

## Socio-Demographic Predictors of Domestic Outsourcing among Working Women in Ibadan, Nigeria

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**Abstract:** Paid labour for women, affects the traditional roles typical in a patriarchal society like Nigeria. The study therefore, examined socio-demographic factors predisposing working women to outsource domestic tasks. The study engages the factors highlighted by 140 of the 528 sampled working women who engaged domestic servants in two recipients local government areas of Oyo state. Findings indicated that employers' age, income, marital status, type of marriage and length of marriage are positively associated with demand for domestic servants. Regression analysis revealed that women who started work after marriage were 1.008 times more likely to engage domestic servants than women who started work before marriage while demand for domestic servants are 2.668 times more likely in households where husband supported their wife's decision to work than otherwise. Domestic servants serve as safety valve for household stability and security for working mothers. Consequently, policies should be formulated to regulate the domestic service sector in Nigeria.

**Key words:** Trafficking, domestic servants, demand, policy, strains, emplyers, Nigeria

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### INTRODUCTION

The proportion of married women in paid labour in Nigeria is on the rise. This is inconsistent with African stand where mothering has traditionally been located within the domestic spaces of home and family. Despite this clash of culture and realism, women in contemporary society still bear extensive responsibilities for care of the household and children. As Scanzoni (1978) earlier states:

The wife role although, theoretically significant has not revealed its prime import in any direct linkage to the larger society. Whereas, the husband's behaviour is significant in both the occupational and the conjugal settings, the wife's has been generally significant only within the latter

Women who take up jobs are therefore, seen as challenging the existing norms and assumptions surrounding their mothering role with serious implications. Erinoshio (2005), reports that a wife and mother who works must be withdrawing from the care of her home and children, time and attention of which they are really in need. This may influence the need for domestic help usually sourced from the rural areas due to prevailing rural poverty. According to Onyeonoru due to high rate of unemployment, emigration in search of jobs became an issue tied to human existence. The dual burden

of work and family expectations has become a challenge to the functionality of households. Indeed, Epstein (2004) noted that an escalation of time demands has occurred in the family and work place. Many people feel torn between work and family not only because their households increasingly deal with competing responsibilities but also because job expectations and parenting standards have become more demanding (Daly, 1996; Jacobs and Gerson, 2004; Moen, 2003).

Coser (1974) describes households and workplaces as greedy institutions. This occurs during family formation and career mobility as paid and domestic work demand time and energy. The combining impact of paid work and family tasks has been observed in the literature. Voydanoff and Kelly (1984) report that the higher the time of paid and domestic work, the more often employees experience work family conflict. Also, their productivity is lower and they have more problems in the private sphere such as depression, stress and marital difficulties (Allen *et al.*, 2000; Glass and Estes, 1997).

A way to escape this burden by working mothers is to outsource domestic tasks. Domestic outsourcing is a safety valve strategy to fulfil the traditional roles as mother. One of the frequently used outsourcing options is the engagement of children as domestic servants; most of whom are victims of trafficking. Human trafficking is a multi-dimensional issue (USDS, 2009). Of all the trafficked, children are the worst hit with children trafficked into domestic service constituting the most common forms of

urban child labour in developing countries (Bureau of International Labour Affairs, 1998). According to ILO (2004), trafficking of children has been identified as one of the worst forms of child labour.

Though earlier researchers, including Coser (1973), predicted that domestic service would become a less visible occupation with capitalist penetration, domestic service is arguably among the fastest growing occupations in both industrialising and industrialised nations. Earlier studies on domestic outsourcing have focussed on time availability (Hiller, 1984) and effects of working hours on the use of outsourcing (Cohen, 1998; Soberon-Ferrer and Dardis, 1991; Yen, 1993) few are related to socio-demographic factors as predictors of domestic outsourcing hence, the study investigated socio-demographic factors affecting outsourcing of domestic duties.

## MATERIALS AND METHODS

The city of Ibadan is the capital of Oyo state of Nigeria. Oyo state with the label the pace-setter state came into existence consequent upon states creation exercises embarked upon since independence in 1960. The western region was one of the three regions created by the Macpherson constitution of 1954 which introduced a high level of autonomy for the regions. The western region government was headed by the late Chief Obafemi Awolowo as the first head of government and later, premier. The region attained internal self governing in 1957 as a prelude to political independence of the country in 1960. The old Western region was reduced to the present entity called Oyo state after several states have been carved out of it with its capital in Ibadan. Founded in 1829, Ibadan was until 1970 the largest city in sub-saharan Africa (Lloyd, 1967). Ibadan at a time was settled at Oja'ba, a site very near the Mapo hill. The people of Ibadan were successful warriors who needed the hill which afforded them better defense. Ibadan is the capital of Oyo state and has been an important administrative center, since colonial times. It was the capital of the old Western region from 1946-1967, the old Western state from 1967-1976 and Oyo state from 1976 to date (Afolayan, 1994). According to the 2006 census, Oyo state has a population of 5,591,589 with a male and female population of 2,809,840 and 2,781,749, respectively. It has a growth rate of 3.4% (FBS, 2007). Apart from the major occupations in Ibadan which include trading, agriculture, craftsmanship and engagement in formal public and private sectors, Ibadan was chosen for this study following its status as destination of many trafficked

children (UNESCO, 2006). The core population of Ibadan is Yoruba but its population has always been mixed ethnically and is becoming increasingly so. Although, industry is less developed than in Lagos or Kano, there are large numbers of traders and artisans which service the city with many of its needs (Okafor and Amayo, 2006). Ibadan also has Nigeria's first University, the University of Ibadan which lends to its economy a significant intellectual, professional and artistic profile by virtue of the University presence. There are notable ethnic and class variations. In summary, Ibadan encapsulates so many characteristics of modern Nigeria (Guyer *et al.*, 2002; Agbaje, 2002).

Following these characteristics, two local governments were chosen purposively. They are Ibadan Southwest and Ibadan North. They have also been categorised as child trafficking endemic following the preponderance of demand for domestic servants. They are located in the city and have the largest numbers of wards (12 each). They also host some of the industries, hotels, banks and government secretariats (federal and state) and major markets located in the state.

The study therefore, adopted quantitative data collection method. Using purposive sampling, 528 working women were selected in Ibadan North and Ibadan Southwest Local Government Areas (LGAs) from both public and private establishments. Of these, 140 indicated having domestic servants and were used primarily for this study. Data was analysed using frequency distribution, Chi-square ( $\chi^2$ ) and logistic regression.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

**Background characteristics of respondents:** Table 1 shows the socio-demographic characteristics of respondents. The age distribution showed that most of the working women (77.7%) who participated in the study were between 31 and 50 years while 13.8% fell within the 20-30 years category. Further, 8.5% of the respondents were above 51 years.

As regards ethnic distribution of respondents, the Yoruba populated the study representing 84.7%. This may be due to the research setting which is predominantly, a Yoruba state. The Igbo were 6.1% while Edo has 4.2%. Other ethnic groups had only 5.1% of the distribution. Furthermore, income distribution showed that 16.9% earned between ₦10,000-₦20,000 monthly while 27.1% earned ₦51,000 and above.

In terms of education, 78.2% had tertiary education, 11.6% secondary education while 0.4% had primary education. This implies that majority of the respondents

Table 1: Distribution of respondents by selected socio-demographic characteristics

Age	Frequency	Percent
20-30	73	13.8
31-40	217	41.1
41-50	193	36.6
51 and above	45	8.5
<b>Ethnic</b>		
Yoruba	447	84.7
Igbo	32	6.1
Edo	22	4.2
Others	27	5.1
<b>Income</b>		
10,000-20,000	89	16.9
21,000-30,000	123	23.3
31,000-40,000	87	16.5
41,000-50,000	86	16.3
51,000 and above	143	27.1
<b>Education</b>		
Primary school	2	0.4
Secondary	61	11.6
Tertiary	413	78.2
Others	52	9.8
<b>Religion</b>		
Catholic	40	7.6
Protestants	85	16.1
Pentecostal	315	59.7
Islam	69	13.1
Others	19	3.6
<b>Marital status</b>		
Married	457	86.6
Consensual union	14	2.7
Widowed	25	4.7
Separated/Divorced	12	2.3
Single	20	3.8
<b>Type of marriage</b>		
Monogamous	433	94.7
Polygamous	24	5.3
<b>Children</b>		
1-2	163	35.6
3-4	244	53.3
Above 4	51	11.1
<b>Length of marriage (years)</b>		
1-2	28	6.2
3-5	61	13.5
6-10	110	24.3
11-15	89	19.7
Above 15	164	36.3
Survey, 2009		

were literate enough to make well informed decisions. Further, majority of the working women were pentecostals (59.7%), 16.1% were protestants, 13.1% were Muslims while the Catholic were 7.6%. A large percentage of the women were married (86.6%) while 13.4% were either in consensual union, widowed, single, separated or divorced. Also, a greater proportion (94.7%) had monogamous marriage while 5.3% had polygamous. Distribution by number of children revealed that 53.3% of respondents had between three and four children, 35.6% had between one and two children while 11.1% had more than four children. About 36.3% had been married for  $\geq 15$  years, 24.3% had been married between 6 and 10 years while 19.7% had been in conjugal relationship  $< 5$  years.

Table 2: Women work-home priority

Priority	Frequency	Percent
My home	41	29.3
My work	6	6.4
Both home and work	90	64.3
Total	140	100.0

Survey, 2009

Table 3: Reasons for working

Reasons	Frequency	Percent
Self fulfillment	88	17.9
Supplement husbands earnings	109	22.2
Graduate and cannot waste learning	41	8.4
Needed to have something to do	29	5.9
For my children	36	7.3
Earn a living	175	35.6
Others	13	2.6
Total	491	100.0

Survey, 2009

**Lifestyle preference of respondents:** According to Hakim (2000), the main determinant of women's heterogeneous employment patterns and work histories is heterogeneity in their preference for differing combinations of family work and paid employment. Women, she noted have genuine choices about how they wish to live that there are no constraints limiting or forcing their choices and that the lifestyle choices of women are now more important than constraints associated with social structure/class or other macro level influences. Table 2 shows that 29.3% of the respondents are home centered while 6.4% of the working mothers are work centered. About 64.3% of respondents' prioritised both home and work. This implies that the adaptive mothers (those that combine home and work) constitute the majority. They obtained qualification with the intent of working but not totally committed to work.

They are concerned with childcare facilities and are responsive to social services. This finding confirms Hakim's Preference theory which categorized women lifestyle preferences into work centered, adaptive and home centered. She noted that preferences are becoming more important than they were in the past when economic necessity was usually the driving force and they are most important among highly educated women in rich modern societies (Hakim, 1996).

The motives for working are shown in Table 3. The major drive seems to be economic. About 35.6% of the women stated that they work in order to earn a living while 22.2% took up jobs in order to supplement their husbands' earning. However, 17.9% are working for self fulfillment while 8.4% considered their educational achievement, a waste without working. For other women, 7.3% are working to train their children whereas 5.9% did not want to stay idle at home by opting for work outside the home. However, the quality of parenting is weakened

Table 4: Selected socio-demographic variables and demand for domestic servants

Variables	Have domestic servants at home?		$\chi^2$	df	p-value
	No	Yes			
<b>Age</b>					
20-30	51 (69.9)	22 (30.1)	9.527	3	0.023
31-40	167 (77.0)	50 (23.0)	-	-	-
41-50	145 (75.1)	48 (24.9)	-	-	-
51 and above	25 (55.6)	20 (44.4)	-	-	-
<b>Ethnic group</b>					
Yoruba	341 (76.3)	106 (23.7)	14.586	3	0.002
Igbo	19 (59.4)	13 (40.6)	-	-	-
Edo	10 (45.5)	12 (54.5)	-	-	-
Others	18 (66.7)	9 (33.3)	-	-	-
<b>Income</b>					
10,000-20,000	76 (85.4)	13 (14.6)	11.598	4	0.021
21,000-30,000	95 (77.2)	28 (22.8)	-	-	-
31,000-40,000	62 (71.3)	25 (28.7)	-	-	-
41,000-50,000	59 (68.6)	27 (31.4)	-	-	-
51,000 above	96 (67.1)	47 (32.9)	-	-	-
<b>Education</b>					
Secondary and below	45 (71.4)	18 (28.6)	0.155	1	0.694
Tertiary	343 (73.7)	122 (26.2)	-	-	-
<b>Religion</b>					
Pentecostal	245 (77.8)	70 (22.2)	7.386	1	0.007
Others	143 (67.1)	70 (32.9)	-	-	-
<b>Marital status</b>					
Married	339 (74.2)	118 (25.8)	11.322	4	0.023
Consensual union	12 (85.7)	2 (14.3)	-	-	-
Widowed	19 (76.0)	6 (24.0)	-	-	-
Separated/Divorced	4 (33.3)	8 (66.7)	-	-	-
Single	14 (70.0)	6 (30.0)	-	-	-
<b>Type of marriage</b>					
Monogamous	326 (75.3)	107 (24.7)	5.297	1	0.021
Polygamous	13 (54.2)	11 (45.8)	-	-	-
<b>Marriage length</b>					
Below 5 years	38 (59.4)	26 (40.6)	7.576	1	0.006
5 years and above	294 (75.8)	94 (24.2)	-	-	-

Survey, 2009

when women engage in paid labour. According to Degler, (1983) and Shorter (1977), aspects of parenting affected by market capitalism, consumerism and production work were predominantly the ways in which children were reared and the influence of the mother-child bond. Therefore, a precondition for taking care of the home since majority of the working women are adaptive mothers may be to engage domestic servants to cope with household demands. Consequently, economic values dominate when economy is elevated and non-economic institutions become weakened. This produces anomic situations as family time is sacrificed for work time. When this happens, the non-economic institutions must make accommodations that help further the dominance of the economy. This finding supports Messner and Rosenfeld's Institutional Anomie Theory (IAT) which posits that anomic situation sets in when the economy is emphasized to the detriment of other social institutions like the family. By taking up jobs, women have created

imbalance in the cultural dictates concerning their role as mothers and the need to outsource their role becomes essential.

Table 4 shows the relationship among selected socio-demographic variables and demand for domestic servants. Table 4 shows that age is significantly related to demand for domestic servant ( $p < 0.05$ ). Due to their youthfulness, young married women take up jobs which may create pervasive systemic dilemma for them in fulfilling expectations as a mother, wife and worker. However, demand for domestic servants is lower among working mothers between 31-50 years due to the presence of grown up children who can help with domestic workload. Central to factors affecting household demands is the dichotomy between the stay at home/traditional mother and the working mother and the role connected to each. The traditional mother is one who stays at home to fulfill the traditional role assigned to women while the working mother is borne out of exigency.

For the elderly, the burden is loneliness caused by departure of their children who may have gone to establish their own families. Thus, the older women demanded for domestic servant for companionship. Analysis of responses showed that 63.6% of the working women demanded for domestic servant with a view to performing house chores/domestic work/cooking/washing/cleaning of the house while 24.1% demanded for domestic servants to cater for their children. This may not be unconnected with the demands of their jobs which leaves them fatigued after work to do further domestic chores. The presence of domestic servant may therefore be used to reduce the workload. Households with this work-family demands show that the structural arrangement of the house is adjusted to accommodate childcare facility when the mother is not around. It is pertinent to note that in Nigeria where there is no welfare package for working women to reduce their workload, the demand for domestic servant may be a veritable option. However, as shown in Table 4, education is insignificant to household demand for domestic servant ( $p = 0.694$ ).

Women in relatively young (starter) households stated that they demanded for domestic servants when the need for extra hand arose due to the outset of child bearing. Added to this is the fact that they (women) are also working alongside their husbands. Thus, the volume of workload in the family, age at marriage, age of children, types of job done by household heads and location/nearness to the family are important propelling factors why starter households employ domestic servants (Table 5).

The financial capacity of households remain important in the demand for domestic servant hence, was

Table 5: Reasons for engaging domestic servants

Reasons	Frequency	Percent
Child care	33	24.1
House chores/Domestic/House care	76	55.5
Washing/Cleaning	9	6.6
Run errands	9	6.6
Cook	2	1.5
Driving	1	0.7
For assistance	7	5.1
Total	137	100.0

Survey, 2009

found to be significant ( $p < 0.05$ ). Ability to pay for outsourced domestic assistance increases with the monthly income of employers. Employers who earn  $> \text{₦}51,000$  and above monthly have greater likelihood to employ than other categories of income earners. Household earnings therefore become critical when hiring domestic servants.

The contribution of women to the household production becomes important to complement husbands' input. As a result, most husbands (87.7%) supported their wives' decision to work to supplement/support their earnings to keep the home going due to the economic situation while others work for self actualization. This finding concurs with that of Martin and Roberts who found that women's economic contribution to household income improves the household economic well-being and standard of living. Further, it was found that when a woman becomes pregnant, the workload in the family may affect her (health wise) and as such the husband may support the idea to bring in somebody to salvage the situation and take care of the house.

Further, marital status, religion of employers, type of marriage and length of marriage of working women were found to be significantly related ( $p < 0.05$ ) to household demand for domestic servants in Ibadan. Also, households where the wife travels out of Ibadan for  $> 2$  weeks were found to have significant demand for domestic servants while education was insignificant ( $p = 0.694$ ).

**Regression analysis of predictors of domestic outsourcing among respondents:** Some variables considered under the bivariate analysis were revisited in the multivariate analysis to determine the variable whose strength is significant enough to influence the demand for domestic servant when simultaneously considered with other variables using logistic regression, utilizing maximum-likelihood estimation procedure. Model 1 presents variables like age, ethnicity, income, education, travel, religion, type of marriage, spouse residence, religion, marriage length and Children Ever Born (CEB) with their respective reference categories. Model 2, apart

from the components of model 1, included work pattern variables like inception of marriage, time of closing, shift duties, husband support for wife's job, husband performance of domestic duties and husband location of work. The results are presented using the Odds Ratio (OR) to predict the category with stronger likelihood to employ domestic servants. A ratio less than unity implies a negative effect of a particular variable or its category on demand and the magnitude by which it is less than unity gives the indication of how less likely that category will demand for househelp relative to the reference category.

On the other hand, a ratio greater than one depicts a positive effect while the magnitude by which it is  $> 1$  is how more likely that category demands for help relative to the reference category.

The first model examined socio-demographic variables and demand for domestic servants in Ibadan. The result is similar to those observed in the previous section. Demand for domestic servants is significant among employers between 31-50 years than the reference category while those above 50 years did not show any significant difference from the reference category. On the basis of ethnicity, Edo women are 10.231 times more likely to demand for domestic servants than the reference category whilst the odds of employing domestic servants among the Igbo are 2.345 times greater than the Yoruba. Distance from their home community may be responsible for this relationship. However, other ethnic groups are 0.352 times as likely as the Yoruba to engage domestic servants. Income appears to be an important factor in the demand for domestic servants. The odds are 2.283 times greater among employers who earn above  $\text{₦}50,000$  monthly to demand for domestic servants. Further, those earning between  $\text{₦}41,000$ - $\text{₦}50,000$  are 1.806 more likely than those earning  $\text{₦}10,000$ - $\text{₦}20,000$  to demand for domestic servants. Also, those with monthly between  $\text{₦}21,000$ - $\text{₦}40,000$  are 1.519 and 1.029 times more likely to demand for domestic servant than the reference category. This finding affirms earlier studies which indicated that high income households are more likely to use outsourcing alternatives than low-income households (Bellante and Foster, 1984; Bittman *et al.*, 1999; Cohen, 1998; Oropesa, 1993; Spitze, 1988). However, though statistically insignificant, those with tertiary education are 1.143 times more likely to employ domestic servants than the reference category. This finding concurs with Van der Lippe *et al.* (2004) who found that women with higher education make more use of housekeeping services.

Households where women travel out of Ibadan for  $> 2$  weeks show significant relationship with demand for domestic servant. Type of marriage was also found important in the demand for domestic servants. Women in polygamous homes are 2.495 times more likely to demand for domestic servant than those in monogamous homes.

Yet, husbands living in the same household with their wives are 0.937 less likely to demand domestic servants than spouse living elsewhere. Further, other religions are 1.139 more likely to demand domestic servants than pentecostals. As to marriage length, working women who have been married above 5 years shows significant relationship with demand for domestic servants. Meanwhile, household with children are 1.137 times more likely to demand domestic servants than those with no children. This is significant for this study as it implies that demand rises with childbirth but at a decreasing rate.

Model 2 incorporated work pattern factors and husband factors. The model shows that women who started work after being married are 1.008 times more likely than the reference category to demand domestic servants while women closing between 6-7 pm from work show significant relationship with demand for domestic servants. Similarly the odds ratio within the same category reveals that those closing between 6-7 pm are 11.627 times more likely to demand for domestic servants than those closing between 1-2 pm. Due to the busy schedule at work, women who do not run shift at work are 2.214 times more likely than those on shift duty to demand for domestic servants. Meanwhile, the odds are 1.951 times greater for women whose husbands supported their decision to work than the reference category. Similarly, the odds are 2.668 times more likely for households where husbands do not assist in the performance of domestic duties than households where husbands do to engage domestic servants. Finally, the model shows that the demand for domestic servants is 1.199 times more likely in household where husbands do not work outside Ibadan than the reference category.

### CONCLUSION

This study has shown socio-demographic factors as predictors of domestic outsourcing among working women. Though their actions may be radically different from that which is dictated by the African culture, the involvement of women in paid labour has positive contributions to the upkeep of the family. The rise of the dual-earner family model has escalated household demands imposing the conscription of domestic outsourcing. However, for their traditional roles of home keepers not to be jeopardised on monetary pursuit, outsourcing of domestic duties become a safety valve.

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