divorce (i.e., having children can increase the chances of resorting to solutions other than a divorce). The results showed a statistically significant relationship between family intervention and divorce decision in interpreting biblical views about divorce. The variables used for this included culture, gender, marital status, parental status, racial status, regional status, educational level, and income per household. It was found that statistically unrelated results were found for populations exposed to the same kinds of technology, social status, education, and culture as in developed countries.

According to the results of this study, it was found that males in both the countries had similar perceptions regarding marriage, attitudes towards divorce, and Divorce Propensity, while the females in both countries had significantly different perceptions. Females in Nigeria live an exceptionally different life compared to women in the US. This may be because of many variables, such as lifestyle, women's rights, freedom of expression, gender roles, and challenges that a Nigerian woman faces in her marriage. Cultural predisposition and societal norms can also account for social pressure and determine an individual's propensity towards divorce.

The results of this study demonstrated that responses from the two countries were significantly different. The roles' distribution in the family was closely related to the distribution of power between spouses, which also explains the differences found between the results of the US participants and the Nigerian participants. This process characterizes the extent to which each of the spouses is responsible for taking on decision-making and responsibility for them in various spheres of family functioning. In modern families, there is a situation when one spouse is engaged in the implementation of their role, and the other has the power in it. Nigerian men tend to be more dominant compared to Americans considering the phenomenon of power in the

family as a desire for dominance in the relationship of a married couple (Olatunji, 2017). It is important to determine to what extent the mismatch in the distribution of family roles is destructive and to what extent the family itself regulates it.

This study suggests that people's ideas about their relationships, such as how committed and satisfied they are with their partners and how grateful they feel, account for most of their satisfaction. According to this study, there is nothing more important to the success of a relationship than the conviction that the other member of the couple is committed to it. Another important predictor of divorce? is level of intimacy —the feeling that one's partner truly understands who they are.

A decision to get married at an older age reveals that the chances of divorce will decrease because at this point in life, one will usually have a higher education, a more stable job, and be better off financially. With a higher level of education, the potential to make more money is greater. Couples who experience more tension in their marriage from things like lack of money and maturity often find themselves turning thoughts of divorce into reality. This often happens too quickly. A divorce is an important decision that should be taken only after serious and deliberate considerations and not on a whim.

Unfortunately, marriages do not last just because of personal chemistry or physical attraction. When Christians decide to get married, they swear that they will love their partner in good times and bad (Robinson & Blanton, 1993). Nobody marries in anticipation of a divorce. However, studies have shown that variables such as culture, location, age, income, employment status, and education have a significant impact on Christian marriages (Arugu, 2014; Takyi, 2001).

Implications

Marriage is a biblical way of life for women and men and is a bond for life. God's order of creation is binding for marriage. The number of divorces in our society in general has risen dramatically in recent years, and no decline is currently in sight. Christians are not exempt from this development. The rising number of problem marriages and divorced people is increasingly becoming a pastoral and theological challenge for Christian churches and communities. Church leaders often worry that breakups will be premature and frivolous. Divorced people who have tried in vain to maintain their marriage often feel that they are misunderstood and ostracized by their fellow believers.

According to biblical standards, in principle, marriage is designed to last for life (see 1 Corinthians 7:39). Divorce goes against God's original purpose in creating marriage. In Matthew 19, 4-8, however, Jesus differentiates between God's original order of creation ("...what therefore God has joined together, let not man separate" (*English Standard Version*, 2016, Mathew19:6b), in which God's goals for a successful life are shown, and an emergency order ("... because of your hardness of heart Moses allowed you ... " (*English Standard Version*, 2016, Mathew19:8)), when people decided to include divorce. A divorce is an emergency order—an order in the mess to avoid greater suffering. The emergency order does not override the ordinances of God. Jesus endeavored to lead people back to God's order of creation (see John 8: 2-11). God's Word grants forgiveness and a new beginning (see 1 Corinthians 6: 9-11). Remarriage of divorced people, like divorce, is an emergency order. The prerequisite for remarriage is that the marital unity cannot be re-established, and that the person concerned has recognized their share of the blame for the failure of the marital relationship and has learned from it.

The results of this study helped evaluate if the answers for the two scales are in line with each other. They also helped to identify whether there was a significant difference between the two scales or if these scales should be treated differently. A regression analysis was conducted to compute the correlation between the two scales. The entire population sample in the study had a significant relationship between Divorce Propensity and Attitude Towards Divorce in the relationships of the Christian couples that were tested. Due to the diversity of the sample size, a strong relationship between the two variables was not observed. The difference in the regions that were covered also explains the results. People who are in Nigeria demonstrated different perception of divorce compared to the people in the United States. This also served the purpose of studying the two areas and conducting a comparative analysis of the two. It also explains why culture, geographical location, and upbringing can impact the way people think about divorce.

The results also identified if the two population samples divided geographically were correlated in terms of Divorce Propensity using the same method. It was noted that culture has a strongly significant impact on Divorce Propensity and Attitude Towards Divorce. Further tests for variables like culture, children, age, gender, employment, education, geographical location, and socioeconomic status were conducted. The result indicated that geographical location makes a difference when it comes to marriages and perception of marriage among Christians. The study ran several separate tests on each one of these groups to better understand if the effect differed among the two age groups. The results were analyzed for the two different population samples and showed that there were no major differences in Attitude Towards Divorce in Nigeria among different age groups. The Divorce Propensity test also indicated that the result was not significant and there were no major differences in Divorce Propensity according to age group in the United States. When difference in either country or geographical locations were tested in

terms of Attitude Towards Divorce, there was a significant difference in the Attitude Towards Divorce between the younger population of the two countries. This implies that young couples tend to behave differently in the two countries. The males have similar perceptions in both countries, while females perceive marriage very differently among the two countries.

The Bible confirms that divorce is possible in certain cases. When this is the case is judged very differently by Christians. Some Christians only recognize the two above-mentioned precedents (adultery, will of the unbelieving partner) as biblically legitimized. Researchers believe that domestic violence also substantially damages unity in marriage and therefore legitimizes divorce (Dlamini, 2005; Ross, 2021). Others have further deduced from the biblical examples that any serious falling out can lead to a possible divorce.

In any case, it makes sense to put time, work, and love into the relationship that once meant so much to both partners before thinking about reasons for divorce. Any good couples therapist or counselor would advise not to give up quickly and that there remains a balancing act between staying married and getting divorced.

No matter what conclusion Christians who have problems in their marriages come to, neither divorce nor staying together occurs without injury in the long term. Sometimes healing happens. Sometimes a fresh start is possible. Sometimes there is a working solution that couples could come to terms with. Sometimes a marriage breaks down and divorce must occur. It is important to keep in mind the picture of marriage that the Bible paints and to note that God remains faithful even when people are unfaithful (2 Timothy 2:13). This also includes learning from mistakes and being compassionate to others who make mistakes. Marital problems are not pleasant, but divorce is and remains an emergency solution with hurtful consequences. However, it is not the end.

Incidentally, the divorce rate among committed Christians is somewhat lower than the social average. But that is just statistical consolation. At the latest, when one's own marriage shows signs of dissolution, it is no longer worth anything.

Marriages would turn into divorces less often if the partners adhered to Christian rules of living together. This includes promises to be faithful to one another and to look after one another. It is also beneficial for a long marriage if the partners put the marital commitment at the center of their relationship and not just their own well-being.

However, a lower risk of divorce should not automatically be equated with a happy marriage (Whitton, 2013). Many people stay together because of "external barriers to divorce" even though they are unhappy in the relationship (Heaton & Albrecht, 1991). This includes, for example, when one of the partners is financially dependent on the other or the fear of being socially disadvantaged as a divorced person. Children are also often a reason why couples do not get divorced.

Another inhibition threshold is religion. In the Church, marriage is still held as a covenant that is for life. This is particularly true of the Catholic Church, which regards marriage as a sacrament. High divorce rates are not a social problem per se. It may be good that unhappy marriages probably end in divorce, giving the partners a chance to enter a happier relationship. A socially regulated and supported separation is important so that partners and children are not left alone with their injuries and their anger and grief. The Church could also help to develop such a "culture of divorce" and rituals for separation.

Limitations

The sample size for this study was limited for the quantitative research approach that was used, which presents a challenge to assert a generalization representing a population. This was a

strategic choice because of the time limits linked to this dissertation. However, a larger sample would have been more representative of the population and could even bring changes to the statistical results. Finally, since this research was of a descriptive quantitative type, it is not possible to affirm facts of cause and effect. Thus, there may be several other nuances than those presented in the discussion of the results. For future research, it would be interesting to use different statistical tests, such as regression tests, to add to the correlation tests to discover mediating elements in the identified relationships. However, despite these limitations, the answers to the research questions brought great richness and value to the quantitative data by the convergence of the participants' responses.

Recommendations for Future Research

As for the research of marriage and family relations directly in unregistered marriages which were not made formal, Nigerian, and American education is characterized by a certain gap in the study of various aspects, which could be studied. This research can further aid to the development of new research topics around divorce, post-divorce, and remarriage in Christians. It is important to note that all of these factors are correlated. These studies cannot definitively state what causes divorce. This will only come to light with more research focused on relationships.

Qualitative analysis or mixed method studies can be conducted in the future to further explore the relationship between the study variables, including Attitude Towards Divorce, Divorce Propensity, and religious inclination. This will help researchers identify the causal links and explore the reasons of the impacts of religious beliefs on Divorce Propensity.

Given the results of this research, it is recommended for future research in the field of cultural evolution and its risk factors that other factors be considered as they may help determine not only causes but also ways of solution regarding divorce.

It is recommended to have greater access to sources of information regarding the role of culture on the Christian marriages of the subjects under study in order to establish other indicators. It is also recommended to have greater openness to carry out future research in younger people due to the effervescence of adolescence and the contextual conditions of the current social model. Lastly, it would be interesting to carry out primary intervention campaigns in the field of cultural and religious impact on Christian marriages that currently constitute problems that still do not have the necessary management in society today.

Summary

This study played a very important role in identifying how cultural aspects can influence Attitude Towards Divorce in Christian couples belonging to relatively similar social strata. The study tested each area individually to identify statistically significant associations between various variables. The results from either region were quite different in terms of Attitude Towards Divorce and Divorce Propensity. The Nigerian population demonstrated different perceptions of divorce compared to the people in the United States. The impact of geographical location and culture on the way people think about divorce can be explained from these findings.

People in the United States struggle with the right balance between their personal lives and professional lives, which often becomes a challenge when it comes to spending enough time with each other and bonding with their partner. This study also found that it is likely for partners who are unhappy in their marriage to stay in the marriage due to cultural, psychological, financial, and religious barriers.

Another important finding of the study was that the cultural implications that apply to each gender in the two study areas also impact the way people in marriages look at and think about divorce. For instance, females in Nigeria are less likely to consider divorce as an option or the most suitable resort, even in an unhappy marriage, compared to females in the United States. This could deal with the degree of freedom women have when it comes to making their own choices in the two countries, and how the culture and religion of each country includes certain limitations on each gender.

The way people see themselves can influence any relationship they may have in their lives, both in friendly and loving relationships. In couples, this aspect of culture is much more important, and since marriage is about a union that, in principle, is intended to be as durable as possible, this will mean that the couple have a high understanding of each other.

The study also found that having children can make a significant difference when it comes to making a decision about getting a divorce. Most people are less likely to resort to divorce as the best resolution when they have children and a possibility of getting separated from them. It was also found that people who believed that their culture had a big impact on their decision about divorce were less likely to show Divorce Propensity and Attitude Towards Divorce overall.

Young people were found to show more proneness towards Divorce Propensity compared to the older people. This can be explained by the fact that marriage at an older age reduces the chances of divorce, Attitude Towards Divorce, or showing Divorce Propensity because at this point in people's lives, they will usually have a higher education, a more stable job, and be better off financially better. People may also have children at an older age, and the opportunity cost of

getting a divorce is much greater for many people compared to the cost of staying in an unsuccessful marriage.

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Appendix

Predictors

Gender

- Male
- Female

Marital Status

- Married
- Unmarried

Parental status

- Having children
- No children

Racial status

- White
- Other race

Regional status

- Southern residence
- Elsewhere

Education

- Less than high school
- High school
- Bachelors
- Masters

Income per household

- Below poverty
- Hand to mouth
- Comfortably above poverty level

Attitude Towards Divorce scale

1. The personal happiness of an individual is more important than putting up with a bad marriage.
2. Good divorce is better than bad marriage.
3. It is alright for a couple with an unhappy marriage to get a divorce.
4. When a couple realize that they no longer love each other, they should get a divorce.
5. It is better to get divorce for a couple who have conflict and are dissatisfied together.
6. Divorce is a life event that may happen to anyone.
7. Divorce laws in the country should be easier.
8. Marriage is a lifetime relationship and should never be ended.
9. Divorce is a negative and anti-values phenomenon.
10. Couple should tolerate each other and remain in marriage.
11. Divorce is not good for parents who have children.
12. A woman will go to her husband's house with her veil and come out with her white kafan (shroud).

Divorce propensity scale

1. I consider divorce as a probable event in my life.
2. I have talked with my close friends about getting divorced from my spouse.

3. I have talked with my parents about getting divorced from my spouse.
4. I have no happiness in this marital life and am thinking to get divorced.
5. I feel my marriage was wrong and is in trouble now.
6. If I had not, I would not even stay in this marital life for a moment.
7. I feel that if I get divorced, my life will be better.
8. I am ready to get divorced, even if I have to leave my property.
9. I am ready to get divorced, even if I don't have any chance to remarry.
10. I am ready to get divorced, even if I have to leave my child/children.
11. My family - nuclear or extended - can prevail on me not to divorce.
12. My culture is a determinant factor in making decision about my divorce.