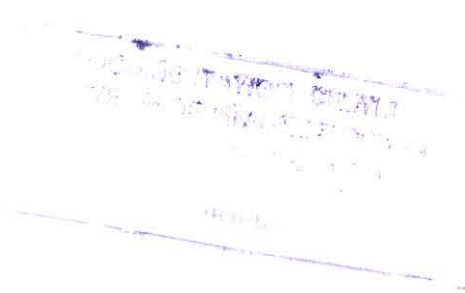


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**ADDIS ABABA UNIVERSITY  
SCHOOL OF GRADUATE STUDIES**

**SOCIO-ECONOMIC AND DEMOGRAPHIC  
DETERMINANTS OF FIRST MARITAL  
DISRUPTION AMONG WOMEN IN ARADA  
SUB-CITY, ADDIS ABABA**

26263



**By**

**WONDIMYE ASHENAFI**

**JULY, 2007**

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OF FIRST MARITAL DISRUPTION AMONG WOMEN  
IN ARADA SUB-CITY, ADDIS ABABA**

**By  
Wondimye Ashenafi**

**A Thesis Submitted to the School of Graduate Studies of Addis Ababa  
University, In Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the  
Degree of the Master of Science in Population Studies**

**July, 2007**

**Addis Ababa, Ethiopia**

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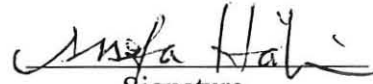
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# *Table of Contents*

	<i>Page</i>
Acknowledgement .....	i
Table of contents .....	ii
List of Figures .....	iv
List of Tables .....	v
Abstract.....	vi
CHAPTER I:INTRODUCTION.....	1
1.1: Statement of the Problem.....	1
1.2: Justification of the Study .....	3
1.3: Objectives of the Study.....	4
1.4: Literature Review .....	5
1.4.1: Theories on Marital Stability.....	5
1.4.2: Socio-economic and Demographic Correlates in Marital Disruption.....	9
1.5: Operational Definition of Terms .....	20
1.6: Conceptual Frame work.....	21
1.7: Hypotheses.....	21
CHAPTER II: METHODOLOGY .....	22
2.1: Data Sources .....	22
2.2: Sample Size.....	23
2.3: Sampling Design and Procedures .....	24
2.4: The Field Work.....	25
2.5: Variable Specification.....	25
2.6: Assessment of Data Quality.....	26
2.7: Data Processing and Analysis.....	28
2.8: <u>Limitations of the Study</u> .....	28
2.9: Delimitation .....	29
CHAPTER III: CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SURVEY RESPONDENTS.....	30
3.1: Demographic Characteristics of Respondents .....	30
3.2: Socioeconomic Characteristics of Respondents.....	34

CHAPTER IV:DETERMINANTS AND DIFFERENTIALS IN FEMALES' FIRST MARITAL DISRUPTION.....	36
4.1: Differentials in Females' First Marital Disruption by Demographic Determinants.....	36
4.2: Differentials in Females' First Marital Disruption by Socio-economic Determinants.....	38
4.3: Results of Multivariate Analysis.....	40
CHAPTER V: DISCUSSION OF MAJOR FINDINGS .....	47
CHAPTER VI:SUMMARY,CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS.....	51
6.1: Summary.....	51
6.2: Conclusion.....	54
6.3: Recommendations .....	54

## List of Figures

	<b>Page</b>
Figure 1.1: Conceptual Framework for the Study of the Determinants of First Females' Martial Disruption	21
Figure 2.1: Percentage Distribution of Respondents by Single Year of Age	27
Figure 3.1: Frequency Distribution of Respondents by Age at First Marriage	32

## List of Tables

	<b>Page</b>
Table 3.1: Distribution of Respondents by Demographic Characteristics	31
Table 3.2: Distribution of Migrant and Non- migrant Respondents by Age at First Marriage	33
Table3.3: Distribution of Respondents by Socioeconomic Characteristics	34
Table4.1: Distribution of First Marriage Instability by Demographic Variables	37
Table4.2: First Marriage Instability by Socio-economic Variables	39
Table 4.3: Results of Logistic Regression Analysis of First Females' Marital Disruption as a Function of Selected Demographic and Socio-economic Variables	44

## ABSTRACT

The Study focuses on the socio- economic and demographic determinants of first marital disruption among women in Arada Sub-City. The study is initiated with the objective of identifying the major divorce or separation causes and critically examining the socio-economic and demographic variables in the variation of these contributory factors. It is hypothesized that marital disruption would be higher for marriage performed at early age and at lower education level, for couples with no children, for marriage entered with out one's consent and for early duration of marriage.

The study used mainly primary data generated through conducting a household sample survey with structured questionnaire to collect the required information. An in-depth interview was also used to substantiate and cross check the information obtained from the structured questionnaire. The units of analysis for this study are ever-married women (excluding widowed for first marriage) who are residing in Arada Sub City, Addis Ababa. The sampling procedure followed a multistage sampling technique in which selected Kebeles were divided in to the manageable enumeration areas so that household listing would be made in order to identify the target population. The dependent variable (first marriage instability) is composed of categories of marriage disruptions due to divorce or separation and the comparative categories of intact marriage. Some of the methods of analysis that were used in this study include uni-variate, bi-variate and multi-variate techniques of logistic regression analysis.

The results of logistic regression analysis revealed that early age at first marriage has a significant and negative relationship with first marriage disruption. Duration of first marriage also showed inverse relationship with the chance of marital disruption. The probability of marital disruption is higher for early durations than the late durations of marriages. Working women were highly related to the odds of being divorced or separated than the non-working one. Marriage made by own choice and consent reduced the odds of marriage disruption as compared to arranged marriages. The education level had a significant and negative relationship with the chance of marital disruption.

It is recommended that governmental and other concerned bodies design methods through which the most significant variables that highly determine the stability of first marriage will be brought to attention and thus the impact of marital disruption would be lessened in the family and in the society at large.

# CHAPTER I

## INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 Statement of the Problem

Marital life disruption is one of the major challenges that take place in the family life (Zasrow, 1996). Its effect at the individual, familial and community level is becoming very immense and usually leads to serious social disorganizations (ibid).

Intrinsically, family disruption results when husband and wife have been unable to find a solution for their marital problems and decide to terminate their poor marital adjustments through divorce or separation (Eshelman and Wilson, 1995). A number of factors that lead to family disruption have been pointed out by different family and social science researchers (Larson and Holman, 1994; Bumpass and Sweet, 1970; Zastrow, 1996). For instance, as Zastrow (1996) noted extensive emphasis on romantic love (which does not grow to rational love), inability to assume marital responsibility, the changing status of women (who are now more financially independent), the growth of individualism resulting in reduced marital role performance, the growing acceptance of divorce and in particular the lose of certain familial functions in modern society are main determinants for the increased rate of divorce. Dunwiddie (1967) also explained early age at first marriage and lack of preparation as main causes for martial life disruptions.

In Ethiopia, women and to some extent men, are traditionally brought up to believe that their major and most important goal in their life is to marry (Daniel, 1994). Unfortunately, this intense urge from family and friends to form marriage is not backed up by orientation in parental goals and responsibilities of marriage life. Thus, many young people who are engaged in marriage at early age discover in the late years that marriage is a serious business and is not always as romantic and exciting as they used to dream it. Due to this, they usually prefer to escape from the unfulfilled marriage commitment by separation or divorce (ibid.). In light of this, the report of the Ethiopian Central Statistical Authority on National Family and Fertility Survey conducted in 1990 showed that 47.3 percent of women who married below 15 years of age had their marriage dissolved either by divorce or separation (CSA 1993).

Once divorce has taken place it does not mean, however, that the problems of the spouses involved are over. It usually leads to a number of difficulties for those involved. In relation to the post-divorce adjustment difficulties, Zastrow (1996) explains the emotional concerns such as feeling of failure, and a sense of loneliness and isolation. In fact, the effect of marriage dissolution goes beyond the individuals who dissolve the marital union. Children and other relatives of the couples are the immediate victims who share the potential consequences (Kumlachew 2001). Particularly children will be exposed to various socio-economic and psychological problems.

Marital disruption creates social disorder that doesn't only affect tradition and culture but also erodes norms and values of the society (Dunwiddie ,1967).Moreover, by increasing the volume of rural-urban migration, it raises the number of prostitutes and street children ;and with other social evils it may hamper endeavors towards socio-economic development(ibid.).

The extent, magnitude and effects of marital instability problems are also recognized not to be the same for men and women (Daniel, 1994). Many women, especially women in developing countries, like Ethiopia, have fewer choices in life outside marriage and children (Sadik, 1990).According to Daniel (1994), a number of Ethiopian women are predominantly engaged in domestic chores such as food preparation, child bearing and child rearing. Very few women are educated, have marketable skills and have been prepared for career development and are mostly made to be dependent on their husbands. For this fact, it is really doubtful that vulnerability to the different situation of marital disruption problems and the negative effect it imposes on women's life is the same to that of men (ibid).

In view of all the multifaceted factors associated in the female's marital instability and in spite of its profound effect on their lives, studies on marital disruption situation with particular emphasis on its causative factors are rare and scarce in our country. Very little is known about divorce related problems of women in general and the potential causes that lead them to marital discord in particular. The need to expand

our knowledge of the determinants of females' first marital disruption is, hence, very acute and this study is inspired on the basis of the scarcity of research reports in the area described on the one hand, and the severity and the ever increasing prevalence of the problem on the other. Hence, this study intends to contribute to fill the gap in our knowledge about females' first marital disruption especially on its determinants in Arada Sub city, Addis Ababa. Arada Sub city of Addis Ababa is selected as a study area due to high prevalence of marital disruption in the Sub city as evidenced by the Central Statistical Authority's 1994 population and housing census marital status data.

## **1.2 Justification of the Study**

Recent research studies all over the world show that divorce is gradually becoming frequent and is increasing in an alarming rate regardless of who has divorced and the duration and limitation of its causes (Burchinal, 1965; Eshelman and Wilson, 1995). The statistics of the United States National Center for Health, for example, showed that the rate of divorce has increased more than double since 1965 worldwide (Eshleman and Wilson, 1995). In Ethiopia, since the practice of keeping such type of vital statistics seems to be very lacking, there is no reliable and ample evidence that shows the patterns and magnitude of divorce. However, the research findings of the Central Statistical Authority (1993) revealed that one-third of Ethiopian's first marriages end up in divorce or separation. The 1990 National Family and Fertility Survey as well disclosed that 35 percent of the first marriages have been dissolved due to either divorce or death of the husband (CSA, 1993). The 1995 Addis Ababa Fertility Survey also showed a deteriorating condition in marital stability in Addis Ababa. According to Groenewold et al. (1989), the extent of marital dissolution in Addis Ababa was nearly one in three marriages.

Regardless of its extent, the real grounds or causes of marital disruption, however, differ considerably by different demographic and socio-economic characteristics such as age at marriage, duration of marriage, number of living children in the marriage, migration effect, status of women, education, choice of marriage and work and

economic status. The variation of each of these factors in relation to the stability of marriage is very significant. Jones (1981), for instance, argues that divorce or separation rate is high in areas where education and economic welfare are least developed; traditional and cultural practices are strong and early marriage is practiced. In countries like Ethiopia such variations show strong correlation in relation to marital stability with the important fact that most of child bearing occurs within marriage and at early age, and use of modern contraceptive is minimal (CSA, 1999). Thus, in this regard, nuptiality factors are considered to be important proximate determinants of fertility.

The over all analysis of marital disruption problems and factors associated with it has an important role in solving certain socio-economic and demographic problems such as prostitution, streetism among children and hence juvenile delinquency, crime and other social evils which are partly the out come of family dissolution due to divorce or separation (Dunwiddie, 1967). It also provides a very good insight in reducing physical and psychological problems as well as other rural-urban migration related problems (like beggary and homelessness) due to marital life crisis (Daniel, 1994). Thus, examining the determinants of marital instability problems helps for the planning of community and welfare services, social support and development plans and community health and family planning programs (including HIV/AIDS).

### **1.3 Objectives of the Study**

The principal purpose of this study is to critically examine the major factors contributing to females' first marital disruption in Addis Ababa, Arada Sub city. This general objective can be further divided into the following specific objectives:

1. to find out the important socio-economic and demographic determinants leading to first marriage disruption of women;
2. to offer some recommendations for stability of marital relationships and hence for the mitigation of marriage disruption problems.

## **1.4 Literature Review**

The very fact behind the study of family dissolution from a demographic point of view is that the analysis of each of the demographic events (fertility, mortality, morbidity, migration and nuptiality events) are sufficiently addressed within the context of the family, or at least related to it than the analysis of individual cases (Megersa, 1999). Thus, the interest in dealing with marital disruption problems is greatly built in different demographic variables like age at first marriage and duration of marriage and other socio-economic factors like education and choice of marriage. In fact, different theories related to marital instability have sufficiently addressed the issue from different perspectives. The following are some selected theoretical outlooks of marital stability problems.

### **1.4.1 Theories on Marital Stability**

#### **1. Social Exchange (Attraction Vs barrier) Theory**

This theory assumes that the strength or weakness of the marital relationship would be the direct function of the attraction within, the barriers around and the alternatives outside of the marriage (Edwards and Saunders, 1981). The basis of this theory can be seen from three different angles (ibid.). The first is the source of attraction inside marriage which may, for instance, be the affection and economic rewards as well as other benefits the marriage relationship offers. The second is the strength of source of barriers such as feelings of obligation, moral proscriptions and some external, social and legal processes acting as push forces (Booth and Edwards, 1985). The final view is the source of alternative attraction as there is much affection and economic rewards outside the marriage acting as pulling forces (ibid.).

In explicit terms, the aforementioned theory states that marriage remains intact when the costs of divorce are high (for instance, where there are children as causes for barriers) and alternative attractiveness is low (such as old age, lower income, wife's unemployment etc). According to Edwards and Saunders (1981) every marriage has two continua: (1) concerning the fullness or emptiness of its attraction, and (2) having to do with the strength or weakness of its boundaries. A decrease in the marriage's

attractiveness and/or an increase in the weakness of its boundaries impel individuals towards dissolving the existing marriage.

## **2. Interactional Dynamics Theory**

Interactional dynamics (ecological) theory states that individuals are embedded in a number of interacting factors particularly interpersonal, familial, and ecological factors that influence the mate selection process and continue to influence the individual and the couple well into their future marriage (Larson and Holman, 1994). The literature in this area may, in general, be divided in to three sub groupings of interacting processes.

### **2.1 Family of Origin Interacting Effect**

According to this theory, the family background of spouses is the most important factor that greatly affects the couples behavior and quality of their marital relationship (Larson and Holman, 1994). Family of origin factors such as quality of parents' marriage, quality of parent-child relationship and quality of family environment play a substantial role in marital stability and happiness for adult children (ibid.). Lewis and Spanier (1979), in their review of different research works on premarital predictors of marital quality and stability, also suggested that the higher the marital quality in the parents' marriage, the higher the marital quality in the adult children's marriage. Further studies on premarital precursors for marital stability explicitly indicate that women whose parents had experienced divorce or separation have a disruption rate ten times higher than that of women who lived with both parents (Bumpass and Sweet, 1972). This may be due to the indirect effect (rather than the direct) of their parents' poor marital adjustments as expressed through the effect on premarital interactional processes and on their personality (ibid.). However, it seems reasonable to accept that the impact of parents' marital dissolution is less effectual when it happens as the children grow up to their maturity level (when they get older) than at their lower level of age (Tilahune, 2006).

## **2.2 Contextual Interacting Factors**

This theory emphasizes that other ecosystems around the individual or couple or the circumstances surrounding the mate selection and courtship (dating) process may affect the later marital quality or stability (Larson and Holman, 1994). White (1990), for instance, argues that friends, in this respect, are an important source for finding a mate, and friends' approval and positive perceptions are predictive of positive marital outcome. Other contexts including job/career circumstances, political circumstances such as war or economic circumstances such as economic depression or boom and many other external pressures have negative influence on marital wellbeing (Lewis and Spanier, 1979). They argue that the greater the independence from such pressures in the decision to marry, the greater the subsequent marital quality. They also stressed that internal pressures such as parental over involvement or intimidation on dating and mate selection may affect a marriage in negative ways.

## **2.3 Couple Interactional Processes**

The theory of couple interactional processes suggest that factors associated with marital quality can best be explained as couple's interpersonal interactions rather than individual entities or characteristics (Larson and Holman, 1994). Similarity of interpersonal attitudes, values and beliefs of couple determine the marital stability and quality (ibid.). Spouses with large differences in attitudes, values and beliefs may run into marital difficulties because they appraise relationship events from incompatible vantage points (ibid.). It is noted that homogamy (the tendency to choose a mate similar to one self in terms of race, socio-economic status, religion, intelligence, age etc) is related to marital stability (Lewis and Spanier, 1979). Larson and Holman (1994) have also showed that positive marital quality is related to small spousal discrepancies in age, education, income, valuing autonomy, and external motives for being married. Similarly, Bumpass and Sweet (1972) and Leherer and Chiswick (1993) as well showed that there is a positive relationship between similarity in religion and marital stability as value consensus is more considered when religious backgrounds are similar.

Studies made by Larson and Holman (1994), on the other hand, stated that the interaction history of the spouses including their acquaintance, cohabitation,

premarital sex and premarital pregnancy also affect their marital relationship adjustments. The better acquainted the spouses are before marriage, the higher the marital quality (ibid.). Shorter dating periods may not allow individuals to screen out incompatible partners or allow individuals much chance to experience some troublesome differences prior to marriage. Thus, for those who are not well-acquainted, when problems which may cause greater discomforts in their relationship occur after marriage, they will easily give up and end their marriage in divorce (ibid.)

### **3. Role Theory**

This theory states that the personal and social development and well being of a person is viewed as a function of factors that facilitate or impede effective role perception or expectations and role performance in group situations (Burr, 1971). In other words, the individual's expectations of his/her relationship to other people determine his/her behavior. The more an individual is able to understand a variety of role relationships, that is, the particular implications of a variety of reciprocal relationships, the more he/she will succeed in effectively handling social relationships (Manus, 1966).

According to this theory conflicts in marital relationship arises if the role performance (role behavior) of the husband does not agree with the role expectation of his wife and vice versa (Burr, 1971). The marital success is highly determined by the discrepancies or consensus between role expectations and role performances [role behavior] (ibid.)

In case of conflicts due to role discrepancies, a possible method of adjustment is provided by Dyer (1962). He proposed that in conflict situations of role discrepancies:

- (i) The husband (or wife) can change his/her role performance completely to meet the role expectation of his /her partner.
- (ii) The husband (or wife) can alter his/her role to a degree and the partner alters his/her role expectation to a similar degree so that role performance and role expectation are compatible.

In each of the above cases the end result is an agreement between role performance and role expectations. However, adjustments to role discrepancies become difficult if marriage is performed at early age (Booth and Edwards, 1985). This is because early age at first marriage is negatively related to effective role performance (Bahr, Chaapell and Leigh, 1983)

## **1.4.2 Socio-economic and Demographic Correlates in**

### **Marital Disruption**

Numerous factors have been cited to explain changes in divorce rates overtime. Many social science researchers (Zastrow, 1996; Eshelman and Wilson, 1995; Dunwiddie, 1967; Bumpass and Sweet, 1972) have focused on the socio-economic characteristics such as the growing acceptance of divorce, an extensive emphasis on romantic love, educational status, interfaith marriages, the HIV/AIDS case related divorce causes, job displacement and economic crisis as potential causes that account for the increasing rate of divorce. There are also a number of other factors that contribute to the high rate of divorce (Zastrow, 1996). Some obvious causes are alcoholism, adultery, the changing status of women and their decreased economic dependence on their husbands (i.e. the wider the opportunities for women to get education, employment etc. resulting in the less likelihood of their living in unhappy marriage), incompatibility in sexual matters, infidelity, and the interference from relatives and friends. The less noticed but very essential factor contributing to an increasing divorce rate is the unwillingness of some men to accept the changing status of women (ibid.). According to Zastrow (1996) many men still prefer a traditional marriage where the husband is dominant and the wife plays a supportive (subordinate) role as child rearer, house keeper and emotional comforter. On the contrary many women living in cities are not in a position to accept such a status but demand equal and shared responsibility in family matters (ibid.). Urbanization and modernization may also be considered as contributory factors for the increase in divorce rate as they contribute for the decreased social and moral constraint thereby the strict codes of

ethics ( which used to be effective mechanism of ‘divorce control’) are lessened (Megersa 1999; Canabal, 1990).

The demographic determinants of divorce are also evident as they characterize the individual or the spouse to be divorce prone or not (White, 1990; Megersa, 1999; Clarke and Brington, 2000; Reiners, 2003) .These may include age at first marriage, duration of marriage, number of alive children in the marriage, duration since first marriage and the status of migration (Megersa, 1999; Clarke and Brington, 2000.) In most cases, however, the causes of divorce are complex (as several factors can lead a person or couple to be dissatisfied with a marriage), and are specific to a couple’s relationship, their troubles and their own life experiences (Larson and Holman, 1994).On the other hand, there is now an increasing recognition that in some marriage where there is a considerable tension, bitterness and dissatisfaction, divorce is some times a solution ( Zastrow ,1996)

## **Demographic Correlates in Marital Disruption**

### **a) Age at First Marriage**

Many research works by different scholars confirm the relation between age at first marriage and marital instability (Bitter, 1986; Booth and Edwards, 1985; Schoen, 1975; Reiners, 2003). In fact there is little research and not far reaching explanations to the association between late marriage and marital instability (Booth and Edwards, 1985; Reiners, 2003).Instead more emphasis is given to the relationship between marrying early and marital instability may be due to the mediating effects of role performance and the availability of alternatives on the relationship as explained by social exchange and role theories of marital stability (ibid.). More generally, age at first marriage is found out to have a negative relation with marital instability (Booth and Edwards, 1985; Lee 1977; White, 1990).

Higher ages at first marriage are typically thought of as an indicator of female autonomy or female empowerment (Reiners, 2003). According to Reiners (2003),

increasing ages at first marriage to a greater degree of self-arrangement of marriages is a powerful mechanism of declining divorce rates.

Eshleman and Wilson (1995) indicated that first marriages contracted before age twenty are far less stable than marriages among couples in their early twenties, and both are less stable than first marriages of people aged twenty five or older. Bumpass and Sweet (1972) also confirmed that women who marry before age 20 have substantially higher rates of marital disruption than women who marry at older ages. Generally, early age at first marriage is known to be the best indicator of the prevalence of the instability in marital relationships (Pathfinder international/Ethiopia, 2006). Major explanation for this high rate of divorce at early marriage includes emotional immaturity, unintended marriage due to premarital pregnancies, poor role performance in marital relationships and less tolerance for any marital dissatisfaction due to suitability of alternatives for remarriage (Booth and Edwards, 1985; Clark and Berrington, 2000). With regard to premarital precursors of marital quality and stability, White (1990) concluded that age at first marriage is the strongest predictor of divorce in the first five years of marriage.

#### **b) Duration of Marriage**

Most divorces are assumed to occur in the first few years of marriage (Zastrow, 1996). There is also a tendency of increase in divorce shortly after the children are grown, which may be partly because some couple wait until the children are ready to leave the nest before dissolving an unhappy marriage as explained by social exchange -alternative versus barrier- theory (Booth and Edwards, 1985).

In fact, since age at first marriage and marital duration are strongly correlated, it is difficult to untangle the effects of the two conceptually distinct variables. Empirically the results are the same: divorce or marital disruption is less likely when respondent and marriages are older (white, 1990). Apart from this identical effect of duration and age at first marriage, different research works (Jacobson, 1950; Johnson, Amoloza and Booth, 1992) show negative relationship between marriage duration and instability. The explanation for this correlation goes with the explanation of the

role theory of marital stability: longer stay in relationship develops experience and experience will make the spouses to fulfill the role perceived and expected in marriage and will contribute to make the marriage alive. Hence the longer the duration of the marriage the more the partner could understand each other so that they can fulfill each others' role expectations.

### **c) Number of living Children in the Marriage**

The relationship between the presence of children and marital dissolution can be seen from different perspectives. The first is that children are deterrent to separation or divorce only when they are in the pre- school ages. In this respect, Cherlin (1977) noted that once all the children in a family are in school, they do not seem to influence the probability of separation and divorce. He suggested that the high costs of child care for pre- school children in terms of time, money and effort seems to act as a deterrent to marital dissolution. One study made in Australia also confirms that the presence of children younger than six years decreased the risk of marital dissolution, but the findings of this study as well indicate that the effect of young children on marital dissolution was disappeared when the employment activity of the wife was simultaneously taken into account (Glenn and Krammer, 1987). On the other hand, there is a widely accepted belief that divorce and separation rates are moderately lower for those who have children than for the infertile or childless (Jacobson, 1950; Reiners, 2003). However, the recent increase in the level of voluntary childlessness has prompted researchers to investigate the risk of marital disruption associated with childlessness (Clarke and Brington, 2000). It is also possible that the presence of several children might deter dissolution for a negative reason that a heavy burden of child care would fall on the parent who would have custody of the children after dissolution (Cherlin, 1977). In this respect, Cherlin (1977) further noted that marital specific capital, like children, deters dissolution only when it takes the form of assets, but the effect of too young children on marital dissolution is in general unclear. Premarital child bearing is also assumed to increase the risk of marital dissolution (White, 1990)

#### **d) Migration**

The level of social integration is likely to be influenced by residential mobility. According to Landale and Ogena (1995) high level of residential movement is related to both higher levels of divorce and lower levels of social integration. The fundamental idea underlying this assertion is that couples are embedded to differing degrees in a larger network of social ties, which serves to reinforce both the marital bond and the cohesion of the family unit (ibid.). In fact, the condition of the social integration depends on the socio- cultural situation of the region of migration. For instance, Kumlachew(2001) noted that in areas where early marriage is commonly practiced, women with unsatisfied marriage often dissolve it and migrate to urban centers. In this regard, the 1995 fertility survey of Addis Ababa revealed that high rate (56.5 percent) of marital dissolution was for migrant women. Megersa (1999) also indicated that marital disruption is higher for migrants than non-migrants and it is higher for female than male migrants. On the other hand, in densely populated areas men usually migrate to urban center to supplement their income. Thus, if the husband is very far from his home, he may form another family in the town and may dissolve the former one (Sadik, 1990). In general, the link between migration and marital instability show two directional interdependences. Migration, as one determinant factor of marital disruption, affects marital stability by facilitating separation through the widened communication gap created between husband and wife (ibid.). On the other hand, marital instability may also cause out migration especially rural-urban for economic, psychological and social reasons (Kumlachew, 2001).

With regard to the gender aspect of migration, rural to urban migration in particular, has been such that males dominate in all streams of migration (Sadik, 1990). Thus migration tends to result in large sex imbalances in particular low sex ratios in the urban areas and high sex ratios in the rural areas. These sex imbalances are largely responsible for the rising divorce rates in many developing countries as the estranged partners find alternative mates (ibid.).

### **e) Age Difference between Couples**

Just as a young age at marriage, a greater age difference between spouses is sometimes considered as characteristic of a subordinate position of women within the household (Reiners, 2003). According to Reiners (2003), wide age gap engagements, particularly too young women engaged to too old men, lessens the women's autonomy and their empowerment in the issues of their household. Thus, he views that a large age difference between spouses significantly reduces the risk of divorce and may be an indication of a greater submissiveness of women to the authority of their husbands. On the other hand, study made by Pathfinder International/Ethiopia(2006) on the causes and consequences of early marriage in Amhara region showed a contradictory result that age difference between couples greatly affects the level of understanding in their emotional and interpersonal relationship and thus their marriage life as a whole. According to the report of this study, marriage instability crops up as a negative consequence of marriage engagement between young women and too old men. In this study the distinction on wide age gap between couples was considered where the husband is at least ten years older.

### **f) First Husband's Marriage Order**

The marital history of spouses influences the propensity to remarry and the subsequent experience of the spouse in the remarriage (Schlesinger, 1974). The probability for the instability of females' first marriage increases if their husbands had divorced earlier. This is the most potent predictor of marital instability for wives married once (ibid.). Cohabitation or prior marriage with another partner may reflect a tendency for lower levels of marital commitment, suggesting reduced stability for the current union as well; furthermore the presence of children from previous formal or informal marriages has been found to have an adverse impact on marital stability (Leherer and Chiswick, 1990). Perkins and Kahan (1979) documented that greater maladjustment, confusion and faulty communication are viable among members of the remarriages (when compared to the first marriages). They also noted the real difficulties of stepfather-child or step mother-child relationships that the remarried

partners face in their households. Actually what causes remarriages to be more divorce prone than first marriages is in debate (Alam, Saha, Ginneken, 2000). Martin and Bumpass (1989), for example, argue that people in remarriages carry with them the characteristics (early age at first marriage, low education and so on that raised the probability of their first marriage dissolving. However, Alam, Saha and Ginneken (2000) impressively argue that if this was the case, then remarriages would not be divorce prone when age at marriage and level of education are controlled. White and Booth (1985) also discussed the problems of communication between stepparent and stepchildren in second or higher order marriages is more problematic than the first marriages thus usually leads to marital stability problems. Levinger(1976) suggests that previously divorced persons are more likely to view separation as an easy solution to conflict, or to be members of groups that find divorce more acceptable. In contrast to this, Aguirre and Parr (1982) found that persons who had been previously divorced and were in second or higher order marriages were in stable marriages.

## **Socio-economic Variables Affecting Marital Stability**

### **a) Education of the Wife**

Divorce rates are generally higher for those with fewer years of schooling (Clarke and Berrington, 2000; Sweet and Bumpass, 1972; Olusanya, 1970), but this relationship between education and marital dissolution was mediated through age at marriage and duration of marriage. Marital instability is noted to occur more frequently when the wife's education level (and of income) is higher than the husband (Eshelman and Wilson, 1995). On the other hand, the educated women who are invariably married to men of equal or higher education are in general better off economically than the uneducated ones and probably feel somewhat more secure in marriage (Olusanya, 1970). However, research findings in the association between education and marital instability vary with respect to the direction of the relationship. For instance, some researchers (Sweet and Bumpass, 1972; Clarke and Berrington, 2000, Kumlachew, 2001) had the same opinion that there is an inverse relationship between education and marital instability. On the other hand, a curvilinear relationship-negative at lower levels and positive at higher levels-was also found (Tilahune, 2006). Contrary to this,

recent findings also indicated that women's education has no effect on marital instability (Reniers, 2003).

#### **b) Similarity of Religion between Couples**

There is a widely accepted belief that religiosity is an important deterrent to divorce and separation though higher divorce and separation rates are recorded for interfaith (different faith) marriages than for single faith or intrafaith marriages (Eshelman and Wilson, 1995). Religious heterogamy is generally associated with a higher likelihood of marital dissolution. A household where the spouses differ in their religious preferences is characterized by less efficiency and more conflicts (Lehrer and Chiswick, 1993). Interfaith marriage, however, comes in different shades and degrees; the magnitude of its destabilizing effect varies considerably with the degree of dissimilarity between the religious beliefs and practices of the two groups and with the clarity with which they define their respective boundaries. Nevertheless, comparisons among different types of intrafaith marriages show that stability generally does not differ significantly by religious affiliation. Exceptions are unions involving two partners with no religious identifications which are characterized by high instability (ibid.). In general, the effect of intrafaith marriage on marital dissolution was found out to be the lowest among Jewish couples and highest among the Protestants (Bumpass and Sweet, 1972). In Ethiopia, the 1995 Fertility Survey of Addis Ababa revealed that marriage dissolution due to divorce was highest among Orthodox Christian women (54.5 percent) followed by Muslim women (38.3 percent) and the lowest rate was observed among Catholic religion followers (11.8 percent) (CSA 1997)

#### **c) Income and Work Status of the Wife**

Different research findings show the existence of direct linear relationship between marital instability and wife's income and work status (Zastrow, 1996; Clarke and Berrington, 2000; White, 1990; Megersa, 1999). Husband's unemployment or insecure job conditions, wife's higher earnings than husband's, and stressful working situations are found to have a positive association with the risk of marital dissolution

(Clarke and Berrington, 2000). In contrast, Joan and Spitze(1980) concluded that the wife might be a more attractive partner to the husband if she has higher earnings in that her motivation to end the bad marriage might be offset by his desire to continue it; he calculates the benefits that her earnings relieves him of financial responsibility. The 1990 Family and Fertility Survey of Addis Ababa indicated that 93 percent of the first marriages of those with higher income in the study sample remained intact (CSA, 1993)

#### **d) Living Arrangement after First Marriage**

Post-marital residential patterns are important covariates of marriage stability (Reniers, 2003).Reiners noted that in populations with matrilineal descent systems matrilocal residence after marriage is often the prescription. These unions are thought to be inherently unstable because the husband is separated from the base of his authority in his own village. In the village of his wife, he is subordinate to her kin group (ibid.). In most rural settings such matrilocal or patrilocal residential arrangement is common in which marriage is characterized by extended family systems and its arrangement and stability to large extent is determined by parents or the kin group (Abeje, 1995). However, in urbanized societies (in towns and cities) such a requirement concerning post marital residence of the newly married couples is not rigid. Matrilocal arrangements are common among the Agnuwak in Western Ethiopia where descent is traced through the female line (Institute of Curriculum Development and Research, 1998). The residential arrangement in urban areas of Ethiopia, however, is neo-local, where the newly married establish residence independent of the line (patrilineal or matrilineal) through which lineage is traced (ibid.). In this areas the conjugal or nuclear family is the most common type of family in which the decision making process is on the hands of the couple and not in those of the kin group (Abeje, 1995).The functions and responsibilities of the conjugal family are to the conjugal unit and not to any other group(ibid.). Nevertheless, because of housing shortages, it appears that patrilocal or matrilocal residential arrangement is prevailing in urban areas of Ethiopia (particularly in Addis Ababa) as well recently (Path finder International/Ethiopia, 2006).

#### **e) Choice of First Marriage**

According to the Federal Family Law of Ethiopia or the Revised Family Code (Proclamation of 2000), age at marriage and consent in the marriage are the two most 'Essential Conditions of Marriage'. Thus any practice of marriage that violates the right to choose a mate with one's own consent is against this law. In Ethiopia, as a traditionally and customarily accepted practice, particularly in rural societies, arranged marriage is a typical feature of forced marriage with the purpose of forging alliances between families as well as broadening the resource base (Abeje, 1995, Megerssa,1999).In these societies the functions of marriage go beyond the interest and consent of the immediate couple and its stability to large extent is determined by the influence of either parents or the kin group(Abeje,1995). For instance, one study made by Path finder International/Ethiopia (2006) in Amhara region indicates that young girls are forced or pushed in to marriage by their parents, relatives, friends, local elders and the like. The study points out that few women have a role in choosing their lifetime companion and in making the decision whether or not to marry. They are usually forced to marry men they do not know, their consent is rarely considered, and they usually have no information even about the wedding.

Kurdek (1991) also noted that the better acquainted the spouses are before marriage, the higher the marital quality. If, on the other hand, couples are entered in to marriage with the influence of a third party but not acquainted to each other, then some troublesome differences in the incompatible partners may lead to greater problems in the marriage relationship (Grover et.al., 1985; Larson and Holman, 1994)

#### **f) Parents' Marital History**

According to family of origin interacting effect theory, the family background of spouses is the most important factor that greatly affects the couples' behavior and quality of their marital relationship. As is explained in the theory, family of origin factors such as quality of parents' marriage, quality of parent-child relationship and quality of family environment play a substantial role in marital stability and happiness for adult children. However, the effects of a broken home background are ambiguous and may vary with the reason for the dissolution of the marriage (Bumpass and

Sweet, 1972). Bumpass and Sweet (1972) and Lewis and Spanier(1979), for example, proposed that the higher the marital quality in parents' marriage, the higher the marital quality in adult children's marriage. Glenn and Kramer (1987) also found a moderate effect of parental divorce on adult children's marriage and demonstrated that women who spend part of their childhood in single parent families are more likely to have their own marriages break up. They explained that lower commitment to marriage and a tendency for children of divorce to remarry at an unusual early age are main reasons for their marriage disruption. Leherer and Chiswick (1993), on the other hand, found a negative relationship between parents' marital dissolution and adult children's marital instability with possible explanation that such people may possibly have the experience that give them a greater sense of the difficulties of single parenthood and therefore want to remain in the marriage rather than dissolve it. Perkins and Kahan (1979) as well noted the real difficulties of stepfather-child or step mother-child relationship that the partners faced in their early childhood and which might have a profound negative impact on the well being of their households. They suggest that the internal dynamics of divorced parents' remarriage (largely because of stepchildren) are more problematic and thus often lead to marital discord and indirectly influence the adult children's marital stability through the effects on personality.

More important than a single event such as parental divorce for predicting adult children's marital quality or stability is, however, the processes and interactions in the family of origin(Holman and Larson,1994). Home environments such as quality of husband-wife and parent-children relationship predict marital stability and satisfaction of the adult children (ibid).Nevertheless, it appears that the impact of marital dissolution of parents and their remarriages are less effectual when it happens as the children grow up to their maturity level (when they get older) than at their lower level of age.

## 1.5 Operational Definition of Terms

**1.5.1 Marriage:** is the legal union of person of opposite sex, the legality being established by civil, religious or other means according to the custom and laws of each country (Encyclopedia Britannica, 2003)

**1.5.2 Marital Instability:** refers to characteristics of marital relationship such as the level of disagreement as well as dissatisfaction (unsteadiness) with the relationship that may or may not result an ultimate ending of the marriage itself (Johnson, Amoloza and Booth, 1992).

**1.5.3 Marital Disruption:** is a condition in which partners of a marital union cease to live together as husband or wife especially due to divorce or separation.

**1.5.3.1 Divorce:** dissolution of valid marriage usually freeing the parties to remarry (Britannica 2003).

**1.5.3.2 Separation:** a decision that husband and wife make to live apart while they are still legally married. This term is used throughout this study to represent separation of spouses due to some misunderstanding but have not terminated their marriage by law or custom.

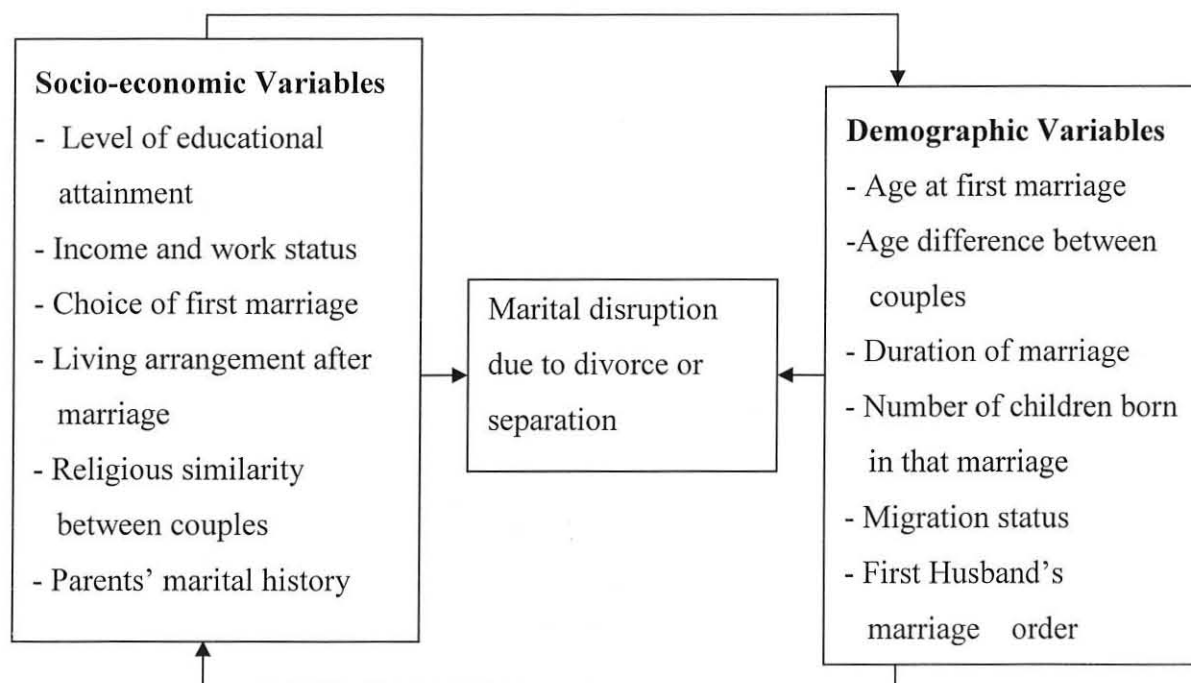
**1.5.4 Enumeration Area (EA):** it is the unit of land delineated for the purpose of enumerating population without omission and duplication. An enumeration area in urban center constitutes 150-200 housing units (CSA, 2001).

**1.5.5 Household:** consists of a person or group of persons irrespective of whether they are related or not who normally live together in the same housing unit or group of housing units and have common cooking and eating arrangements (CSA, 2001)

## 1.6 Conceptual Frame work

The conceptual framework that guides this study is illustrated as follows.

**Figure 1.1: Conceptual Framework for the Study of the Determinants of First Females' Martial Disruption.**



## 1.7 Hypotheses

On the basis of literature review and objectives of the study the following hypotheses are set for examination:

1. Early age at first marriage is negatively related to the risk of divorce or separation.
2. There is an inverse relationship between first marriage disruption and duration since marriage.
3. Educated women are expected to have low risk of first marriage disruption due to divorce or separation.
4. Women with children have a relatively stable marriage than those with out children.
5. There is a positive relationship between first marriage disruption and work status of women.
6. Own mate selection has a positive effect on marital stability.

## CHAPTER II

### METHODOLOGY

#### 2.1 Data Sources

The researcher primarily employed a structured questionnaire as an instrument to collect the required information. The questions were prepared so as relevant information such as the marital status of respondents, migration status, number of living children, level of educational attainment, work status and others would be incorporated for the analysis of females' first marriage disruption due to divorce or separation. The questionnaire was originally prepared in the English language but later translated into Amharic for easy understanding and communication between the data collectors and the respondents.

An in-depth interview with selected key informants was also made to substantiate and cross-check the information obtained from the questionnaire. The need for the in-depth interview arose from the fact that some important points in people's attitude and feelings cannot be exhaustively captured by the questions in the questionnaire.

The main themes included in the in-depth interview were:

- the status of early marriage;
- parental involvement on the issues of the spouses' relationship;
- problems with arranged marriages; and
- major factors leading to marriage instability and the associated socio-economic problems owing to marital life crisis.

Consistent with the expectation, the in-depth interview was found to be instrumental in supplementing the structured questions.

More over, further information was collected from records of administrative offices, journals, published or unpublished research papers, books and other sources so as to authenticate and support the primary data collected.

## 2.2 Sample Size

Sample size is usually determined based on the required precision, variability of the characteristics to be measured and the resources available. Required key indicators of the study are mostly proportions. In determining sample size, with no prior information about the variability of the population proportion with respect to the desired outcome, which is going to be measured, the variance of the population proportion is often guessed by taking the population proportion to be equal to 0.5. Therefore, setting the population proportion (P) equal to 0.5, a minimum sample of about 784 ever married women (excluding widowed for first marriage) was found to be sufficient to attain a 95percent confidence with an absolute error of 3.5percent. In effect, the following formula was used to calculate the required sample size (Wikinson and Bhandarkar, 1984),

$$n = \frac{(Z_{\alpha/2})^2 NPQ}{(Z_{\alpha/2})^2 PQ + E^2 N} \quad \text{Where,}$$

$n$  = Required Sample Size

P is the population proportion that experience first marriage stability problems. Since the researcher does not have data regarding the extent of the problem, the proportion of population possessing this characteristic is assumed to be 50 percent.

$Q=1-P$

$Z_{\alpha/2}$  is the standard normal value corresponding to the desired level of confidence interval (95percent).It is given to be 1.96.

E=Absolute error, i.e. the margin of error or limit of accuracy which the researcher will tolerate, which is assumed to be 3.5percent.

N=Population size

And for a large population size ( $n \leq 0.05N$ ), the above equation is reduced to,

$$n = \frac{(Z_{\alpha/2})^2 PQ}{E^2} ; \text{(Wikinson and Bhandarkar, 1984)}$$

$$\text{Thus, } n = \frac{(Z_{\alpha/2})^2 PQ}{E^2} = \frac{(1.96)^2 * 0.5 * 0.5}{(0.035)^2} = 784$$

### **2.3 Sampling Design and Procedures**

The unit of analysis in this study are ever married women (excluding widowed for first marriage) and who are residing in Arada Sub city, Addis Ababa. The widowed are excluded from this study because the study significantly focuses on determinant factors of female marital disruption only due to divorce or separation, but not because of the involuntary dissolution owing to the death of the husband. The Sub city is taken as a study area based on the factual evidence of high divorce incidences registered in the Sub city as displayed in the records of the Central Statistical Authority's 1994 Population and Housing Census<sup>1</sup>. In fact the present Arada Sub city comprised of exclusively the former Woredas 1 and 2 and partly Woredas 3, 9 and 14. Consequently, the cross tabulation of marital status across Woredas showed high percentage of divorces for these two exclusive Woredas of the Sub city as compared to the other 26 Woredas that comprise the present Sub cities of Addis Ababa. The Sub city has 10 Kebeles and hosts about 330,053 inhabitants with an almost 50 percent of women.

The proper way of locating the study individuals is from the household listing in the enumeration areas (EAs). Operationally, the sampling strategy of the present survey used the already delineated enumeration areas of the Sub city that was made by Central Statistical Authority (CSA) of Ethiopia. In this regard, from the total of ten Kebeles that comprise the Sub city, six Kebeles were selected using random sampling method. In the selected Kebeles all the EAs together with their respective household size (which was obtained from the 1994 Population and Housing Census for Addis Ababa) were listed and eighteen enumeration areas were selected using simple random sampling method. Again in these selected enumeration areas all the 3100 households were visited in order to make a household list. From the household list, 2360 eligible women with the desired attribute were as well recruited and listed. Thus, this listing was used as a sampling frame. Finally, from these enlisted women, 784 eligible respondents were made to be included in the study by using systematic simple random sampling method.

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<sup>1</sup> Marital status raw data, from CSA's administrative records.

## **2.4 The Field Work**

Prior to the actual field work started, eight female data collectors and two supervisors were recruited on the basis of their educational background and experience in data collection and four days training was given for them for the effective administration of the questionnaire in the data collection process. The training for enumerators was particularly focused on clarifying the content of each question, how to approach and talk to the respondents and on how to fill each entry in the questionnaire. The training for supervisors was particularly on how to supervise the enumerators and also on how to check and edit the filled questionnaire so that errors would be corrected.

To assess the validity and the content clarity of the Amharic translated version of the questionnaire a pilot survey was also used. Based on the result of the pilot survey, discussion was also undertaken with the data collectors and supervisors so that error could be edited or corrected.

During the actual field data collection operation, the eight enumerators contacted the eligible respondents and collected the required information through the structured questionnaire. The two supervisors were instructed to make a close supervision over the enumerators and to undertake a spot check and a thorough scrutiny of the filled in questionnaire to ensure that data collection activities were undertaken according to the given instruction. Over all the field data collection process took a period of about two weeks.

## **2.5 Variable Specification**

### **Dependent variable**

The dependent variable (i.e. first marriage instability) is composed of categories of marriage disruptions due to divorce or separation and the comparative category of intact marriage.

### **Independent variables**

The independent variables that are used in this study are categorized into two groups. They are demographic and socio-economic variables. Demographic variables include age

at first marriage, migration status, number of alive children, age difference with husband, first husband's marriage order and duration of marriage. Socio-economic variables include education level of respondents, religious similarity between couples, choice of marriage, living arrangement after marriage, parents' marital history and income and work status of respondents.

## **2.6 Assessment of Data Quality**

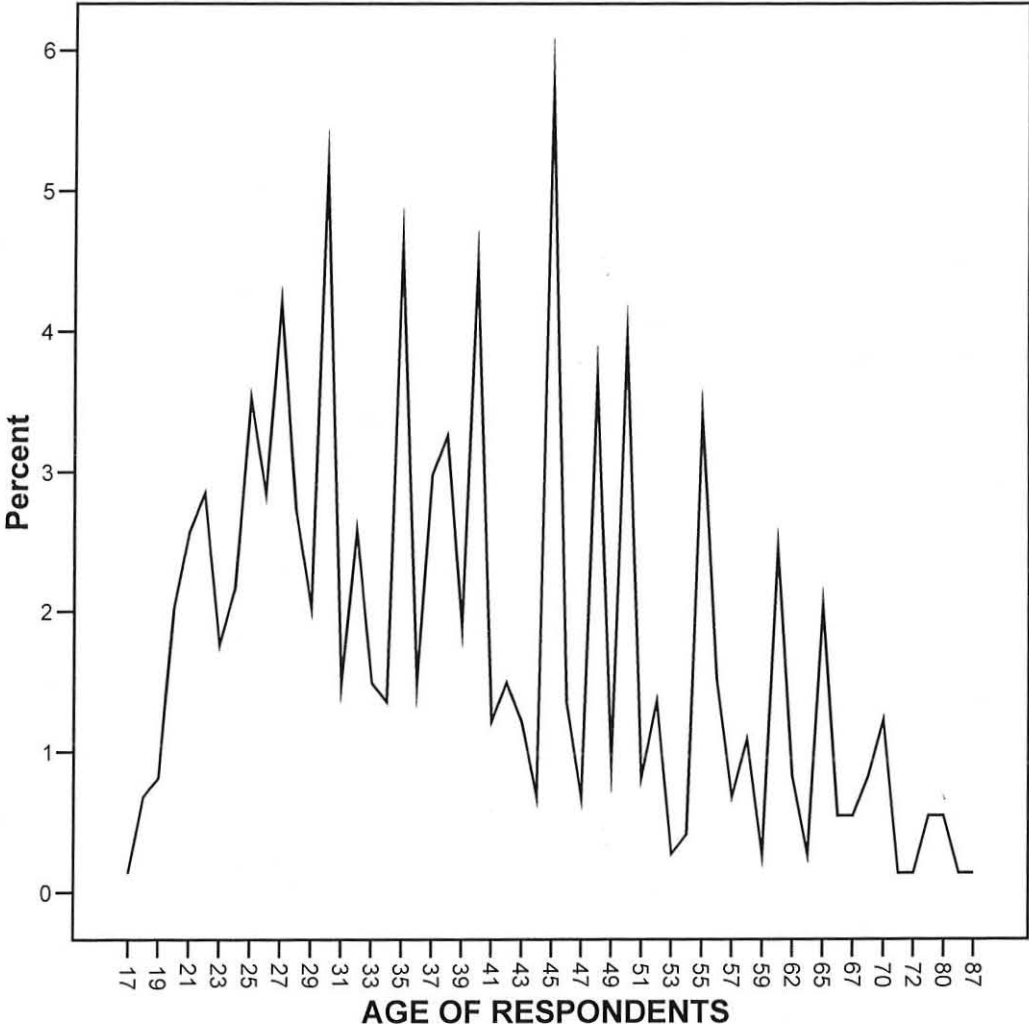
Data quality assessment is an important procedure of research works and it has very much to do with the analysis of data and the interpretation of results in investigative findings. In effect, the reliability of any research and its findings is primarily determined by the quality of the data processed and analyzed. The two well known errors that usually encounter and affect the data quality in data collection process are content and coverage errors. Errors of coverage occur either when certain part of the population is not enumerated at all or when it is enumerated more than once. Content errors occur when certain information is reported differently from what it really is. In this respect, because of the high sensitivity nature of questions regarding age, the quality of the *age data* is often found out to be a problem. Two major types of errors are usually observed in age reporting. These are age heaping and age shifting.

Age heaping or digital preference is the act of reporting ages as ending in some digits, mostly 0 and 5. These errors are common in societies with no practice of birth and death registration. In the case of age transference or shifting the act is not preferring one digit to another but telling ages higher or lower than the true ages. The simplest way of checking the problem of age mis-reporting is to examine the distribution of women by single year of age. Under the circumstances where no exodus of population and drastic reduction in mortality prevailed, the single year age distribution is expected to decrease as age increases (CSA, 1997).

In this study, the evaluation of age data shows there are digital preferences in age reporting, particularly to digits 0 and 5 (Figure 2.1). However, when grouped age data has been used, these effects of age reporting errors for single years of age would be

minimal (see Table 3.1). As shown in the table, the classification of the women according to the given age groups indicates a more even distribution except for a noticeable heaping at ages 25-34. It seems more likely that respondents from the younger age group (15-24) have transferred their ages in to the older group (25-34).

**Figure 2.1: Percentage Distribution of Respondents by Single Year of Age**



In relation to coverage in the present survey, the response rate was 94 percent .The coverage problem arose due to the unavailability of respondents during the survey period and the unwillingness of some informants to give a complete response.

## 2.7 Data Processing and Analysis

Data was edited, coded, and entered into a computer using the users' friendly SPSS software package. The data was also tabulated in to the explanatory variables across those serving as dependent variable.

Both descriptive and multivariate statistical techniques were used while analyzing the data. Percentages, frequencies, mean values were the descriptive analyses of the quantitative data. As a multivariate procedure, the logistic regression model was used to examine the relationship between the independent variables and the dichotomous dependent variables. Since the probability of marital instability (the dependent variable) is a dichotomous variable, this technique is appropriate for the analysis of the relationship between a set of predictor variables and this binary dependent variable (Demeris, 1992)

If  $P_i$  is the probability that the  $i^{\text{th}}$  respondent is divorced or separated to the first marriage, then  $(1-P_i)$  is the probability that the respondent is still at the first marriage. Then ratio  $P_i/1-P_i$  gives the odds of the respondent being divorced or separated to the first marriage. Thus, the logistic regression model takes the form

$$\left( \frac{P_i}{1 - P_i} \right) = e^{B_0 + B_1 X_{i1} + B_2 X_{i2} + \dots + B_k X_{ik}}$$

Where  $P_i$  is the probability that the  $i^{\text{th}}$  respondent is divorced or separated to first marriage,  $X_i$  is a set of independent variables, and the  $B_i$ 's are the regression coefficient. From the  $B_i$  the odds ratio will be estimated, as  $\exp(B_i)$ . The odds ratio is the factor by which the odds of divorce or separation change per unit change in the  $i^{\text{th}}$  independent variables controlling for the effects of other variables (Demeris, 1992).

## 2.8 Limitations of the Study

The fact that age is the most important variable in demographic analysis and with its contrast sensitivity of errors in reporting (due to recall bias) often makes high limitations in demographic surveys. In the present study the age data displayed in figures 2.1 and 3.1

indicate that there are digital preferences in age reporting. However, with a reasonable assumption that the errors would be minimized when grouped age data are employed, the data have been used for the analysis. The other limitation arises from the income data. With regard to the income level of the respondents most of them (i.e. about 67 percent of the survey women) were not willing to respond to their income and even those who responded, about 62 percent of them reported that their monthly income is very much less than birr 200. Thus, due to high number of missing cases and the inconvenience of categorizing the reported income data, the income level of respondents was excluded from the analysis. Therefore, the results of this study and its generalizations should be seen in light of the specified sample size used and the aforementioned limitations.

## **2.9 Delimitation**

This study is delimited to the investigation of socio-economic and demographic determinants of females' first marital disruption who are currently residing in Arada sub city, Addis Ababa.

The study is not directed towards the investigation of how causative factors of marriage disruption are related to the post-divorce adjustments, but it only focuses on how causes of marriage disruption are related to risk behaviors in divorce or separation.

## CHAPTER III

### CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SURVEY RESPONDENTS

In view of the fact that some selected socio-economic and demographic characteristics of respondents are important in further elucidation of findings, the following sections are devoted to provide essential socio-economic and demographic profiles of respondents. The demographic characteristics include the respondents' current age, age at first marriage, number of alive children, migration status, age difference with husband, first husband's marriage order and duration of first marriage. The socio-economic characteristics of the survey respondents include educational level, work status of respondents, living arrangement after first marriage, choice of first marriage and religious similarity between couples and parents' marital history.

#### **3.1 Demographic Characteristics of Respondents**

The *current age distribution* of respondents is presented in Table 3.1. Regarding to the proportion of women in the respective age groups, the table depicts that there are relatively higher proportion of women aged 25-34 years (nearly 28 percent) and a relatively lower proportion for women age greater than 64 years (about 7 percent). However, the proportion of younger respondents (15-34 years of age) is relatively lower (about 40 percent) compared to those older than 34.

**Table 3.1: Distribution of Respondents by Demographic Characteristics**

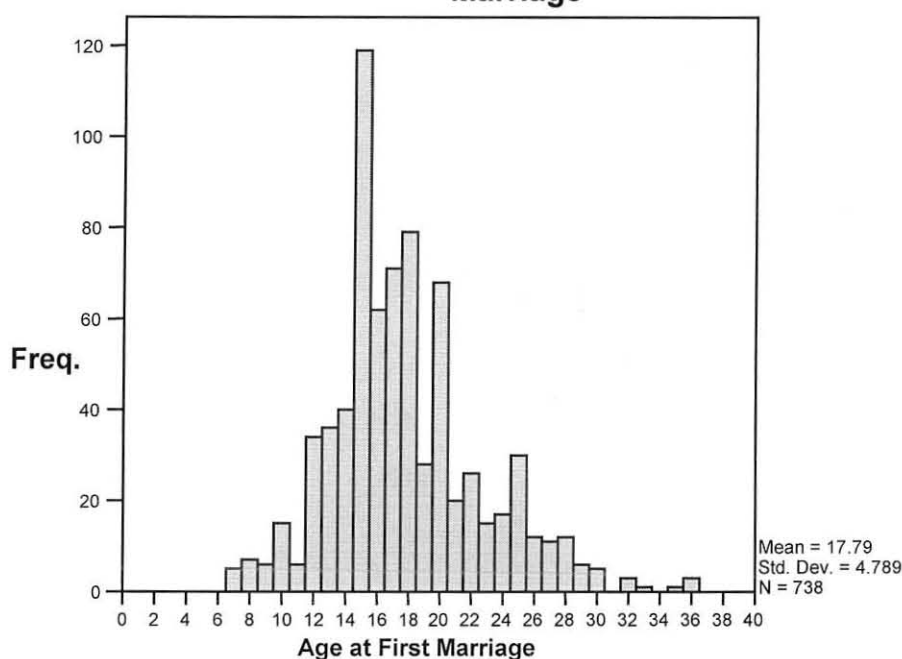
Variables	Number	Percent
<b>Current Age</b>		
15-24 years	96	13.0
25-34 "	202	27.4
35-44 "	172	23.3
45-54 "	141	19.1
55-64 "	77	10.4
More than 64 years	50	6.8
<b>Age at First Marriage</b>		
Less than 15 years	149	20.2
15-17 years	252	34.1
18-20 "	175	23.7
21-23 "	61	8.3
More than 23 years	101	13.7
<b>Number of Living Children</b>		
No child	152	20.6
1-2	327	44.3
3 and above	259	35.1
<b>Age Difference with Husband</b>		
Husband about the same age or younger	154	20.9
Husband less than ten years older	322	43.6
Husband ten or more years older	262	35.5
<b>Migration Status</b>		
Non migrant	176	23.8
Migrant	562	76.2
<b>Duration of Marriage</b>		
0-4 years	558	75.6
5 years and above	180	24.4
<b>Husband's Marriage Order</b>		
Not Married Before	639	86.6
Married at least once	99	13.4
<b>Total</b>	<b>738</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Source: Own Survey Data (2007)

As it was explained in the first chapter, *early age at first marriage* is the best indicator of the prevalence of marital life disruptions. According to the Federal Family Law of Ethiopia (the revised Family Law), legal age of marriage is 18 years and above for both males and females, and any marriage before that age is considered as early. With regard to the age at first marriage of the survey respondents, 45.7percent of them were married within the legal age of marriage (18 years and above) [Table 3.1].The table further shows that about 20 percent of the respondents were first married before the age 15.This indicates that one-fifth of the ever married respondents got married while they were

neither physiologically nor psychologically ready for the marriage union. In general the mean age at first marriage was observed to be 17.79 years and the median age was 17.00 years. The figure below summarizes the distribution of ever married respondents by their age at first marriage where the modal age at marriage was 15, even though it appears to be affected by digital preference in the age reporting. This age mis-reporting would, however, be relatively moderated when the age data is grouped for further analysis. As shown in Table 3.1, the classification of the women according to the given marriage age groups shows a more even distribution than the single year distribution.

**Figure3.1: Frequency Distribution of Respondents by Age at First Marriage**



From the overall total survey respondents, women who are *migrants* are about 76 percent (Table3.1). This shows a higher proportion of ever married migrant women compared to *non migrants* perhaps due to a high rate of dissolution of the early age at first marriage and a higher unemployment condition of the place of origin that altogether push them towards the capital city(Addis Ababa) .

In fact, early age at first marriage is one known factor of rural-urban migration for married women (Kumlachew, 2001). In line with this, Table 3.2 clearly indicates that about 42.9 percent of first marriage among migrant took place when they were below 15

years old. Where as among non migrants (those who born and raised in Addis Ababa throughout their life time) the proportion married by the same age was only 15.3. On the other hand, remarkably higher proportion non-migrant women engaged in first marriage within the legal marriage ages (Table 3.2).

**Table 3.2: Distribution of Migrant and Non -migrant Respondents by Age at First Marriage**

<b>Age at first Marriage</b>	<b>Non migrants</b>	<b>Migrants</b>	<b>Total</b>
<15	15.3(27)	42.9(241)	(268)
15-17	22.2(39)	16.7(94)	(133)
18 years and above	62.5(110)	40.4(227)	(337)
<b>Total</b>	<b>100.0(176)</b>	<b>100.0(562)</b>	<b>(738)</b>

*Source: Own Survey Data (2007)*

*Note: Figures in brackets are cell frequencies*

Ever married respondents were also asked for information on the *age difference between themselves and their spouses* at the time of first marriage. The results show that about 79 percent (584 in 738 cases) of the ever married respondent women were married to older men and only 21 percent of women were married about the same age and to younger husbands (Table3.1). Of those who married an older husband, the age difference was observed to be less than 10 years in 322 cases (43.6 percent) and 10 or more years in 262 cases (35.5 percent)

Information was also collected as to how long the respondents stayed in the first marriage. Results of the survey show that about 76 percent of the respondents were able to stay at their first marriage during the early duration (the first four years of marriage) [Table 3.1]. A sharp decline in proportion stay was also observed in the second duration groups (5 years and above) indicating high risk of marital disruption during the first five years of marriage compared to the relatively late years of duration.

Respondents were also requested whether they have children or not. Nearly 80 percent of them reported that they have child/ren with their number varying between one child and twelve children.

Respondents were further asked whether or not their *first husbands had been married before*. Nearly 14 percent of the women reported that their husbands had been previously married at least once (Table3.1).

### 3.2 Socioeconomic Characteristics of Respondents

Level of education is one of the essential socioeconomic characteristics that determines the accessibility and acquisition of knowledge pertaining to a particular issue of life (Clarke and Berrington, 2000). In line with this fact, respondents were asked whether they are literate or not and the level of education they attained while they are/were in their first marriage. The results are presented in Table 3.3. From the total respondents, about 43 percent reported that they were not educated and were not able to read and write in any language. The remaining 57 percent had gone to school and obtained formal education. About a quarter (23.8 percent) of them attended education beyond the primary level.

**Table 3.3: Distribution of Respondents by Socio-economic Characteristics**

Variables	Number	Percent
<b>Education Level of the Wife</b>		
No Education	314	42.5
Primary Education(Grades 1-8)	248	33.6
Secondary and above(Grades 9+)	176	23.8
<b>Work Status of the Wife</b>		
Not Working	497	67.3
Working	241	32.7
<b>Living Arrangement after First Marriage</b>		
With Parents	229	31.0
Alone	509	69.0
<b>Choice of Marriage</b>		
Own Choice /Consent	322	43.6
Arranged Marriage	416	56.4
<b>Religious Similarity between Couples</b>		
Similar	699	94.7
Different	39	5.3
<b>Parents' Marital History</b>		
Intact marriage	487	66.0
Dissolved marriage	251	34.0
<b>Total</b>	<b>738</b>	<b>100.0</b>

*Source: Own Survey Data (2007)*

The work status of the women was also assessed in the survey. The results presented in Table 3.3 clearly indicate that two thirds (67.3 percent) of the respondents were not engaged in any gainful job while they were /are in their first marriage. Since the living arrangement (place of stay) after marriage is an important attribute for safe marriage life, the dwelling place of spouses after their first marriage was also asked. Thirty one percent of the women reported being lived with their in-laws in extended families. The majority of them (about 69 percent) lived in their own home in nuclear family system indicating their independent living from their parents (Table 3.3).

Regarding the choice of marriage the majority (about 56 percent) of the respondent women were pressured (forced indirectly or directly by parents, relatives or friends) in to marriage. The rest 44 percent of the survey women were married willingly and by their own choice (Table 3.3).

Table 3.3 also presents the situation of interfaith (of different faiths) and intrafaith(of the same faith) marriages where a predominantly 95 percent of respondents' marriage was from intrafaith marriages. Only 5 percent of the survey women reported their husband had a different religion from them.

Information on the marital history of the family of origin indicates that a high proportion (66 percent) of respondents reported the marriage condition of their parents was intact (Table 3.3).

## CHAPTER IV

### DETERMINANTS AND DIFFERENTIALS IN FEMALES’ FIRST MARITAL DISRUPTION

#### **4.1 Differentials in Females’ First Marital Disruption by Demographic Determinants**

In this section major demographic variables such as age at first marriage, migration status, number of living children, age difference with husband and duration of marriage will be analyzed in relation to the dependent variable (first marriage instability).

The differentials in marriage instability by age at first marriage is presented in Table 4.1. As shown in the table the rate of marital disruption among women who married at age less than 15 years is enormously high (about 80 percent) while it is about half among those who married between ages 15 to 17. This high marital disruption rate at early age marriage is likely due to the unwillingness or forceful marriage of the young girls that are particularly arranged by their parents. However, marriage disruption frequencies appear to show a decline trend as the marriage age advances (Table 4.1) indicating that physical and psychological maturity is an important predictor of marital stability.

When first marriage status is examined in relation to the number of children born, the percentage distribution of disrupted marriage for women with no children was very high (about 76 percent) as compared to those women with one or more children [Table 4.1]. Consequently, marriage disruption frequencies appear to show a declining trend as the number of children increases. This indicates that infertility is contributory to marital instability as children are deterrent to it.

First marriage instability also varies with the migration status of respondents. As clearly shown in table 4.1, the majority of non migrants (about 71 percent) had stable marriage than the migrants. The high marriage instability rate for migrants as compared to the non-migrants might be due to the propensity of migrating towards Addis Ababa in search of jobs after the first marriage is dissolved at the place of origin.

**Table 4.1: Distribution of First Marriage Instability by Demographic Characteristics**

Variables	Marital Instability		Total
	Intact	Disrupted	
<b>Age at First Marriage**</b>			
Less than 15 years	22.1 (33)	77.9(116)	100.0(149)
15-17 years	50.4(127)	49.6(125)	100.0(252)
18-20 ''	72.0(126)	28.0(49)	100.0(175)
21-23 ''	83.6(51)	16.4(10)	100.0(61)
More than 23 years	86.1(87)	13.9(14)	100.0(101)
<b>Number of Living Children**</b>			
No child	23.7(36)	76.3(116)	100.0(152)
1-2	57.8(189)	42.2(138)	100.0(327)
3 and above	76.8(199)	23.2(60)	100.0(259)
<b>Age Difference with Husband**</b>			
Husband about the same age or younger	50.6(78)	49.4(76)	100.0(154)
Husband less than ten years older	53.4(172)	46.6(150)	100.0(322)
Husband ten or more years older	66.4(174)	33.6(88)	100.0(262)
<b>Migration Status**</b>			
Non migrant	70.5(124)	29.5(52)	100.0(176)
Migrant	53.4(300)	46.6(262)	100.0(562)
<b>Duration of First Marriage**</b>			
0-4 years	49.3(275)	50.7(283)	100.0(558)
5 years and above	82.8(149)	17.2(31)	100.0(180)
<b>Husband's Marriage Order</b>			
Not Married Before	57.7(369)	42.3(270)	100.0(639)
Married at least Once	55.6(55)	44.4(44)	100.0(99)
<b>Total</b>	<b>424</b>	<b>314</b>	<b>738</b>
**Pearson chi-square sig. at p<.01 and*at p<.05			

*Source: Own Survey Data (2007)*

(Figures in the bracket are actual number of observations)

Table 4.1 also presents the percentage of first marriage instability by duration since first marriage. It appears that first marriage disruption was quite frequent (about 51 percent) during the first four years of marriage as compared to the late durations. The high disruption rate at the early duration is probably due to the in-migration of divorced or separated women to Addis Ababa.

The results in Table 4.1 on the variation of first marriage instability by the age difference between couples indicate a small percentage difference for those respondent women who married to persons of the same age or younger and less than ten years older . But among those who married ten or more years older husbands low percentage women (nearly 34 percent) reported that their marriage ended up either by divorce or separation. In general,

the percentage of women stayed in marriage increases as the age difference with husbands' enlarges (Table 4.1) indicating a greater submissiveness of women to older husbands.

The incidence of first marriage instability was a little bit higher (about 44 percent) to those women who reported that their husbands had previously married at least once (Table 4.1). The results in the table also indicates that a relatively high proportion of women (about 58 percent) who had first husbands not married before had a stable marriage.

#### **4.2 Differentials in Females' First Marital Disruption by Socio-economic Determinants**

When the educational level of the respondents is examined in relation to marital instability, a pronounced decline of disruption rate was observed as the women advances in education (Table 4.2). Accordingly, Table 4.2 indicates that the stability of first marriage increases with the increase of the level of education.

When first marriage instability is examined in relation to work status of women during first marriage, high disruption rate (51 percent) was observed for working women (other than the household work) than the non working (39 percent) [Table 4.2]. This higher marital disruption rate for women who have work is probably due to the greater chance of economic independence that may lead them to intolerance in unhappy marriage.

When marital instability is seen in relation to the marital history of parents, Table 4.2 shows that the incidence of marriage instability is low (about 36 percent) for those respondents whose parents were dissolved their marriage. On the other hand among respondents with intact marriage high proportion women (about 54 percent) reported their parents' marriage was also intact.

**Table 4.2: First Marriage Instability by Socio-economic Variables**

Variables	Marital instability		Total No
	Intact	Dissolved	
<b>Education Level of the Wife**</b>			
No Education	38.5(121)	61.5(193)	100.0(314)
Primary Education(Grades 1-8)	62.1(154)	37.9(94)	100.0(248)
Secondary and above(Grades 9+)	84.7(149)	15.3(27)	100.0(176)
<b>Work Status of the Wife**</b>			
Not Working	61.4(305)	38.6(192)	100.0(497)
Working	49.4(119)	50.6(122)	100.0(241)
<b>Living Arrangement after First Marriage**</b>			
Alone	64.4(328)	35.6(181)	100.0(509)
With parents	41.9(96)	58.1(133)	100.0(229)
<b>Choice of Marriage**</b>			
Own Choice / Consent	75.5(243)	24.5(79)	100.0(322)
Arranged Marriage	43.5(181)	56.5(235)	100.0(416)
<b>Religious Similarity between Couples</b>			
Similar	56.8(397)	43.2(302)	100.0(699)
Different	69.2(27)	30.8(12)	100.0(39)
<b>Parents' Marital History*</b>			
Intact Marriage	54.2(264)	45.8(223)	100.0(487)
Dissolved Marriage	63.7(160)	36.3(91)	100.0(251)
<b>Total</b>	<b>424</b>	<b>314</b>	<b>738</b>

\*\*Pearson chi-square sig. at  $p < .01$  and \*at  $p < .05$

*Source: Own Survey Data (2007)*

(Figures in the bracket are actual number of observations)

As to the living arrangement after first marriage, the place the spouses stayed greatly affects their marital stability. The data presented in table 4.2 indicates that nearly 58 percent among the ever married women who lived in extended families ended their marriage either by divorce or separation. This high incidence of marital instability is probably due to the unnecessary involvement of in-laws in the decisions and management of the spouses' own household. On the other hand, among those women who lived in nuclear family (independent of parents) about 64 percent were in a stable marriage (Table 4.2).

As to the information on whether the survey respondents entered in to marriage by their own consent or not and the corresponding variation in relation to first marriage instability, the results of Table 4.2 shows that about three fourths of marriage being made

by own choice and consent were in a stable union. On the other hand, results on the same table indicates that more than half (57 percent) of the women who reported being entered in to the arranged marriage ended up their marital union either by divorce or separation.

### 4.3 Results of Multivariate Analysis

In this section the correlates of first marriage instability were examined using logistic regression .Since the dependent variable is dichotomous, the model was fitted using logistic regression ,where the dependent variable becomes the odd ratio of marital disruption versus intact marriage. The logistic model is expressed by the equation:

$$P/1-P=e^{B_0+B_1X_1+B_2X_2+\dots+B_nX_n}$$

P=Chance of success and

1-P= chance of failure, then the ratio (P/1-P) is the odds of being in the category of success of the logistic expression. The regression coefficients together with their sign indicate the magnitude and direction of the effect in the log of odds, being in the category of interest of the response variable for a unit increase in the predictors (Halli et.al.1992).

In the logistic regression result, exp (B<sub>i</sub>) is the estimated multiplicative change in the odds for a unit increase in the predictor, controlling the effect of others. However, before the application of the logistic regression model for examining the determinants of first marriage instability, a bi-variate analysis was made to test the relationship between the dependent and a set of independent variables. Particularly, to examine the relationship between the dependent (first marriage instability) and the selected socio-economic and demographic factors, the Pearson chi-square test of independence was used (see Tables 4.1 and 4.2).Then predictors that were significantly related (by considering 0.05 significant level) with the dependent variable were selected. Accordingly, the variables religious similarity between couples and husband's marriage order were found to be insignificant and hence dropped from the variable list for further analysis.

In this study, the application of the logistic model considers first marriage instability as dependent variable having a value zero if the respondent is still in her first marriage and a value of one if she is divorced/ separated. Using the Enter method of the logistic

regression, sets of the independent variables that theoretically well predict the dependent variable were entered in to the model. The model fitness towards the data was also assessed by considering a greater than 0.05 on the hosmer and lemeshow goodness of fit test statistic. The independent variables included in the model, hence, are age at first marriage, age difference with husband, migration status, duration of marriage, number of living children, work status of respondents, living arrangement after first marriage, choice of first marriage, parents' marital history and education level of respondents.

#### **4.3.1 Demographic Variables**

The major demographic variables included in the model are age at first marriage, duration of marriage, age difference with husband, migration status and number of living children.

##### ***Age at First Marriage***

Age at first marriage is highly significant and indicates an inverse relationship with the odds of marriage disruption (Table 4.3). The results of the table clearly shows that women who got married within the legal marriage ages (i.e. ages 18 and above) have less likelihood of dissolving their marriage as compared to those who got married before age 18 (OR=0.229;  $P \leq 0.01$ ). In other words, an increase in age at first marriage from age less than 18 years to the legal ages of marriage reduces the odds of first marriage disruption by a factor of 0.229, meaning that it reduces the chance of divorce and separation rate by about 77 percent [ $100(1-0.229)$ ], controlling the effect of other variables. This obviously indicates that early age marriages contribute much to marital instability as compared to marriage performed within the legal ages (18 years and above). As is indicated in section 4.1, this high marital disruption rate at early age is likely due to the unwanted marriage that is particularly arranged by parents and relatives of the young girls. More over the lack of experience in effectively handling role performances in marriage relationship and the availability of suitable alternatives may also lead these young girls to intolerance in dissatisfied situations and thus dissolving the existing marriage as explained by role and social exchange theories.

### ***Duration of First Marriage***

The regression coefficient (B) for duration of first marriage shows inverse relationship with the odds of marital disruption (Table 4.3). The chance of first marriage disruption among women who stayed in the first marriage beyond four years since marriage is lower than those who stayed in it until their fourth year wedding anniversary by about 89 percent (OR=0.110;  $P \leq 0.01$ ). As explained by the Role theory in the first chapter, this sharp decline of disruption rate during the late years of marriage durations probably shows the commitment of the individual partners to meet each other's role expectations and thus to keep their marriage alive as a result of the mutual understanding developed through the longer stay in marriage.

### ***Age Difference with Husband***

Except for the 10 or more years age difference for husbands, the reported husbands' age difference has not significantly explained the rate of marital disruption at  $P \leq 0.05$  level. However, moving from younger or the same age husbands' marriage to a less than ten years older husbands' marriage reduces the odds of being divorced/separated by a factor of 0.732 (Table 4.3). Similarly moving from younger or about the same age husbands' marriage to a more than ten years older husbands' marriage significantly reduces the odds of being divorced/separated by about 53 percent (OR=0.467;  $P \leq 0.01$ ). This is due to the better economic position of the older men (since older men relatively tend to accumulate more wealth throughout their life than the younger men) that may attract their wives to remain in the marriage even if it gets worse.

### ***Number of Living Children in the Marriage***

As in similar studies explained in the first chapter (Jacobson, 1950; Reiners, 2003; Cherlin 1977), it appears that the presence of several children for survey respondents deterred disruption (Table 4.3). The chance of marital disruption among those women who have one child or two children is reduced by about 50 percent as compared to those who have no living children from first marriage (OR=0.501;  $P \leq 0.05$ ). Like wise, those whose living children in first marriage is 3 and above have about 78 percent less chance

of disruption of their first marriage as compared to those with no children (OR=0.223;  $P \leq 0.01$ ). This indicates that children are deterrent to marital instability. One probable reason for this is that women fear the heavy burden of child care that would fall on them since they usually take the custody of the children after dissolution.

### ***Migration***

As to the migration status of respondents, non-migrant women have higher chance of marital disruption than the migrants. The results of Table 4.3 indicate that the relative risk of marital disruption is 72 percent higher for non-migrants than the migrants (OR=1.720;  $P \leq 0.05$ ).

**Table 4.3: Results of Logistic Regression Analysis of First Females' Marital Disruption as a Function of Selected Demographic and Socio-economic Variables**

Variables	Parameters			
	B	S.E	Wald	Exp(B)
<b>Age at First Marriage</b>				
Less than 18 years (RC)				1.00
18 years and above	-1.476	.224	43.354	.229**
<b>Duration of Marriage</b>				
0-4 years( RC)				1.00
5 years and above	-2.211	.308	51.577	.110**
<b>Age Difference with Husband</b>				
Husband about the same age or younger (RC)				1.00
Husband less than ten years older	-.312	.283	1.217	.732
Husband more than ten years older	-.761	.290	6.888	.467**
<b>Migration Status</b>				
Migrant (RC)				1.00
Non- migrant	.542	.257	4.444	1.720*
<b>Number of Living Children</b>				
No child( RC)				1.00
1 -2	-.692	.292	5.629	.501*
3 and above	-1.500	.329	20.744	.223**
<b>Parents' Marital History</b>				
Intact marriage (RC)				1.00
Dissolved marriage	-.185	.217	.729	.831
<b>Living Arrangement after First Marriage</b>				
Alone (RC)				1.00
With parents	.222	.233	.901	1.248
<b>Work Status</b>				
Not working (RC)				1.00
Working	.611	.219	7.770	1.842**
<b>Choice of First Marriage</b>				
Arranged Marriage( RC)				1.00
Own Choice / Consent	-1.216	.247	24.143	.297**
<b>Education Level</b>				
No Education (RC)				1.00
Primary Education	-.743	.242	9.395	.476**
Secondary and above	-1.846	.325	32.215	.158**
Constant	2.920	.398	53.884	18.540**
Number of cases				738
-2Log Likelihood				632.762

\*\* P<0.01,\*P<0.05, RC=Reference Categories

### **4.3.2 Socio-economic Variables**

The major socio-economic variables included in the model are work status of respondents, living arrangement after first marriage, choice of first marriage, education level and parents' marital history

#### ***Work Status of Respondents***

The work status of the respondent women shows a significant influence on marital disruption. The result of the regression analysis presented in Table 4.3 clearly indicates that working women are highly related to the odds of being divorced or separated than the non-working one. The odds of divorce/separation for working women is 1.842 times greater than the non-working indicating that working women have a relatively high chance of economic independence that may lead them to dissolve an unhappy marriage. The relation ship was found to be statistically significant at  $P \leq 0.01$  level.

#### ***Living Arrangement after First Marriage***

The living arrangement after first marriage has not significantly explained the rate of marital disruption at  $P \leq 0.05$  level. However, as the regression result of Table 4.3 shows the odds of marital disruption is 25 percent higher for marriage partners who lived with their parents than for those who lived alone independent of parents (OR=1.248). This high incidence of marital disruption is probably due to the unnecessary involvement of in-laws in the issues of the partners' own household.

#### ***Choice of First Marriage***

The right to choose a life long mate with one's own will and building a successful marriage is one of the hypotheses to be tested in this study. Accordingly, the regression result of Table 4.3 indicates that marriage made by own choice and consent reduces the odds of marriage disruption by 70 percent as compared to marriage arranged by a parents and relatives [OR=.297,  $P \leq 0.01$ ].

### ***Education Level of Respondents***

The regression results for educational attainment showed a variation in the likelihood of marital disruption between the different education levels. Table 4.3 clearly indicates that an increase in the level of education from no education to primary education reduces the chance of divorce and separation rate by about 52 percent, controlling the effect of other variables (OR=0.476;  $P \leq 0.01$ ). Similarly moving from no education to a higher level of secondary and above education significantly reduces the odds of marital disruption by about 84 percent. The relationship is also found to be statistically significant at  $P \leq 0.01$  level.

### ***Parents' Marital History***

The marital condition of the family of origin was not found to be statistically significant. However, the regression results of Table 4.3 indicate that moving from parents' intact marriage to that of dissolved marriage reduces the odds of marital disruption by about 17 percent (OR=0.831).

## CHAPTER V

### *DISCUSSION OF MAJOR FINDINGS*

#### *Girls who married at early ages are more likely run away from marriage*

Many research works by different scholars (Booth and Edwards, 1985; Lee 1997; White, 1990; Reiners, 2003) confirm the negative relation ship between age at marriage and marital instability. The results of this study also show that there is an inverse relationship between age at first marriage and marital disruption and thus confirming the stated hypotheses in the relationship between the two variables. Early marriage often leads to different physiological and psychological damages which are interrelating each other in affecting the marital stability. As explained by Role and Social Exchange theories the inability of the young married women in fulfilling the biological and social roles expected as a wife and the availability of alternatives for remarriages may lead to conflicts in marriage relationship and thus resulting marital discord. Consequently, the better chance of remarriages for early married respondent women could be the cause for dissolving their earlier marriages. In this regard, a 28 years old separated woman who has three children had described, in her own words, how early age marriage put her whole life in to crisis. She said,

*I was only 16 when I started dating with a boy friend. At that age we did every thing that partners do and finally discovered that I was pregnant. I told my boy friend that I was pregnant and started living together as husband and wife. But some time later he denied being the father of the child, left me alone and even started dating with another girl. I decided to leave my childhood village and painfully gave birth to the child in another village .In the new village, I got married to a seemingly nice man and bore two children for him. But later, as we failed to live together in harmony, I left the children with him and came to Addis Ababa to find a job.*

#### *Women who married older husbands have a relatively high probability of marriage stability*

Wide age gap engagements, particularly too young women engaged with too old men reduces the risk of divorce or separation (Reiners, 2003).The results of this study also showed a consistent declining linear relationship between age difference with husbands

and first marriage disruption. In particular a sharp decline (about 53 percent) in the chance of marriage disruption was observed for respondent women who married husbands of ten or more years older as compared to those who married husbands of the same age or younger (Table4.3). This could be due to the better economic position of older husbands that might attract the attention of the respondent women and fringes interest in them to stay in marriage, even though it was unsatisfactory.

### ***Choice of marriage is an important factor in determining marital stability***

Different researchers (Grover et.al., 1985; Kurdek, 1991; Abeje, 1995) confirmed the negative relationship between choice of marriage and marital instability. The results of this study also showed that there is an inverse relationship between choice of first marriage and marital disruption and thus confirming the stated hypotheses in the relationship between the two variables. In this study the majorities (about 56 percent) of the respondent women were reported being entered in to the already arranged marriage and only 44 percent of them were married willingly and by their own choice (Table 3.3). Among those who entered in to marriage arranged by a third party more than half (57 percent) of them ended up their marital union either by divorce or separation (Table 4.2). This shows that the prevailing arranged marriage among respondents resulted in the marriage discord. In this regard, Interactional Dynamics Theory as well stated that arranged marriage usually do not allow individual partners experience some troublesome differences prior to marriage and thus when problems which may cause greater discomforts in their relationship occur after marriage, they will easily give up and end their marriage in divorce or separation. In general, marriage entered without the will and understanding of the other partner decreases the willful commitment to the marriage that keeps the marriage relationship alive. Concerning this, a woman who had given up the marriage arranged by her parents told the researcher the following:

*Of course, I was only 15 when my parents arranged the marriage for me and I was totally unaware of the arrangement. I even did not know the person I was supposed to marry. After the marriage, I led a miserable life for 3 years and came to Addis Ababa by my self, leaving my husband alone.*

### ***Living arrangement has little impact on marital stability in the context of***

#### ***Addis Ababa***

Post-marital residential patterns are important covariates of marriage stability (Reniers, 2003). In a matrilocal or patrilocal residential arrangement marriage is characterized by extended family systems and its arrangement and stability to large extent is determined by parents or the kin group (Abeje, 1995). Consequently, in such cases of residential arrangements disagreement and conflicts certainly arise due to the unnecessary and over-involvement of in-laws and relatives in the decisions and management of the partners' own family life. The results of the current study also amplify the above reality. As is indicated in the regression analysis in Table 4.3 the chance of marital disruption was 25 percent higher for marriage partners who lived with their parents than for those who lived alone independent of parents, even though the relationship was not found to be statistically significant. Parental involvement on the marriage life of adult children was also an issue during the in-depth interview. For example, a 27 years old woman explained the following:

*We chose to live with my husband's parents because we couldn't afford to rent a house. But after some time, his parents began to intervene in our issues, particularly by telling him how I spent each day while he was out for work. Unfortunately, he became biased because of their reports and got angry with me. Actually, we had decided not to have children until we were able to solve our financial problems. But the big problem was my mother-in-law's strong desire to have grand children. I thought that caused all the mess in my marriage. Then, with the consent of my husband, I went to Beirut to work for some time there. But when I came back, I discovered that my husband had already got married to another woman, their marriage being arranged by his family.*

### ***Employment of women increases their liberty to dissolve an unhappy marriage***

Different research findings show the existence of direct linear relationship between marital instability and wife's income and work status (Zastrow, 1996; Clarke and Berrington, 2000; White, 1990; Megersa, 1999). Consistent with the bi-variate analysis, the results of logistic regression analysis of this study also showed a significant positive relationship between work status of women and marital instability (Table 4.3), and thus

confirming the stated hypothesis in the relationship between these two variables. This indicates that respondent working women had a better economic flair that may led them to intolerance in unhappy marriage and live independently.

*Parents' marital history appears not to determine the marital stability of spouses*

Leherer and Chiswick (1993) found a negative relationship between parents' marital dissolution and adult children's marital instability. The results of the current study as well showed that marital disruption of parents is negatively related to the disruption of the adult children's marriage, though the relationship was found to be insignificant. The non-significant relationship, nonetheless, is probably due to the presence of other strong predictors which lead to undermine the direct effect of parents' marital history on the adult children's marriage.

## CHAPTER VI

### SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

#### 6.1 SUMMARY

This study attempted to examine the socio- economic and demographic determinants of female's first marital disruption, taking the case of Arada Sub City. The study is confined only to first marriage history of women currently residing in the Sub City. This is mainly because histories of higher order marriages often have complicated interrelating effects that make them not easily suitable for comparison purposes. The study is largely based on the primary data generated through conducting a household sample survey with structured questionnaire to collect information pertaining to essential background and marriage histories of the respondents. In-depth interview of key informants was also used to substantiate the information obtained from the structured questionnaire

In an attempt to identify and examine the major factors contributing to first marriage disruption, different theories and literatures related to the topic were surveyed and discussed. Based on these theories and the different research findings twelve explanatory variables were selected and grouped in to demographic and socio-economic variables, first marriage instability being the dependent variable. The demographic variables include age at first marriage, migration status, number of living children, age difference between couples, first husband's marriage order and duration of marriage. The socio-economic variables selected are living arrangement after first marriage, choice of first marriage, religious similarity between couples, education level, parents' marital history and work status of respondents.

The study population was selected based the household listing in the enumeration areas. In this regard, from the total of ten Kebeles that comprise the Sub City, six Kebeles were selected using simple random sampling method and of the selected Kebeles eighteen enumeration areas were taken based on the systematic sampling method. From these enumeration areas household listing was made in order to recruit women with the desired outcome. Then a total of 784 women who had the desired attribute were made to be

included in the study using systematic random sampling. From these 784 women 738 women gave full responses regarding both their background and marital histories.

In terms of the first marriage status of respondents 57.5 percent of them were in intact marriages and the remaining 42.5 percent of the sampled women disrupted their marriages either through divorce or separation. With regard to the background information of respondents, the majority (67.3percent) had no jobs other than the household work and the rest 32.7 were working since first marriage. Sixty nine percent of the respondents lived in nuclear families and the other 31 percent were living in extended families. A higher proportion (56.4 percent) of the sampled women was entered in to the already arranged marriage while 43.6 percent of them were entered in to it with their own choice and consent. Interfaith marriages accounted the majority (94.7 percent) of the respondents' marriages as compared to 5.3 percent that represents intrafaith marriages of the respondents. As to the education level of respondents 42.5 percent of them had no education and the rest 57.5 percent had formal education ranging from primary to higher level of education. In terms of the family of origin marital history, about one third of the respondents reported that their parents had dissolved their marriage. With regard to the demographic characteristics of the survey women 54.3 percent of the respondent women married at ages less than 18 and the rest married within the legally marriageable ages. A higher proportion (76.2 percent) represents migrants while 23.8 percent were non-migrants. The birth history of respondents showed that 20.6 percent of the survey women had no children while the rest 79.4 percent had one or more children. About 76 percent of the respondent women stayed together for 4 years since marriage while the rest were stayed in the first marriage for more than 4 years.

The differentials in marriage instability were also analyzed in relation to different background and demographic variables using bi-variate analysis. The rate of marital disruption among women who married at age less than 15 years is enormously high (about 80 percent) as compared to the disruption rates among women aged more than 15 years. The percentage distribution of disrupted marriage for women with no children was

very high (about 76 percent) as compared to those women with one or more children. The majority of non migrants (about 71 percent) had stable marriage than the migrants. First marriage disruption was quite frequent (about 51 percent) during the first four years of marriage as compared to the late durations. A pronounced decline of disruption rate was observed as the women advances in education. High disruption rate (51 percent) was observed for working women (other than the household work) than the non working (39 percent). The incidence of marriage instability is low (about 36 percent) for those respondents whose parents were dissolved their marriage. On the other hand, among respondents with intact marriage high proportion women (about 54 percent) reported their parents' marriage was also intact. Nearly three-fifth (58 percent) among the ever married women who lived within the extended family system ended their marriage either by divorce or separation. About three fourths of marriage being made by own choice and consent were in a stable union.

The results of logistic regression analysis showed that age at first marriage has a significant and negative relationship with the odds of marriage disruption. Duration of first marriage also showed inverse relationship with the chance of marital disruption. The probability of marital disruption is higher for early durations than the late durations of marriages. Working women were highly related to the odds of being divorced or separated than the non-working one. Marriage made by own choice and consent reduced the odds of marriage disruption as compared to marriage arranged by parents or relatives. The education level had a significant and negative relationship with the odds of marital disruption. As the level of respondents' education increased the chance of divorce and separation consistently decreased.

Overall, the results this study appears to imply the determinant role of women's education as well as their empowerment (in relation to the enhancement of their freedom from the family control over the union formation process, and hence increasing the propensity to postpone marriages beyond their teenage years) in molding the nuptiality patterns. As a matter of fact, most of the socio-economic and demographic variables considered in the multivariate analysis seem to show their impact on the dependent variable in the expected direction, as is confirmed in most recent research works.

## **6.2 CONCLUSION**

Based on the results of uni-variate, bi-variate and multi-variate analysis discussed before, the following concluding remarks are forwarded.

1. With the increase in the age at entry to first marriage and a corresponding decrease to the marital disruption, it is possible to conclude that delaying the age at first marriage contributes much to the stability of the marriage.
2. Since improving the educational status of women reduced the risk of divorce or separation it is likely that overlooking the education of women has a detrimental impact on marital life well being.
3. The relatively low rate of marital disruption among women with several number of children signifies that the presence of children help the marriage to remain intact.
4. From the results of both the bi-variate and logistic regression analysis marital disruption tended high with the violation of the right to choose a partner .This shows that own mate selection has a considerable role in marriage stability.

## **6.3 RECOMMENDATIONS**

Finally, based on the findings of this study, the following recommendations are forwarded.

1. Since women's marital disruption is significantly high at early ages, the postponement of marriage beyond the teenage years is essential. In this regard, the enhancement of the community awareness towards the impact of young age marriage (through mass media like television and radio, stage plays and dramas and the frequent distribution of pamphlets) can have a significant role in increasing the age at marriage and thus in bringing down the related marital disruption problems.
2. As is shown in the findings of this study, women's education has a considerable positive impact on the well being of their marriage. In most cases, educating women is

associated with marital stability through the increased propensity in postponing early marriage and their entry of marriage that are consensual. Therefore, access to education should be facilitated to this segment of population primarily in terms of easy availability.

3. According to the Federal Family Law of Ethiopia or the Revised Family Code (Proclamation of 2000), age at marriage and consent in the marriage are the two most 'Essential Conditions of Marriage'. Thus any practice of marriage that violates the right to choose a mate with one's own consent is against this law. In light of this, marriage choice should be with the free and full consent of the intending spouses rather than parents and relatives preferences. Thus, to make the law in effect and to eliminate or at least reduce this traditional value systems imposed on women, educating the community and parents and creating awareness towards the law is essential. Educating women also plays a substantial role in raising their decision power in choosing the life long mate.

4. Integrated efforts by different concerned bodies (such as marriage counselors and family arbitration parties) should be made in order to help conflicting partners settle their disagreements and live in harmony. Particularly the act of marriage counseling should be encouraged as some marital stability problems can be tackled before hand through professional advices. This, in general, may solve social problems like prostitution, streetism among children, juvenile delinquency, crime and other social evils which are partly the out come of family dissolution due to divorce or separation. More over, rehabilitation programs for those who are already exposed to the psycho-social and economic problems due to marital life crisis should be made to make their life better. In this regard the efforts the different NGO's are undertaking in alleviating the aforementioned separation or divorce-related problems are worth mentioning and should be encouraged and supported.

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**Addis Ababa University**  
**Institute of Development Research**  
**Population Studies and Research Center**

**Questionnaire**

**Informed Consent:**

Dear respondent:

This questionnaire is designed to collect data about the socio- economic and demographic determinants of females' first marital disruption. You have been selected to complete the questionnaire as part of a sample of the study population. I would very much appreciate your participation in this study.

The data collected from this questionnaire will be used for the purpose of the research. Your genuine responses are very important in order to meet the purpose of the study. To this end, whatever information you will provide will be kept strictly confidential and will not be shown to other persons.

Participation in this study is voluntary and you can choose not to answer any individual question or all of the questions. However, I hope that you will participate in this study since your views are important..

Do you have any question with regard to this study?

Do you agree to take part in this study?

(1) Yes (continue)

(2)No (thank you)

## SECTION ONE: HOUSEHOLD ROASTER

**Enumerator:** Ask the head of the household to tell you the name, relationship to the household, sex, age and first marriage status of the usual residents of the household

In *	names of usual resident	Relation Ship to the hh**	Sex 1= male 2=female	Age in completed years	Ever been Married? 1=yes 2=no	First Marriage Status	Eligibl ity***
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)
01			1 2		1 2		01
02			1 2		1 2		02
03			1 2		1 2		03
04			1 2		1 2		04
05			1 2		1 2		05
06			1 2		1 2		06
07			1 2		1 2		07
08			1 2		1 2		08
09			1 2		1 2		09
10			1 2		1 2		10
11			1 2		1 2		11
12			1 2		1 2		12

\*Line number of persons who usually live in the household starting with head of the household

\*\*Head of the household

\*\*\*Circle line number of all ever married women (excluding widowed) aged 15 years and above.

### **CODES FOR COLUMN 3**

#### **Relationship to the Head of the Household**

01=Head	07= parent -in-law
02=Wife or husband	08=brother or sister
03=Son or daughter	09=co-wife
04=Son-in-law or daughter-in-law	10=other relatives
05=Grand child	11=adopted or step child
06=Parent	12=not related
	98=don't know

### **CODES FOR COLUMN 7**

#### **First Marriage Status**

Currently married to 1<sup>st</sup> husband=1  
Divorced to 1<sup>st</sup> husband=2  
Separated to 1<sup>st</sup> husband =3  
Widowed to 1<sup>st</sup> husband=4

## SECTION TWO: BACKGROUND QUESTIONS

Q. No	Questions and filters	Coding categories	Skip to
201	How old are you?	_____ Years old	
202	In what month and year were you born?	_____ Year _____ Month	
203	Is Addis Ababa your Place of birth?	1-Yes 2-No _____ →	206
204	Have you ever lived outside Addis Ababa for more than a year?	1-Yes 2.No _____ →	209
205	Where was the last place you lived in before you came back to Addis Ababa?	_____ Region _____ Zone _____ Woreda _____ Town _____ →	209
206	Where were you born?	_____ Region _____ Zone _____ Woreda _____ Town	
207	When did you come here?	_____ Months _____ Years _____ Years ago	
208	For how long have you been living here continuously?	_____ Years _____ Months	
209	For most of the time until you were 12 years old, did you live in a city (Addis Ababa), in a town or in countryside?	1.Addis Ababa 2.Town 3.Countryside	
210	Can you read and write a simple sentence in any language?	1-Yes 2- No _____ →	212
211	What is your highest level of education?	1. _____ Grade 13. certificate(Tech./voc. or other) 14.Diploma(Tech./voc.or other) 15.Degree 20.Church/quran/self study or education in literacy program 21.Other _____ (specify)	

212	What is your religion?	1.Orthodox 2.Catholic 3.Protestant 4.Muslim 5.Traditional 6.Other _____ (specify)	
213	What is your ethnicity?	1.Oromo 2.Amhara 3.Tigre 4.Gurage 5.Other _____ (specify)	

**2.1.1: Question No 215—219 are only for women whose first marriage is intact till the time of interview.**

214	INTERVIEWER: Check the status of first marriage of the respondent?	1.Intact _____ → 2.Disrupted _____ →	215 220
215	Are you currently engaged in any gainful job?	1.Yes _____ → 2.No	217
216	Have you done any gainful work in the last seven days?	1.Yes 2.No _____ →	219
217	What type of work do you mainly do? (Your occupation)	1.Civil servant/Gov.employee 2.Petty trader 3.Daily laborer 4.Self Business/trade 5.Non Gov./Private institution employee 6.Other _____ (specify)	
218	How much do you usually earn for this work?	1. _____ per hour 2. _____ per day 3. _____ per week 4. _____ per month 5.other _____ (specify) _____	→301
219	What is your reason for not engaged in gainful job?	1.Housewife 2.Student 3.Couldn't get job 4.Not interested 5.Health problem/Incapacitated 6.Pensioner 7.Other _____ (specify) _____	→ 301

**2.1.2: Question No 220—225 are only for women whose first marriage is disrupted till the time of interview.**

220	Were you engaged in any gainful employment in the year of your marital disruption?	1.Yes 2.No →	223
221	What was your usual occupation during that time?	1.Civil servant/ Gov.employee 2.Petty trader 3.Daily laborer 4.Self Business/trade 5.Non Gov./Private institution employee 6.Other _____ (specify)	
222	How much did you usually earn for that work?	1. _____ Br. per hour 2. _____ Br. per day 3. _____ Br. per week 4. _____ Br. per month 5.Other _____ (specify)	→ 224
223	What was your reason for not engaged in any gainful employment?	1.Housewife 2.Student 3.Couldn't get job 4.Not interested 5.Health problem/Incapacitated 6.Pensioner 7.Other _____ (specify)	
224	Were you able to read and write in any language during the time of your marital disruption?	1.Yes 2.No →	301
225	What was your highest level of education in the year of your first marriage disruption?	1. _____ Grade _____ 13. Certificate(Tech./voc. or other) 14.Diploma(Tech./voc.or other) 15.Degree 20.Church/quran/self study or education in literacy program 21.Other _____ (specify)	→ 301

### SECTION THREE: MARRIAGE HISTORY

**Enumerator:** - The following questions are related to marital conditions of women and their husbands' whose first marriage is intact or disrupted till the time of interview.

Q.No	Questions and Filters	Coding Categories	Skip to
301	How old were you when you first got married?	_____ Years old	
302	In what month and year did you marry for the first time? PROBE: If don't know month, in what season? If don't know year, how many years ago?	_____ Months, or _____ Season _____ Years, or _____ Years ago	
303	How old was your first husband when you got married to him?	_____ Years old	
304	When you married him, was he older, younger or about the same age as you?	1.Older 2.Younger 3.About the same age 4.Don't know	
305	By the time you got married to him, was he married before?	1.Yes 2.No →	307
306	How many times had he been married earlier to yours marriage?	_____ number of times	
307	When you married him, was he from the same town or district as you?	1.Yes 2.No	
308	What was the first household you lived in after marrying your first husband?	1.Husband's family's household 2.My family's household 3.Set up new household 4.Rent 5.Other place	
309	When you married for the first time, were your parents living together?	1.Yes → 2.No	311
310	How did their marriage dissolve?	1.Death of one spouse 2.Divorce 3.Separation 4.Other _____ (specify)	
311	Before you married your first husband, have you and he been seeing each other?	1.Yes 2.NO →	314

312	How often have you been seeing each other?	1. Every day 2. 2 or 3 days a week 3. Once a week 4. Once a month 5. Once in a while 6. Other _____ (specify)	
313	How soon did you marry after the first date with your first husband?	_____ Months _____ Years	
314	What is the ethnic background of your first husband?	1. Oromo 2. Amhara 3. Tigre 4. Gurage 5. Other _____ (specify)	

**3.1.1: Question No 316—328 are only for women whose first marriage is disrupted till the time of interview**

315	INTERVIEWER: Check the status of respondent's first marriage.	1. Intact _____ → 2. Disrupted _____ →	329 316
316	By the time you got married to him, was his religion similar to you?	1. Yes _____ → 2. No	318
317	Whose religion did you practice then?	1. Husband's 2. Mine 3. Both 4. Different other 5. Other _____ (specify)	
318	By the time you got married to him, did you and he have the same mother tongue?	1. Yes _____ → 2. No	320
319	Whose language did you speak in your house then?	1. Husband's 2. Mine 3. Both 4. Different other	
320	For how long did you stay in marriage with the man you first married?	_____ Years _____ Months	

321	When did your first marriage end?	_____ Months, or _____ Season _____ Years, or _____ Years ago	
322	Have you been remarried ever since your first marriage disrupted?	1.Yes 2.No →	325
323	In what month and year did you marry for the second time?	_____ Months, or _____ Season _____ Years, or _____ Years ago	
324	How many times have you been married (including your current marriage) since the disruption of your first marriage?	_____ number of times	
325	Did you have any children by your first husband?	1.Yes 2.No →	END
326	How many children did you have by your first husband?	_____ number	
327	How many of them raised at your home (until age 6) by the time your first marriage disrupted?	_____ number	
328	How many of them died before your first marriage disrupted?	_____ number	

**3.1.2: Question No 329—337 are only for women whose first marriage is intact till the time of interview**

329	By the time you got married to him, was his religion similar to you?	1.Yes <input type="checkbox"/> → 2. No	331
330	Whose religion do you practice now?	1.Husband's 2.Mine 3.Both 4.Different other 5. Other _____ (specify)	
331	By the time you got married to him, did you and he have the same mother tongue?	1.Yes <input type="checkbox"/> → 2.No	333
332	Whose language do you speak in your house now?	1.Husband's 2.Mine 3.Both 4.Different other	
333	Have you ever given birth?	1.Yes 2.No <input type="checkbox"/> →	END
334	How many sons/daughters do you have by your first husband?	_____ number	
335	Are all of them alive?	1.Yes <input type="checkbox"/> → 2.No	337
336	How many of them have died?	_____ number	
337	Of those children born alive, how many of them are less than age 6 and are living with you now?	_____ number	

## DECLARATION

The thesis is my original work, has not been presented for a degree in any other university and that all sources of materials used for the thesis have been duly acknowledged.

Name klondimye Ashenafi

Signature 

Date 16/08/07

This thesis has been submitted for examination with my approval as university advisor.

Eshetu Gurm (Ph.D)  
Advisor

  
Signature

16/08/07  
Date