

Domestic and Marital Relationships Among Muslim Couples in Northwest Geopolitical Zone, Nigeria from 2013-2023: A Case Study at Ringim Localgovernment Area

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Abstract: *This research investigated marital relationship among Muslim Couples in Ringim Local Government Area; The Institution of marriage occupied highest position in Islam, the importance of marital relationship plays significant role within the frame work of Islam. This research investigated and provided some solution to address these issues among Muslim couples in Ringim Local Government Area. The methodology employed in the conduct of this research is ethnography of communication method which comprises the use of observation and interview as primary sources of data. More so, secondary sources of data collection such as: written literature, textbooks, journals and browsed materials on challenges of marital relationship among Muslim Couples was also used. The findings propose valued perceptions and recommendations bring into line with best practices of marital relationship, contributing to the advancement of institution of marriage among couples in the Area.*

Keywords: economic pressure, emotional intimacy, marriage challenges, muslim couples, Ringim

INTRODUCTION

Islam considers marriage as a social bond and a means of attaining spiritual and emotional fulfillment. Shari'ah provides comprehensive guidelines and principles governing marriage, it emphasizes love, compassion, tranquility and mutual understanding among the spouses. Despite the aforementioned position of importance, there are some certain obstacles and problems that are confronting the Muslim couples in the research area. These include economic issues, communication gaps and emotional intimacy among others.

The principal objective of this research is to carefully assess the impact of emotional intimacy, economic pressure and communication gap on marital relationship among Muslim couples, focusing on the Muslim couples in Ringim Local Government Area. By investigating the current state of marital relationship, discovering perceptions of effectiveness and categorizing challenges this research aims to contribute valuable insights to the juncture of marital relationship within the area of Ringim Local Government.

METHODOLOGY

Participants: The study involved 60 married couples, some with 2 and and 3 wives, 5 parents, 2 judges and and 3 Hizba officers, all of them are from Ringim Local Government Area. A purposive sampling technique was employed to ensure representation from diverse backgrounds and levels of expertise.

Data Collection:

- **Interviews:** In-depth interviews were conducted with couples, parents, judges and Hizba officers to gain qualitative insights into their experiences with marital relationship and family issues. The interviews explored emotional intimacy, financial pressure, communication gaps and other challenges stumble upon in marital relationship.
- **Observations:** court marital cases and Hizba marital conflict resolution case observations were conducted to assess the actual success and challenges of marital relationship
- **Data Analysis:** Qualitative data from interviews and observations were subjected to thematic analysis to identify recurring patterns, themes, and narratives related to marital relationship among Muslim couples in Ringim Local Government Area.

FINDINGS

1. Lack of Emotional Intimacy: The findings revealed that there is a lack of emotional intimacy among the couples which have led to misunderstanding, miscommunication, and a lack of harmony. These have resulted to frequent conflicts, resentment, and a weakening of the marital bond.

2. Economic Pressure: The findings also reveal that there is an economic pressure among the Muslim Couple in the area which have also created tension and conflict between spouses. Disagreements about spending, saving, or managing finance led to arguments and create a sense of division within the marriage.

3. Communication Gap: The study identified absence and deterioration of communication gap which resulted to increased misunderstandings, emotional distance, weakened trust, reduced marital satisfaction and undermining the stability of a marriage in general.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings, the study suggests numerous recommendations to improve marital relationship among Muslim couples in Ringim Local Government Area.

- **Fulfillment of Emotional Needs:** Islam recognizes the importance of fulfilling each other's emotional needs as part of marital rights and responsibilities. This includes showing affection, offering emotional support, and spending quality time together. Neglecting these aspects is seen as failing in one's duties as a spouse. : Islam encourages spouses to support each other during difficult times, both emotionally and spiritually. This mutual support is crucial for maintaining emotional intimacy, as it reinforces the sense of partnership and solidarity in the marriage.
- **Mutual Support and Cooperation:** Islam places great importance on mutual support within a marriage, especially during times of difficulty. Couples are encouraged to work together to manage financial pressures, sharing responsibilities and making decisions together. However, Islam encourages contentment (qana'ah) with what one has, regardless of financial circumstances. This attitude helps couples avoid.
- Unnecessary stress over material wealth and prevents them from falling into the trap of excessive consumerism or debt.
- **Regular and Open Communication:** Couples should make it a habit to regularly set aside time for open and honest conversations. This could be a weekly or daily check-in where both partners discuss their feelings, concerns, and aspirations. Listening is as important as speaking. Active listening involves giving full attention to your spouse, acknowledging their feelings, and refraining from interrupting. This helps in understanding each other better and reducing misunderstandings.

DISCUSSION

The assessment of marital relationship among Muslim couple in Ringim Local Government Area, presents both challenges and solutions. While the current situation of marital relationship is unjust, there is a great need to address the issue in order to have a harmonious family relationship. The challenge identified, predominantly related to economic pressure, is significant but not overwhelming.

The findings align with existing literature on marital relationship, highlighting the importance of fulfilling each other's emotional needs as part of marital rights and responsibilities. This includes showing affection, offering emotional support, and spending quality time together. (Al-Qur'an Surah An-Nisa 4:35, An-Nisa (4:19), (*Al-Tirmidhi 2008 Vol 2:1080*).

CONCLUSION

This research delivers a inclusive assessment of the current state of marital relationship among Muslim couples in Ringim Local Government Area. By examining the relationship among couples and identifying key challenges and solutions, the research offers valuable insights and practical recommendations for improving marital relationship. The findings highlight the lack of emotional intimacy, economic pressure, and communication gap. These efforts have the potential to significantly improve the quality of marital relationship among couples in the area, preserving and maintaining communication and emotional closeness.

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