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## TABLE OF CONTENTS

Article	Page
1. Working Conditions, Grievance Procedures and Fringe Benefits as Determinants of Labour Turnover in Selected Industries in Oyo State, Nigeria – AJALA, E.M. Ph.D. and ADEDIRAN, Kehinde Busayo, MSW.	1
2. Workplace Innovation and Organisational Communication as Determinants of Employees' Quality of work-Life in Distributive Industries in Lagos State, Nigeria-Abidoye SARUMI, Ph.D, PGDE and Sikiru Olapade SALAMI, Ph.D	14
3. Antecedent and Current Factors Inhibiting Functional Literacy Development among Craft Workers in Ijebu Ode, Ogun State, Southwestern Nigeria- OLUDEYI, Olukunle Saheed, OGUNBIYI, Joseph Olukayode PhD and AKINSANYA, Adebayo Olatunde Ph.D	23
4. Token Reinforcement and Cooperative Learning Strategies in Enhancing Social Skills of Children with Intellectual Disability in Ibadan, Oyo State, Nigeria- OYUNDOYIN, John Olusegun, Ph.D and AYINLA, I. O.	39
5. Collaborative Learning Strategy and Academic Achievement of Secondary School Students in Social Studies in South-West, Nigeria- ABDU-RAHEEM, Bilqees Olayinka Ph. D	50
6. Comparative Analysis of Delinquent Behaviour on The Basis of Parental Educational Background, Single Parenthood and Socio – Economic Status of In-School Adolescents in Ibadan, Oyo State, Nigeria-ANIMASAHUN, R. A. Ph.D and BABALOLA, S. O.	63
7. Parental Attitude, Socio-Economic Status and Home Facilities as Predictors of Secondary School Students' Learning Outcomes in South-West, Nigeria- ODUNSI Adenike Olufunmilayo (MRS), OYEBANJI-ABIODUN Olayemi, Ph.D and AKINWUMI Femi Sunday, Ph.D	75
8. Perceived Social Support, Organisational Citizenship Behaviour and Work Motivation as Predictors of Psychological Well-Being of Public Health Workers in Ibadan, Oyo State, Nigeria- IIMOH A.M, Ph.D	91
9. Factors Influencing Child Abuse among Yorubas in Ibadan Metropolis, Oyo State, Nigeria- OMOKHABI Abiola Adiat, Ph.D and OMOKHABI Suleiman Udukomose	104
10. School Related Variables as Correlates of Performance in Biology among Senior Secondary School Students in Ibadan North Local Government Area of Oyo State, Nigeria- ADEYEMI Adetola O, Ph. D	119
11. Causal Factors of Challenges of Mastering Concord of English Among Students with or Without Learning Disabilities in Ibadan- LAZARUS, Kelechi U. (Ph.D) and AKINBILE, Samson O.	132

12. Psycho-Social Factors as Correlates of Job Performance of Women in The Print Media in Southwestern, Nigeria- ODIAKA, Stella, Ph.D and OGIDAN, O.T Ph.D. 144
13. Mindfulness Practice as an Effective Tool for Promoting Positive Health and Psycho Social Well-Being: A Review of Literature- MOJOYINOLA, J.K. Ph.D. 156
14. The Connectivity of Adult Education and Poverty Reduction in Nigeria: Issues and Perspectives- OLADEJI, Stella Olabisi Ph.D and OLANIYI, Albert Ayodele 167
15. An Assessment of Literacy Needs of Non-Literate Women in Ibadan, Oyo State- ADELORE, Omobola Omoyeni and OYALAKUN, Hannah Olubunmi 178

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# PSYCHO-SOCIAL FACTORS AS CORRELATES OF JOB PERFORMANCE OF WOMEN IN THE PRINT MEDIA IN SOUTHWESTERN, NIGERIA

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## Abstract

*The effect of communication in any society cannot be ignored. Media play great role in shaping and correcting the vices of the society. The presence of women in the print media has shown that they are relevant and up to the rigorous task of gathering news and meeting deadlines. These they have done in living up to expectations in their various media houses. This thus raises the concern of what could be attributable for this trend of women working in such a demanding profession. Could it be that these women have developed some psycho-social attributes (emotional intelligence(EI), self-concept(SC), self-efficacy,(SE)mentoring, age at job entry, marital status, educational background, socio economic status and number of children), ability to work under pressure and newsworthiness which could have accounted for their job performance? This study, therefore, investigates some psycho-social factors as they correlate with job performance of women in the print media in Southwestern Nigeria. The descriptive survey research design of the ex post facto type was adopted. The total enumeration and stratified random sampling techniques were adopted using 549 women professionals from 12 purposively selected print media houses. A 5 Likert scale questionnaire was administered and complemented with four sessions of in-depth interviews with selected women in the print media. Data were analysed using descriptive statistics, Pearson Product moment correlation, multiple regression and content analysis. The findings show that EI, SE, SC mentoring, age at job entry, marital status, educational background, socio economic status and number of children correlated with job performance of women in the media. The study shows that Psycho-social factors influence job performance of women in the print media in Southwestern Nigeria and priority should be given to these factors while number of children does not influence job performance of these women.*

**Keywords:** Psycho-social factors, Women's Job performance, The Nigerian Print Media.

## Introduction

Media communication is a powerful means of bringing about social change which impact significantly on people who subconsciously adopt and internalise attitudes, beliefs and values presented graphically or textually (Joshi, Pahad & Maniar, 2006). Obviously, the revolution in the media communication has helped accelerate the pace of social change during the last few decades. According to Dare (2000) radio, television, newspapers and other mass media have not only made this world informative but have also revolutionised the values, attitudes, interests and social milieu, particularly with the involvement of female employees.

The high presence of female employees in the media has promoted and reflected the current mainstream cultural standards in a profession that is dominated by men because of its nature. In time past, media profession had largely ignored the women until the change that involved women in paid employment (Symth, Sandra, Bourne & Alison, 2000). The Africans by custom and law did not encourage women access to formal wage employment, the media profession inclusive, while the few women involved faced significant discrimination within the profession. Women were not a significant part of the media workforce at the beginning, but now their increasing emergence has made the media houses a fairly gender balanced institutions. Hence, the contemporary media outfit (prints, television and radio) reflect the images of thinnest (feminist beauty) and link images to other symbols of prestige, happiness, love and success for women and the society.

The growing number of women journalists in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century provoked mixed reactions (Otokunefor, 1990). Reactions

evolved from cheering on questioning whether women's presence in the mass print media was helping reform the status of women or reinforcing gender stereotypes. Little is known about the personal struggles of women journalists in the early years of the popular press. In the absence of plentiful data, the study of novels and short stories, many of them semi-autobiographical and written by men and women working in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century newspaper industry, combined with analysis of previously unstudied memoirs and early guides for women journalists, illuminate the obstacles — and opportunities — experienced by these pioneers. (Otokunefor, 1990).

The change in women and family-specific needs as well as an increase in the demand for office workers made the workplace experience a momentum change in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, with increase in the number of female workers. Statistically, in Asia and Latin America, women are 21 percent and 25 percent of the total media workforce respectively, while in Southern Africa, they are about 27 percent. In Western Europe and the United States, they constitute about 35 percent of the media workforces. Globally, they are 59 percent of all part-time workers in the news media (Ikuomola & Okunola, 2011).

The power of the media to make or mar the image of women; to hasten or retard the progress of women in society cannot be underestimated (Molara, 1990). Regardless of this recent development of increased number of women working and performing to expectation in the media, available statistics have shown that a large majority of them are concentrated at the low organisational hierarchy of the media houses across the globe. Specifically, the majority of the women in the print media around the

world, who responded to the 1997 International Women Media Foundation (IWMF) revealed that not even one of the ten decision makers in their companies is a woman (Ikuomola & Okunola, 2011).

It is, therefore, a general trite knowledge that the general level of employment by gender now shows that men and women are engaged in paid productive activities such as the media, which contribute to the nation's outputs of goods and services (International Labour Organisation ILO, 1981). There are evidences to show that in contemporary time, women are participating and performing in different aspects of the media profession along with their traditional roles in the unpaid domestic (household) sectors of the economy (ILO, 1981). Women now play dual roles of being breadwinners by working in the media houses and sharing family responsibilities. The women seem to have moved away from being perceived as the domesticated female left behind to cope with the worst of family development to major contributors of family income. Their husbands no longer see them as having no contribution or opinion in family issues except those traditional responsibilities on them. Suffice to say that the impact of women is felt in every facet of the media profession (as editors, reporters, interviewers, adverts, graphic artists and others). They are at the forefront of entrepreneurial activities. The Nigerian media woman of today is expressing her feelings, views, and ideas on issues and asserting herself, performing her duty with vigour and passion (Anyanwu, 2001).

Regardless of the societal biased of the print media and wage involvement of women in different professions, the number of women in the print media is still not as high as that of male counterpart. Studies acknowledged

their commitment and contributions to the industry to be far beyond the expectations of management and co-workers, regardless of the challenges they face (Bhagat, 2002). Babul (2010) in support of Bhagat (2002) stresses that in spite of the fact that the number of women in the print media is on the rise relatively to men's, there are still challenges. Suffice it, therefore, to conclude that despite the significant improvement of women's number in the general labour force across the globe, diverse barriers and glass ceilings are still being identified as factors impeding the advancement of women in the media and other professions.

Observably, the diversity of women in the print media employment, inevitably poses challenges to them within the profession, household and the society. Dare (2000) submits that media have powerful effects on people and the entrance of women in such a profession poses serious challenges to them. These are in terms of the interface of work, family roles and societal expectations of women. The real and perceived home and occupational burdens of women in the print media are often cited by media owners as reasons for their perception of women as more unstable and less committed than men. The idea is that the level of women commitment to a career in the media is gradually proofing otherwise. Women are thought to take more time off for domestic duties and to leave the media labour force at a particular period, such as marriage or childbirth or attending to loved ones.

It is pertinent to state that gone are the days when the media was considered to be no place for a woman; times have changed with more women joining the fourth estate. Just as women have broken many traditional barriers in politics, socio-economic areas, their male counterparts have undergone less

of an attitudinal change of creating a soothing and conducive environment for women to perform.

Regardless of the enormous challenges women in the print media are faced with, social recognition and other reasons could be factors that attract women into the profession. Male and female now work together in all segments of the industry, a development that has changed a lot in the outlook towards women that work outside the home. As the society is still dominated by men, the contributions of women in the print media as professionals and other working women are important for expediting the process of social change and development (Abbas, 2009). The general assumption, according to societal trend, seems to be that it is difficult for women to reach managerial positions due to their perceived inherent inability and traditional upbringing. Women do pick up a career in the print media, or any discipline or career. Women are not handicapped nor have they been found intellectually unfit. Women in the print media have proved to be as resourceful and enterprising in their work as their male colleagues, they have gone to places, winning laurel such as awards, fellowship abroad and prestigious assignments (Joshi, Pahad & Avani, 2006). They helped in gathering news, marketing the organisations, as well as soliciting for adverts that assist in sustaining the print media houses.

The women in the print media is challenged with a slow rise to the top, with the general misconception of the society that women in the media are not respected. They know that their colleagues (opposite sex) watch them with an attention naturally critical, but not always sympathetic, neither is there a royal road, especially, prepared nor made smooth

for either sex. Blau and Ehrenberg (2011), conclude that the long hours demanded by the media profession further hinder the women in the print media who in many cases still bear the primary responsibility in their homes and children. Based on this, motherhood remains a primary obstacle to women in the print media career and economic success, as the heart of this practice is tradition.

The general job performance of women in the print media has convinced the society and print media owners to encourage their positive contribution to the development of the media houses in particular and the society in general. Thus, the general employees' performance of the women is paramount to the continued existence and relevance of the print media houses.

There have been vast literature on factors that generally influence job performance of workers, but there has been little emphasis on those factors that influence the job performance of the women in the Nigerian print media in particular. This, therefore, raises the concern on the factors that could have influenced the success of the females in the Nigerian print media. Could the success story of these women be as a result of their psychological factors (self-efficacy, self-concept, emotional intelligence and good mentoring) or could it have been some other social factors like age at job entry, marital status, number of children, educational attainment or their socio-economic status or the combination of both? It is most obvious that women who have succeeded in the print media in Nigeria have values that determine their decisions and guide their career lives. They must have expressed certain values in the profession that made them direct their energies to individual and organisational goals and accomplishment.



The self-efficacy of women in the print media is her belief, her ability in the print media to produce designated level of performance that could exert influence over her job accomplishment. This suggests her individual behaviour, environment, and cognitive factors (i.e., outcome expectations and self-efficacy) that are all highly inter-related, Bandura (1986). The belief about one's ability to accomplish specific tasks that influence the tasks employees choose to learn and the goals they set for themselves successfully. This affects her level of effort and persistence to accomplish difficult tasks (Bandura, 1994). Thus, the women in the print media self-concept is reviewed as the way she thinks, feels, view issues, and react to them in relation to her work. This proposes one's concept of four interrelated self-perceptions, the perceived self, the ideal self, one self esteem, and a set of social identities. Each of these elements plays a crucial role in understanding how the self concept relates to energizing, directing and sustaining organisational behaviour and performance.

According to Leon (2001) self-concept is an individual's representation of all his or her self-knowledge. He argues that an individual's self-concept is, in essence, "what an individual believes he/she is". The emotional intelligence of the women in the print media is the ability of women in the print media to recognize and control their emotional and interpersonal competency that could influence their behaviour, thinking and interaction with others. It is about understanding their emotions (and the emotions of those around them) and learning to manage the way they handle them – in the workplace as well as in their lives.

In line with Adeyemo and Ogunyemi (2005), to be emotionally and socially intelligent is to effectively understand and express oneself, to understand and relate well with others, and to successfully cope with daily demands, challenges and pressures. At the intrapersonal level, it involves the ability to be aware of oneself, to understand one's strength and weaknesses, and to express one's feelings and thought non-destructively. On the interpersonal level, being emotionally and socially intelligent encompasses the ability to be aware of other people's emotions, feelings and needs, and to establish and maintain cooperative, constructive and mutually satisfying relationships. Thus, for women in the print media, to be emotionally and socially intelligent implies their ability to effectively manage personal, social and environmental change by realistically and flexibly coping with the immediate situation, solving problems and making decisions.

The orientation and performance of women in the print media can also be attributed to their mentorship. Mentoring is a process by which women in the print media receive advice, direction and impact from a more experienced member of the institution on issues relating to the individual's job and career development.

Mentoring among the media "whether print, broadcast internet or social media "is critical to the development of a free press. It provides the vision and ethical framework for reporting that earns and maintains public trust. The true leaders of the media industry in Africa are those who mentor and inspire the next generation to overcome the challenges they face "lack of access to information, censorship, personal threat, and even attacks in some places. They serve as the moral compass that leads by example to

enable the media play its role in the consolidation of democratic governance (Okachie, 2011).

The social factors examined in this study are factors that influence the personality of the women in the print media. Factors like age at job entry, marital status, and number of children, educational attainment and socio-economic status as it correlates to job performance of the women in the print media.

Hence, this study examined some predisposing psychological factors (self-efficacy, self-concept, emotional intelligence and good mentoring) and social factors (age at job entry, marital status, number of children, educational attainment or their socio-economic status) that influenced the job performance of women the print media.

### **Statement of the problem**

A cursory look at the estimate of women in the print media will show that they represent fewer percent of overall employees. One of the main reasons could be the demand of the profession, less pay, societal discrimination, lack of security and recognition, (Kamala, 2012). The Nigerian print media is like every other profession characterised by imbalance to the disadvantage of women. In spite of the glass-ceiling, a lot of women have made their marks in the print media.

Women have succeeded in the profession against all odds, with strong reputation in the industry. Their performance in the various departments in the media houses cannot be ignored. Women are now occupying leadership positions, though few, regardless of the existing glass ceiling and other barriers. This has, however, been demonstrated having positive impacts on the job performance of the generality of the women in the print media houses. This raises the salient question of what factor(s) could

have contributed to the job performance of these women in the print media, who have succeeded in having impressive accomplishments in the print media in Nigeria regardless of the traditional roles that reinforce gender stereotypes and glass ceiling. Could it have been some psychological factors (self-efficacy, self-concept, emotional intelligence and mentoring) or social factors (age at job entry, marital status – married, separated/divorced, number of children, educational attainment and their socio-economic status)? Previous studies have concentrated efforts in highlighting the impediments of women to their job, family and the society, without giving attention to the psycho-social factors that have contributed to the success story of some successful women in the Nigerian print media. It is on this basis, that this paper examines the influence of some psycho-social factors on job performance of women in the print media in Southwestern Nigeria.

### **Hypotheses**

The null hypotheses raised to guide this study which was tested at the 0.05 level of significance states that: there is no significant correlation between the psycho-social factors (self-efficacy, self-concept, emotional intelligence, and mentoring, with age at job entry, marital status, number of children, educational attainment and socio-economic status) and job performance of women in the print media.

### **Methodology**

The study adopts the descriptive survey design of the *ex-post facto* type. The study used 12 purposively selected media houses in Southwest, Nigeria. A total of 549 stratified female media professionals were selected across the various departments and units of the 12 media houses. Emotional intelligence, self-efficacy, self-concept,

mentoring, social factors scales and job performance questionnaire were used for data collection. The reliability of these instruments were determined through a pilot test that was conducted with 10 female media professional from different media houses outside the 12 that was used for the study. The reliability co-efficient (r) values

obtained were: 0.64, 0.72, 0.83, 0.68 and 0.91 respectively. These were complemented with 12 sessions of in-depth interview (IDI) with immediate supervisors of the female media professionals. Data obtained were subjected to multiple regression and content analysis.

## Results and Discussion of Findings

**Table 1a: F- Ratio of Psycho-social Factors and Job Performance**

Model	Sum of Squares	DF	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Regression	38199.146	9	4244.350	82.534	.000
Residual	27666.737	538	51.425		
Total	65865.883	547			

$R = .762$ ,  $R^2 = .580$ ,  $Adj R^2 = .573$

**Table 1b: Relative Effects of Psycho-social Factors on Job Performance**

Model	Unstandardised Coefficient		Standardised Coefficient	T	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta Contributions		
(Constant)	6.970	2.616			
Psychological Factors	.119	.134	.427	11.632	.000
Social Factors	.524	.119	.237	3.910	.000

## Interpretation and Discussion:

Table 1a shows that the joint effect of independent variables (psycho-social factors) on job performance is significant to job performance of women in the print media. ( $F_{(9,538)} = 82.534$ ;  $R = .762$ ,  $R^2 = .580$ , Adj.  $R^2 = .573$ ;  $p < 0.05$ ). About 58.0% of the variation was accounted for by the independent variables. The result shows the relative influence of each of the independent variables on the dependent: Psychological Factors ( $\beta = .427$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ) and Social Factors ( $\beta = .237$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ). About 50.0% of the variation was

accounted for by these variables. While the relative effect of each of the independent variables on the dependent social factors are: marital status ( $\beta = -.028$ ,  $P > .05$ ), number of children ( $\beta = .011$ ,  $P > .05$ ), social economic status ( $\beta = .204$ ,  $P < .05$ ), educational attainment ( $\beta = .110$ ,  $P < .05$ ) and age at job entry ( $\beta = .511$ ,  $P < .05$ ).

The result shows that psycho-social factors correlated significantly with job performance of women in the print media. This corroborates Silva and Stevens (2002) that the totality of psycho-social efficacy of women generally has tremendous explanatory power in determining the fluctuations in their level of job performance.

Gill (2002) asserts that the components of the social and psychological beings of women are very important in any career. The finding of this study reveals that majority of the respondents identified the fact that the

key components of the psychological factors (self-concept, self-efficacy, emotional intelligence and informal mentoring) and social factors (age at job entry, marital status, educational background, number of children and socio-economic status) were key strategy to breaking through the 'glass ceiling' and enhancing the women in the media to perform at a high level. They agree that women with informal mentors have a sense of belonging in the print media.

They guide, counsel, encourage and praise them whenever achievement is made. In view of this, informal mentoring in the print media is not gender sensitive; a large number of mentors and protégé relationship are bisexual.

According to Bandura (1986), the confidence of an individual to believe he/she has the ability is attributed to psycho-social factors which have encouraged job performance. These perceptions are formed through women in the print media experience with and interpretations of their work environment, and are influenced, especially, by reinforcements, evaluations of significant others and one's attribution for their own behaviour which contribute to the level of their job performance (Sharelson, Hubner, & Stanton, 1976).

Bar-On (2002) model which focuses on array of emotional and social abilities including the ability to be aware of, understand, and express oneself, the ability to be aware of, understand, and relate to others; the ability to deal with strong emotions and the ability to adapt to change and solve problems of a social or personal nature supports the effectiveness of job performance of women in the print media. He hypothesised further that those individuals with higher than average psycho-social factors are in general more successful

in meeting environmental demands, organisational goals and pressures. Women in the print media demonstrate a high level of psycho-social factors; this is ascertained from the distributed instruments of the study. Among these are responses of respondents who agree that the level of their psychological factors (self-concept, self-efficacy, emotional intelligence and informal mentoring) and social factors (age at job entry, marital status, educational background, number of children and socio economic status) helped them to perform. They ascribed this to the possibility of penetrating tight ends to get the right information.

A maxi-cycle of job performance framework is adapted in understanding how psycho-social factors influence job performance of the women in the print media, using the Super Donald's Life Space Theory (1990 and components of the Feminists theory), this study has been able to reveal that, even though most women differed in their abilities, personalities, values, interests, traits and self-concept, a larger majority of them were able to perform credibly well on their jobs due to their planfulness, mentoring system within the print media houses, good foresight, rational career decision making and better knowledge of career etiquette.

Evidence of career maturity due to good development of career adaptability has influenced positively on the job performance of women in the print media. Their desire to meet up with the organisational goals by meeting deadlines, unbiased, fair and balanced reporting, ability to work under pressure, ensuring social justice, critical questioning and uncovering of truth, responsible investigation and better

gathering of news has made the women access themselves and conclude that they have fared well in their chosen career.

In order to complement the above, an in-depth interview sessions conducted affirmed the influence of psycho-social factors on job performance of women in the print media. Majority of the women identified informal mentoring as a key strategy to break through the 'glass ceiling'. In view of this, informal mentoring in the print media is not gender sensitive; a large number of mentors and protégés relationships are bisexual. In support of this, an IDI session by a respondent in one of the media houses has this to say:

*Oh yes, a great deal. I wouldn't have gone this far without a mentor. I was able to understand the field etiquette of the job. Even when gathering of news, going out on interviews seems difficult, I am always encouraged when I go out with a mentor. Editing my news and meeting deadlines wouldn't have being possible without my mentor. My first outing was not too interesting but was encouraged that I could do better. Now, look at me, I am mentoring the upcoming women in my office. I also do encourage them whenever we go out on our state meetings that mentoring is the key to get women to the peak in the print media.*

media among the sociological variables and this has the highest value among all the independent variables used for the study. This is not unconnected with the fact that the strength and vigour put into a career is usually at high level when the women are young compared with when they are old with family and domestic responsibilities. It is, therefore, recommended that all print media houses should give priority to psycho-social factors predisposing job performance of women employees. The age at which women join the profession should be pegged at 25 years or thereabout because this is when women employees are at their prime. Self-concept, self-efficacy, emotional intelligence and socio-economic status should be enhanced positively to encourage the women to perform optimally.

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Another respondent also has this to say about the importance of mentoring among women media workers:

*To be candid, you cannot excel in your career without a mentor. I enjoy this a great deal in the print media.*

Yet another responded:

*Mentoring to me has been the driving force, unconsciously, because I want to meet up my mentors /organizational goals, I am now an award winner like my mentor.*

The above findings support the literature that women in the print media enjoy a high level of informal mentoring which has helped them perform to the expectation of organisational goals.

These affirm that informal mentoring impacted on them significantly in their job performances. The IDI also shows that social factors correlated significantly with job performance of women in the print media. This corroborates Baker (2008) that the pattern of family formation of men and women with high educational attainment level and job performance differs. Regardless of this, women are likely to make concessions for family responsibilities (Beaujot, 2000). Gender gap has been apparent in most professions including the print media, with more men reaching the peak of their career than women (Emellers, 1993). This is affirmed through an in-depth interview session by a respondent.

*I am very fortunate that I have a caring mother that takes care of*

*my children. I give my best at work and I perform to meet my organisation goals.*

Another respondent submits that:

*I have a daughter with a reliable nanny. I do leave my child with her to attend to my official assignments without any fear. I can tell you that my daughter is fine and my career progression is encouraging.*

From this finding, it can be concluded that women in the print media see bearing children as part of African culture, part of life of an average woman to mandatorily have at least a child within or out of marriage. To most of the respondents, it is widely acceptable as an important factor in enabling women working or not, to participate fully in social, cultural as well as economic life.

## **Conclusion**

The study investigates the influence of psycho-social factors on job performance of women in the print media in Southwestern Nigeria. All the nine psycho-socio variables (self-concept, self-efficacy, mentoring, emotional intelligence, age at job entry, marital status, and number of children, educational attainment and socio economic status) used for this study, influence job performance of women in the print media in Southwest, Nigeria but at varying degrees. Self-concept have the highest value among the psychological variables while age at the period of entering the job mostly influenced the job performance of women in the print media among the sociological variables and



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separation, divorce or spousal death. On the other hand, provisions of fundamental needs strengthen the home front, boost the personality of the couples and enhance positive interactions in the home. These, by implication, promote marital stability. This was corroborated by Goodman (2009); Williams and Cheadle (2015), who revealed that global economic scarcity has created and caused serious gaps in marriages which invariably affect Igbo couples' marital stability. Economic instability may push some couples to become frustrated and emotionally overwhelmed with life. This situation often indicates danger signals to couples, if not properly managed. Manuel, Melissa, Martinson, Bledsoe-Mansori and Bellamy (2012) in their study stated that economic deprivation in families leads to the creation of emotional strain between intimate partners.

The consequences of economic hardship cut across poor material possessions such as poor housing facilities, inability to meet up with one's bills, poor feeding plan, inability to access good medical care, lack of adequate education and inadequate security of lives and properties. All these negatively influence the well-being of couples, thus creating anxiety, anger and depression, (Edin and Kissane, 2010). The consequences of economic hardship and its effects on marital stability were seen in the massive retrenchment of workers globally. The global unemployment rate which increased to 10.2% in the last decade created opportunity for economic challenges for couples (Goodman, 2009). Poor economy encourages inflation which in turn increases the rate of poverty and malnutrition, poor infrastructural facilities, spread of diseases and epidemics, increase in crime rate, political instability and so on. These ugly situations manifest as a result of poor

economic condition which has severe adverse effects on the stability of marital union globally, (Igbo couples inclusive). Nonetheless, the repercussions of these economic challenges in the life of the couples in turn affect the economic status of the family which, invariably lead to increased marital distress, suspicion, anxiety, depression, separation and in extreme cases, divorce and spousal deaths (Conger, Renter and Elder, 2010). They went further in their study to state that financial insecurity prevents couples from the ability to satisfy their parenting responsibilities. It is evident that marriages with poor economic resources most often end in separation or divorce. This was in line with Butterworth, et al (2012) Dooley, Prause and Ham-Rowbottom (2000) and Olesen (2013), who attested in their study that lack of economic opportunities such as employment, food security and adequate medical care, could trigger depression and mental stress in the lives of couples. Poor economic resources have the tendency to generate conflict, distress, disunity and hopelessness between partners. Generally, there is growing concern of children's well-being during economic recession. However, there is an urgent need for the formulation and execution of policies that would mitigate the effects of economic recession in order to prevent family disaster. This paper, therefore, suggests that personal factors (commitment to marital vows and economy) correlate with marital stability among Igbo couples in Ibadan, Oyo State, Nigeria.

Several studies have been done on the causes and consequences of marital instability (Ademola, 2013) with emphasis on its effects in the family, (Maciver and Dimpka, 2012) focusing on the danger of marital instability in the family and larger society. Other studies have determined the divorce