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## Impacts of Migration on Family Structure in Ado-Ekiti Nigeria: Implication for Healthy Family Ties

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### Abstract

Migration have direct effect on home and family structure since it causes families to break up. It is not uncommon for children to move out of their parents' homes into those of friends, relatives, or strangers at a young age. Many fathers spend the most of the years living far away from their families, including their wives and children. The study adopts a survey design. The purposive sampling technique was utilized to select two hundred respondents (men & women) on whom copies of the questionnaire were administered. Data from questionnaire were analysed with descriptive and Chi-square analysis. The hypotheses tested revealed that there is a significant relationship between migration and healthy family ties as the calculated value ( $X^2$ ) was 18.842 and the "P" value was 0.004, which was less than the level of significance of 0.05. The findings also revealed the impacts of migration on healthy family ties as children becoming wayward or suffer care, poor academic performance of the children left behind, criminal behaviors, psychological problem for the wife and children (depression, anxiety), change the family structure and separation or divorce. The study recommended probable solutions to the effects of migration on family ties in Ado-Ekiti as maintaining frequent communication among couples or Partner, tolerance among the couples and financial support to the family left over.

**Keywords:** Migration, family ties, family structure, parents and children.

## Introduction

According to the International Organisation for Migration, the majority of Nigeria's emigrants are from the country's metropolitan centres. In addition, eight million Nigerians have moved from the country side to the cities throughout the country (Morrissey , Mitchell , Rutherford (2020). Many of these migrants are parents, and they often have to make the heartbreaking decision to leave behind their children and other family members. However, anecdotal estimates suggest that up to 37% of all children in Nigeria may live without one or both biological parents because of migration , even though there are no official figures on the number of children who remain behind. Male and female independent migration is a feature of migration between Africa and Europe (Millward, (2020).

Transnational couples, in which one spouse migrates while the other remains in the country of origin, are on the rise as a result of tightening migration regulations that make it harder for couples to migrate together (Bailey & Boyle (2020). Leaving children and spouse behind, especially when they are cared for by family members, is a tough choice that may have lasting effects on the spouse/child's mental and emotional development (Morrissey, Mitchell & Rutherford (2020). Tight immigration and family reunion regulations, high relocation expenses (financial, emotional, and cultural), and job insecurity in the new location all contribute to the emergence of transnational families. In order to grasp the complexities of transnational families, it's necessary to rethink the ways in which affection, support, and physical proximity are communicated and experienced over great distances (Ahlburg, De Vita, & Carol 2020,).

Even when both biological parents are present, it is not uncommon for children in Nigeria to live with a relative or other caretaker instead. This is also true of many other sub-Saharan nations. Social parenting norms facilitate migration by parents

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who can leave their children with extended family and other non-biological relatives (Cooke, T. J. (2020).

Most individuals move without their families, despite the fact that family mobility is common. When one or more members of a family leave their hometown, the resulting disruption to the family unit sometimes manifests as the formation of two or more houses located in different parts of the country (Weston , Stanton , Qu , & Soriano (2021). The number of people living in a rural location will decrease if its people leave for metropolitan places. If a migrant from a rural region joins a home in an urban area, it will increase the size of the urban household. If the migrant chooses to live alone and create a single-person or non-family household, it will increase the number of non-family households in urban areas. The urban family dynamic will shift when relatives move in from the countryside. Even if children leave the village for the city, it may not have much of an impact on family dynamics there.(Welbourne, (2020) . However, when rural household leaders or their spouses move to the city, this results in a smaller household size and a different family dynamic. In rural locations, the family unit will essentially consist of one parent (Clark, & S. Davies (2019). A de facto single-parent family may thrive for decades. The majority of migrants who were surveyed had grown up in a broken family (Boyle, Cooke, K. Halfacree, & D. Smith. (2021).) When the rest of the family follows the household head to the city, or when the household head returns to the village permanently, the separation of the home that was created by the migration of the household head or spouse will be over. The family's ability to provide economic and social support would also suffer as a result of the separation at home.

The fostering family's role is not limited to providing childcare; it also includes carrying on culturally desirable practises of childcare that migrant parents value and want to pass on to their children. In order to provide migrant parents with childcare while they adjust to their new social and economic environment, foster care was established. Children in foster care depend on the parent, the carers' talents, and the

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community's informal care economy (Bird & Bird. (2019). Family and extended family dependence, as well as community support, are hallmarks of the global care economy. Many research (Weston , Stanton , Qu , & Soriano (2021) have looked at the effects of parental migration on children, and most of them have focused on the negative emotional elements, particularly when the migrant is the mother. Looking at the specifics of migration, such as the consistency of care, parental involvement, and access to technology, a growing body of research demonstrates both positive and neutral emotional externalities for children in transnational care (Bielby, W. T., & D. D. Bielby (2020). Family migration is nevertheless a dynamic and intensely political kind of migration, despite its perennial importance. Family life is undoubtedly affected by migration. We know that people's family structures change when they migrate to a new nation, with the beliefs and practises they bring with them influencing the shift as much as the economic, legal, social, and cultural pressures of their new home (Bartel, (2019).The current research aims to provide light on the nature and degree of the connection between migration and changes in family structure and functioning, as well as family ties.

### **Objective of the Study**

The main objectives of this study is to find out the impacts of migration on healthy family ties in Ado- Ekiti, Ekiti State, Nigeria. The other objectives are to:

- i. Identify the factors that necessitated migration among couples in Ado-Ekiti.
- ii. Examine the impacts of migration on healthy family ties in Ado- Ekiti.
- iii. Analyse the effects of migration on family ties in Ado- Ekiti.
- iv. Identify probable solutions to the effects of migration on family ties in Ado- Ekiti.

### **Hypothesis**

H<sub>0</sub>: There is no significant relationship between migration and healthy family ties

H<sub>1</sub>: There is significant relationship between migration and healthy family ties

## **Theoretical Framework**

### **Neo-classical Theory**

This theory and its variations propose that migration occurs due to a disparity in the availability of and demand for labour across different regions. Worker migration to high-wage countries is common in areas with a flexible labour supply but low pay and poor marginal productivity (Colfer, (1985). However, the underlying assumption of this theory is that labour migration would reach its lowest point if pay disparities were eliminated. They stress the importance of the migrant's prospective income and employment prospects at the outset of the migration process. The Neo-classical theory also assumes, among other things that the initial migration is often forced in poorer nations. There are a number of contributing variables, including poverty, civil war, and restrictive governmental policies. As a result, the Neo-classical approach's assumptions could be tested, especially when applied to emerging nations. In spite of less-than-ideal domestic situations and the availability of better opportunities outside, some non-migrants may choose to remain at home for social and cultural reasons, such as their position in the family's hierarchy, their familial ties, or their gender. Females may remain at home since gender conventions dictate that leaving the family behind is unacceptable, while men may feel compelled to stay at home to provide for the family's safety. In addition, parents may choose to stay put for reasons having to do with their children's wellbeing such as their education, safety, mental health, etc ( Arizpe, Lourdes (2021).

### **Method**

Descriptive survey methodology was used as the research design for this study. The population for this study were couples in Ado Ekiti Metropolitan. 200 respondents were selected due to time and resources. A total number of 200 questionnaire was administered to them using simple random sampling method. The data collected were analysed using descriptive analysis such as frequency table, chart, Percentages

and association between categorical variables were assessed using chi square test. Statistical confident interval was set at 0.05 level of significance.

## **Result**

### **Respondents' Socio-Demographic Data**

**Figure 1. Gender of the Respondents**

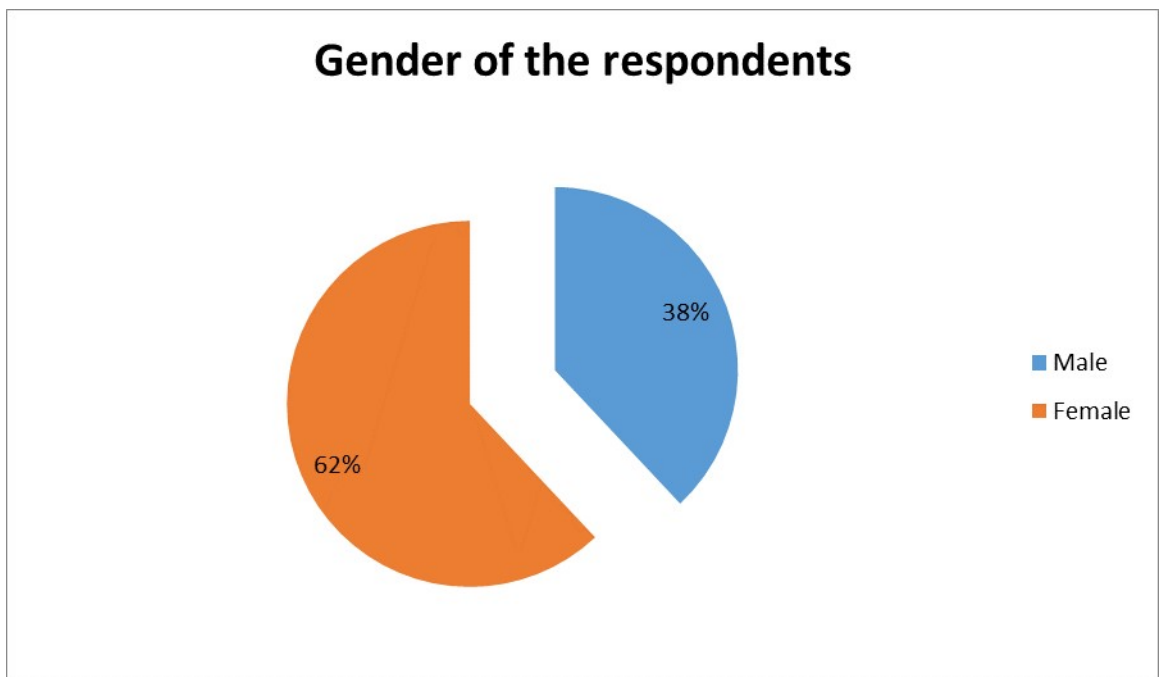


Figure 1 revealed the gender of the participants in which majority of the respondents 62% were female while 38% were male. This implies that majority of the respondents that participated in this study were female. Which implies that the study population is dominated by female and they will have the basic knowledge of the subject matter since the female are the most concern ones

**Table 1. Age of the respondents**

**Table 1 Age of the Respondents**

<b>Options</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage%</b>
18-25 years	40	20.0%
26-35 years	55	27.5%
36-45 years	20	10.0%
46-55 years	61	30.5%
56-65 years	16	8.0%
66+	08	4.0%
<b>Total</b>	<b>200</b>	<b>100%</b>

**(Source: Field Survey,2022)**

The table above shows the percentage of the age of the respondents of this study in which the majority of the respondents 30.5% falls under the age of 46-55 years. It clearly depicts that the majority of the respondent used for this study are more experience and we have more knowledge of what the subject matter is all about.

**Table 2 Religious Affiliation of the respondents**

<b>Religion</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage %</b>
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Christianity	155	77.5%
Islam	33	16.5%
Traditional	12	6.0%
<b>Total</b>	<b>200</b>	<b>100%</b>

**(Source: Field Survey,2023)**

Table 4.2 shows the religion affiliation of the respondents and majority of the respondents 77.5% were Christians, 16.5% of the respondents were Muslim while 6.0% of the respondents belong to traditional faith. It can be deduced that more respondents that are Christians participated in this study because of the advantage of where the study took place which is Christians dominated areas.

**Table 3 Marital Status of the respondents**

<b>Options</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage %</b>
Married	124	62.0%
Single	56	28.0%
Divorced	06	3.0%
Separated	06	3.0%
Widower	08	4.0%
<b>Total</b>	<b>200</b>	<b>100%</b>

**(Source: Field Survey,2023)**



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Table 3 revealed the marital status of the respondents in which the majority of the respondents 62.0% were married, 28.0% of the respondents were single, 4.0% of the respondents were widower, while 3.0% of the respondents were separated and divorced. This implies that majority of the respondents were married and they will have the major understanding of what the subjects matter is all about.

**Table 4. Educational Qualification of the respondents**

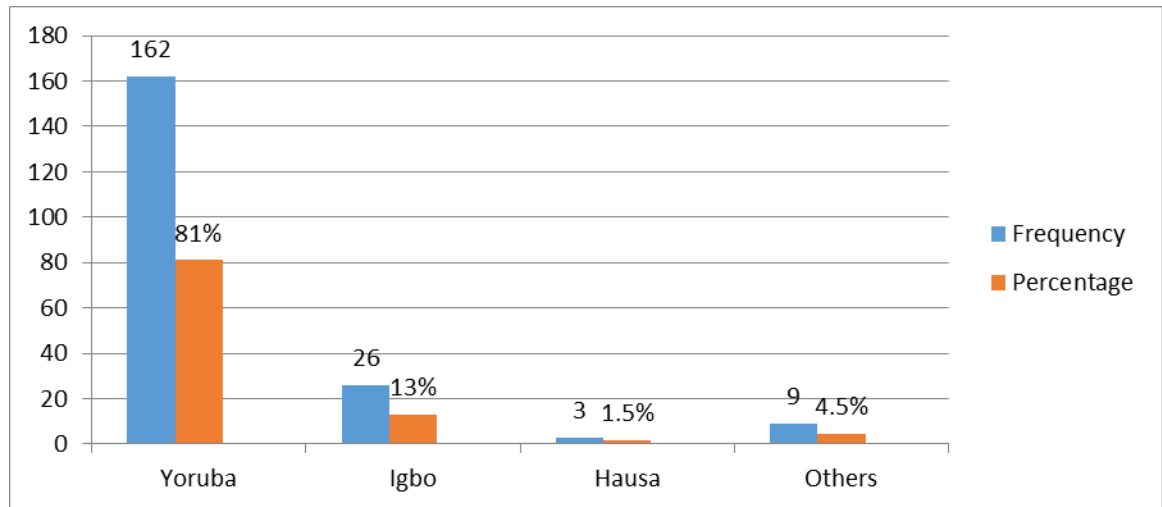
<b>Options</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage %</b>
No formal Education	-	-
Primary Education	03	1.5%
Secondary Education	17	8.5%
ND/NCE	94	47.0%
HND/BSC	57	28.5%
Post Graduates	10	5.0%
Professional	19	9.5%
<b>Total</b>	<b>200</b>	<b>100%</b>

**(Source: Field Survey,2023)**

Table 4 is on the educational qualification of the respondents in which majority of the respondents 47.0% had ND or NCE, 28.0% of the respondents had HND/BSC, 9.5% of the respondents were professional, 8.5% of the respondents had secondary education, 5.0% of the respondents were post graduates, while 1.5% of the

respondents had primary education. From the findings we deduced that the majority of the respondents were educated at one level or the other.

**Figure 2 Ethnic affiliations of the respondents**

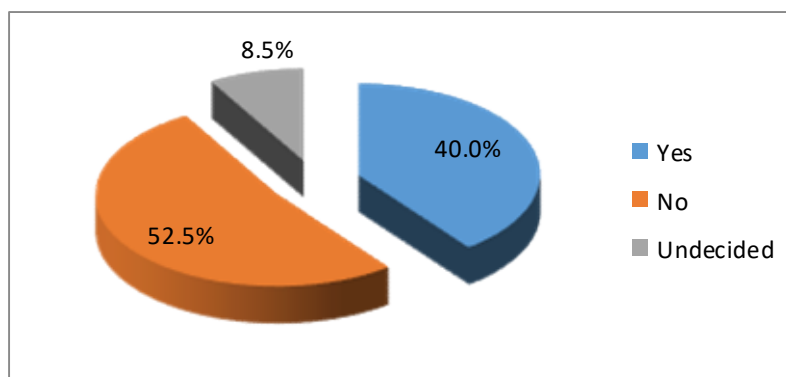


**(Source: Field Survey, 2023)**

Figure 2 revealed the ethnic affiliation of the respondents in which majority of the respondents 81.0% were Yoruba, 13.0% of the respondents were igbo, 4.5% of the respondents belong to other tribe like Udoma, tiv etc. This indicated that although over 81.0% of the respondents were Yoruba speaking people because of where the study took place, about 19.0% of the respondents belong to people from other languages or dialects in Nigeria.

**The factors that necessitated migration among couples in Ado- Ekiti**

**Figure 3: Has your spouse or both of you ever traveled to a place for a long time?**



**(Source: Field Survey,2023)**

The chat above revealed whether the respondents with his/her spouse have traveled to a place for a long time, majority of the respondents indicated that no, 40.0% indicated that yes while 8.5% of the respondents were undecided. From the findings we deduced that majority of the respondents indicated that they never traveled to a place for a long time.

**Table 5 Factors that Necessitated Migration Among Couples In Ado- Ekiti**

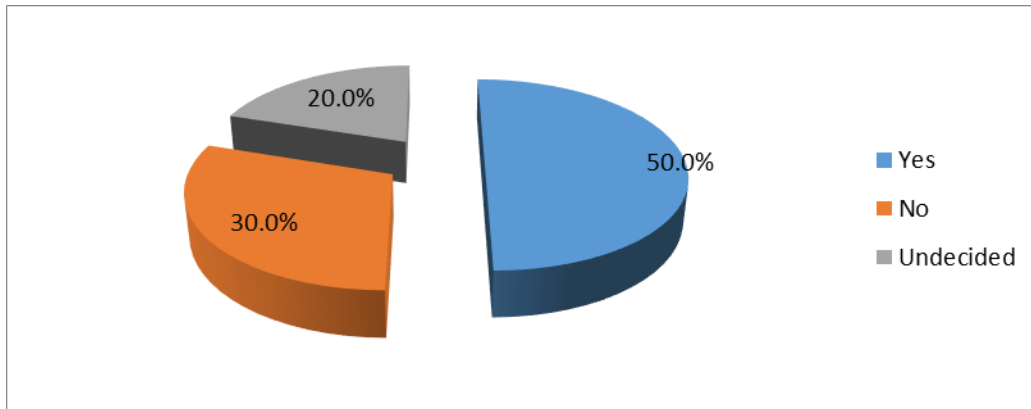
<b>Options</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage %</b>
Business Purposes	67	33.5%
Health Purposes	43	21.5%
Leisure purposes	52	26.0%
Unfavourable employment and housing circumstances	38	19.0%
<b>Total</b>	<b>200</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

**Source: Field Survey,2023**

Table 5 is on the factors that necessitated migration among couples in Ado- Ekiti. The findings revealed that majority of the respondents 33.5% indicated business purposes, 21.5% of the respondents indicated health purposes, 26.0% of the respondents indicated leisure purposes while 19.0% of the respondents indicated unfavourable employment and housing circumstances. From the findings we can deduced that majority of the respondents traveled for “traveled for business purpose.

### The impacts of migration on healthy family ties in Ado-Ekiti

**Figure 4 Do you think that migration of a spouse or partner have a significant impacts on Healthy family ties?**



The chart above showed that majority of the respondent 50.0% indicated that migration of a spouse or partner have a significant impacts on healthy family ties, 30.0% indicated no while 20.0% were undecided. From the findings we deduced that migration of a spouse or partner have a significant impacts on healthy family ties. The effects migration has on the family can vary in different forms which can be positive or negative. However, these effects tend to affect the family either by providing solutions to problems by poverty alleviation through remittance or by giving rise to conditions which can result into conflict for the married couple resulting in divorce, single parenting, effect on the education of children left behind and lots more. This finding is supported by the submission of Weston , Stanton , Qu , & Soriano (2021) which established that when one or more members of a family leave their family, the resulting disruption to the family unit sometimes manifests as the formation of two or more houses located in different parts of the country .

**Figure 5 In a family, who suffer the negative effects of migration in the family?**

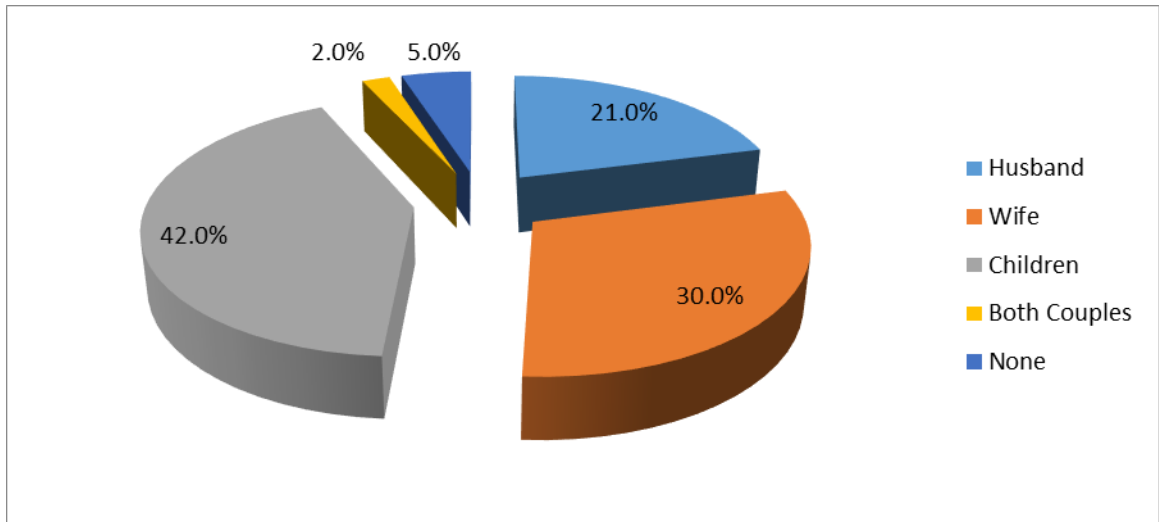


Figure 5 revealed who suffer the negative effects of migration of a spouse or partner. The findings revealed that most of the respondents 42.0% indicated Children, 30.0% of the respondents indicated wife, 21.0% of the respondents indicated husband, 2.0% of the respondents indicated both partners while 5.0% indicated none. From the findings we can deduced that majority of the respondents indicated that children suffers the negative effects of migration of a spouse or partner. The positive and negative effect of migration has been found on the schooling, health and education of children left behind . An outright number of children have been left behind by one or both parent who have migrated for a better life in order to find job opportunity to fend for the family. The impact this development has on a child well being could range from being beneficial or being detrimental to the psychological need of a child (Bielby, W. T., & D. D. Bielby. 2020).

**Impacts Of Migration On Healthy Family Ties In Ado- Ekiti**

Statement	SA	A	U	SD	D
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It affect the functioning of the family as a socialization agent and as an economic unit	109 54.5%	69 34.5%	02 1.0%	04 2.0%	16 8.0%
It reduce the household size, as well as, change the family structure	103 51.5%	60 30.0%	11 5.5%	04 2.0%	22 11.0%
It negatively affect the performance of the child's academics which could lead to the child dropping out of school if not properly monitored	123 61.5%	45 22.5%	06 3.0%	08 4.0%	18 9.0%
It could lead to psychological problem for the wife and children (depression, anxiety)	105 52.5%	62 31.0%	09 4.5%	06 3.0%	18 9.0%
Separation or divorce	106 53.0%	47 23.5%	27 13.5%	05 2.5%	15 7.5%
The children might become wayward or suffer care	132 66.0%	42 21.0%	18 9.0%	-	08 4.0%

Table 6 is on the impacts of migration on healthy family ties, the findings revealed that majority of the respondents 66.0% strongly agreed that the children might become wayward or suffer care, 61.5% strongly agreed that it negatively affect the performance of the child's academics which could lead to the child dropping out of school if not properly monitored, 54.5% of the respondent strongly agreed that it affects the functioning of the family as a socialization agent and as an economic unit, 53.0% of the respondent strongly agreed to separation or divorce ,52.5% of the respondents strongly agreed that it could lead to psychological problem for the wife

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and children (depression, anxiety) and 51.5% of the respondents strongly agreed that it reduce the household size, as well as, change the family structure. From the findings we can deduced the impacts of migration on healthy family ties are; the children might become wayward or suffer care, it negatively affect the performance of the child's academics which could lead to the child dropping out of school if not properly monitored, it affects the functioning of the family as a socialization agent and as an economic unit, it could lead to psychological problem for the wife and children (depression, anxiety) and it reduce the household size, as well as, change the family structure and separation or divorce.

**Table 7: Probable Solutions To The Effects Of Migration On Family Ties In Ado-Ekiti.**

<b>Statement</b>	<b>SA</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>U</b>	<b>SD</b>	<b>D</b>
Learning communication skills	99 49.5%	70 35.0%	17 8.5%	10 5.0%	04 2.0%
Maintaining frequent communication among couples or Partner	65 32.5%	80 40.0%	18 9.0%	17 8.5%	20 10.0%
Financial support to the family left over	92 46.0%	84 42.0%	16 8.0%	05 2.5%	03 1.5%
Tolerance among the couples	88 44.0%	71 35.5%	17 8.5%	10 5.0%	14 7.0%
Promoting healthy, respectful and nonviolents relationship	92 46.0%	68 34.0%	16 8.0%	10 5.0%	14 7.0%

Communicating their feelings of love, admiration, likes and dislikes to each other	96 48.0%	72 36.0%	14 7.0%	05 2.5%	13 6.5%
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Table 7 is probable solutions to the effects of migration on family ties in Ado-Ekiti, the table above revealed that 49.5% strongly agreed that Learning communication skills, 40.0% of the respondents agreed that maintaining frequent communication among couples or Partner 44.0% of the respondents strongly agreed that tolerance among the couples, 46.0% of the respondents strongly agreed that promoting healthy, respectful and non-violents relationship 46.0% of the respondents strongly agreed to financial support to the family left over, 46.0% of the respondents strongly agreed that promoting healthy, respectful and non-violent relationship, 48.0% of the respondents strongly agreed that communicating their feelings of love, admiration, likes and dislikes to each other. The findings revealed that probable solutions to the effects of migration on family ties in Ado-Ekiti are Learning communication skills, maintaining frequent communication among couples or Partner, tolerance among the couples, promoting healthy, respectful and non-violents relationship of the respondents strongly agreed to financial support to the family left over, promoting healthy, respectful and non-violent relationship and communicating their feelings of love, admiration, likes and dislikes to each other.

**Test of Hypotheses**

H<sub>0</sub>: There is no significant relationship between migration and healthy family ties

H<sub>1</sub>: There is significant relationship between migration and healthy family ties

**Table 8: Relationship between between migration and healthy family ties**



Do you think that migration of a spouse or partner have a significant impacts on Healthy family ties?	Has your spouse or both of you ever traveled to a place for a long time?			<b>TOTAL</b>
	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>Undecided</b>	
Yes	0(0.0%)	04(2.0%)	77(10.0%)	81(40.5%)
No	06(3.0%)	15(7.5%)	63(31.5%)	84(42.0%)
Undecided	0(0.0%)	21(10.5%)	14(7.0%)	35(12.5%)
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>06(3.0%)</b>	<b>40(20.0%)</b>	<b>154(77.0%)</b>	<b>200(100.0%)</b>
<b><math>\chi^2=18.842</math>; <math>df=6</math>; <math>p\text{-value}=0.004</math></b>				

**(Source: Field Survey,2022)**

Table 8 above reveals that the calculated value( $X^2$ ) was 18.842 and the “P” value was 0.004, which was less than the level of significance of 0.05. Hence the Null hypothesis( $H_0$ ) was rejected the Alternative Hypothesis( $H_1$ ) was accepted. Since the overall P-value is less than .05 level of significance, at one degree of freedom, the alternate hypothesis is accepted. This implies that there is a significant relationship between migration and healthy family ties.

## **Discussion**

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As Regards the factors that necessitated migration among couples in Ado- Ekiti, the findings revealed that that majority of the respondents indicated that they never traveled to a place for a long time and that majority of the respondents travel for business purposes. Also, the findings revealed that migration of a spouse or partner have a significant impacts on healthy family ties. Findings from this study shows the effects that migration has on the family are both positive and negative. However, these effects tend to affect the family ties by providing solutions to problems by poverty alleviation through remittance or by giving rise to conditions which can result into conflict for the married couple resulting in divorce, single parenting, effect on the education of children left behind and lots more. This could be found in the submission of Bielby, W. T., & D. D. Bielby. (2020). From the findings it was also deduced that majority of the respondents indicated that children suffers the negative effects of migration of a spouse or partner. The positive and negative effect of migration has been found on the children education, health and social well-being of the children left behind as attested to by the work of ( Arizpe, Lourdes (2021).

The findings also revealed that the impacts of migration on healthy family ties are that the children might become wayward or suffer care, it often negatively affect the performance of the children' academics which could lead to the child dropping out of school if not properly monitored, it affects the functioning of the family as a socialization agent and as an economic unit, it could lead to psychological problem for the wife and children (depression, anxiety) and it reduces the household size, as well as, change the family structure in terms of headship and responsibility and sometimes separation or divorce. The findings also revealed that probable solutions to the effects of migration on family ties in Ado-Ekiti are strong learning communication skills, maintaining frequent communication among couples or Partner, tolerance among the couples, trust, respect and non-violent and positive reactions to financial support of the family left behind, communicating their feelings of love at all times and admiration of each other's commitment. The hypotheses

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tested revealed that there is a significant relationship between migration of a spouse in the family and healthy family ties.

### **Recommendation**

Policymakers need to create support systems in education and health care to help the families in such that policy should be put in place to improve availability of labour of jobs and good salary scale for workers especially in rural areas. This can help to prevent unnecessary migration of the spouses in both the rural and urban areas.

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