

FACTORS RESPONSIBLE FOR MARITAL CONFLICTS AMONG NEWLY MARRIED COUPLES IN ILORIN, KWARA STATE NIGERIA

Inioluwa Racheal Ogungbemi^{1*}, Samson Aderemi Ajiboye², Ayodele Bamidele Ogungbemi³, Lateef O. Adegboyega¹

¹*Department of Counsellor Education, Faculty of Education, University of Ilorin, Ilorin, Nigeria.*

²*Department of Social Sciences, School of Liberal Studies, Yaba College of Technology, Nigeria.*

³*Department of Economics, College of Social and Management Sciences, Tai Solarin University of Education, Nigeria.*

Corresponding Author: Inioluwa Racheal Ogungbemi, Email: Inioluwaajiboye74@gmail.com

Abstract: Conflict exists in nearly every sphere of life. Conflicts exist in people's jobs, families, schools, and even in the church. Marital conflict has profound implications for individual well-being, although marital conflict is consequential for both husbands and wives, it has more pronounced health consequences for wives. Thus, this study investigated factors responsible for marital conflicts among newly married couples in Ilorin, Kwara State. A descriptive survey was adopted for the study and the instrument used to collect data for the study was a questionnaire entitled "Factors Responsible for Marital Conflicts Questionnaire (FRMCQ). The instrument was validated and a coefficient of 0.75 was obtained for its reliability. A research question was raised for the study while four null hypotheses were postulated and tested at a 0.05 level of significance. The findings of the study revealed that the factors responsible for marital conflicts among newly married couples in Ilorin, Kwara State are friends' interference in the marital affairs of the couple, poor home background of either spouse, and lack of parenting skills among others. Also, there were no significant differences in the factors responsible for marital conflicts among newly married couples in Ilorin, Kwara State based on gender, age, and educational qualification. Based on the findings of the study, it was recommended that counsellors in collaboration with other agencies should set up campaigns on the need to prevent marital conflicts, and government and stakeholders in the society should establish counselling centers in strategic locations where couples can be educated on different patterns of marital conflicts and counsellors and other agencies should synergize to educate couples on how to get committed, avoid conflicting on the issue of fertility and develop a lasting attraction to their wives in order to prevent domestic violence.

Keywords: Friend's interference; Poor home background of either spouse; Lack of parenting skills

1. INTRODUCTION

Marriage is a ubiquitous institution as it encompasses all cultures, races, ethnic groups, or religious groups [1]. Marriage is a lifelong partnership between a man and his wife (Matthew 19; 5-6). Marriage is a union between a man and woman for life that is both voluntary and legal. A marriage contract is an exchange of estates, properties, rights privileges, roles, and statuses. Beyond a legal contract, marriage is a covenant as it is entered into by agreement and vows made by the parties when entering are for life i.e. based on till death do us part commitment. At the time of the exchange of vows and the pledge to be committed, the man and woman involved are both required to be psychologically balanced, physically fit, and emotionally stable: In short, they should be mentally alert so that none is deceived or cajoled into the deal [2]. In marriage, each partner, male and female is unique based on individual needs. In the opinion of [1], there is a need for emotional, physical, and spiritual coordination in nature to add flavor to the marriage relationship. Without a variety of individual and different needs a marriage relationship would be non-stimulating, tedious, and thereby lack flavor [3]. They have defined marriage as a sacred and permanent contract between a man and a woman who has consented to live a life of vocation, love, and sharing for each other to promote their mutual growth and welfare as persons in their journey through life. This implies that a marital relationship is meant to be a lifelong one until the death of a partner. Marriage as an institution is a universal phenomenon that plays a vital role in society and life. However, no matter how much love the individuals involved have for each other, it is natural that they will from time to time experience conflict as a result of differences in opinions, values, needs, desires, and habits.

A strong and loving marriage is a source of great happiness in life and also a valuable resource during difficult times, while a problematic one can be so devastating to many aspects of a marriage [4]. According to Aldridge and Browne, marital relationships experience crises and conflicts that sometimes result in divorce, separation, broken homes, violence against women or men, child neglect, and several other devastating effects of intra-marital conflicts. Even though couples are aware of the intimate contract they are into in marriage and the implication of this contract to their lives, they encounter challenges that they sometimes cannot handle. The survival of such marriages largely depends on how effectively the couples manage their marital relationship.

Marital conflict has been linked to the onset of depressive symptoms, eating disorders, male alcoholism, episodic drinking, binge drinking, and out-of-home drinking. Although married individuals are healthier on average than the unmarried, marital conflict is associated with poorer health and with specific illnesses such as cancer, cardiac disease, and chronic pain, perhaps because hostile behaviours during conflict are related to alterations in immunological, endocrine, and cardiovascular functioning [5]. Grych and Fincham stressed that physical aggression occurs in about 30% of married couples in the United States, leading to significant physical injury in about 10% of couples. All marriages face certain transitions that occur throughout the relationship. Some of these transitions include getting married, career changes, having children, the last child leaving home, and retiring from work. Indeed, the trends towards urbanization and increased mobility bring about much greater separation. Some theorists believe that marital conflict is a normal occurrence for couples [6]. Marital conflict is often seen as an inevitable phenomenon that occurs within all relationships. Based their research on the notion that the transitions and challenges that occur within a marriage present problems that are inevitable and often lead to marital conflict [7].

According to [8], some factors that give rise to marital conflict include: lack of sexual satisfaction, childlessness, communication gap, in-law influence, and poverty among others these factors generate crises and conflicts that are detrimental to marital relationships such as desertion, negligence, malicious beating, child abuse, abscondment, assault, disobedience and several other features in the marital relationship. Marital conflict can influence children's adjustment directly by equipping children with faulty working models of functional behavioural and emotional expression for dealing with social problems [9]. undertook a study on increasing cases of broken marriage in Jos metropolis [9]. A sample of 175 couples participated to determine factors associated with marital conflict. It was discovered that there are many factors individually or in combination that lead to marital conflict. Such factors, according to Miri, lack of love between couples, infidelity, childlessness, problems of in-laws, habitual drunkenness, going into marriage with unrealistic expectations, and improper communication among others. Even though the study did not work on personal factors, the factors mentioned were associated with marital conflicts.

In a study by [10] on marriage conflict and mediation among the Kamantan people of Kaduna State. The findings of the study showed that childlessness with 91.1% is a major cause, cruelty /wife beating 90%, lack of proper care of wife 91%, polygamous marriages 72.24%, lack of love 35.92%, forced marriage 76.11%, extra marital affairs, etc. are all associated with marital conflict. Frequent marital conflict according to Samana generally viewed as a source of ongoing tension that can preoccupy parents and deplete their emotional resources, possibly leading to disengagement from their children [12]. Despite this recognition, there are few direct tests of the proposition that marital conflict affects children's maladjustment through a decrease in parental involvement and attentiveness.

Financial arguments are one of the most frequently occurring conflicts in marriages. On average, lack of finance in a family has a stronger, longer lasting, and predicts marital discord better than other types of marital conflict [11] In spite of these findings, few studies have investigated the predictors of financial arguments. Marital conflicts exist in many marriages because many couples cannot manage conflict in such a way that will strengthen their marriage [12]. It is important to find ways to equip couples with conflict management skills to curb the effects of many escalated conflicts like fighting among couples, abuse of one another, separation and divorce as a result of conflict, and murder which is the end result of escalated conflict. According to [13], incessant conflicts result in broken homes, which consequently breed criminals and juvenile delinquents in society. Children from broken homes also experience educational backwardness and sometimes drop out of school because they cannot cope with conflict at home and academic challenges. When the home or the family is confused and bedevilled by interpersonal conflicts, you do not expect children to develop sound personalities due to family socialization at home. How couples handle conflict in their relationship affects the strength and type of relationship a couple may have. Conflict may have the power to destroy a relationship when not well managed or build a marriage when properly managed. This makes it essential for married couples to know how to manage marital conflict effectively.

The newly married couple could better express their experiences based on different variables, it should therefore be noted that among such variables that could account for marital conflict among this category of people include; educational qualification, employment status, and age at marriage. The number of children is associated with attitude toward wife battering, religious affiliation, number of unions, and type of earnings for work are predictors of holding on to mixed views about wife battering. When there is a wide educational gap between spouses, their approaches to life will be at variance a problem may arise as the less educated person may be more superstitious, traditional, or conservative and there may be difficulty in reasoning together when these disparities exist in wedlock it is often difficult to maintain peace and stability. This study aim to investigate factors responsible for marital conflicts among newly married couples in Ilorin, Kwara State.

1.1 Purpose of the Study

The main purpose of this study was to investigate factors responsible for marital conflicts among newly married couples in Ilorin, Kwara State: The study also sought to know whether the variables of gender, age, and educational qualification would influence factors responsible for marital conflicts among newly married couples in Ilorin, Kwara State.

1.2 Research Question

What are the factors responsible for marital conflicts among newly married couples in Ilorin, Kwara State?

2 METHODS

This research gives a detailed procedure for conducting the research work. It presents the methods of investigation and development of the instrument to be used which involves research design, population, sample and sampling procedure, the instrument as well as its psychometric properties, the methods of administration and data collection, scoring of the instrument, and method of data analysis.

2.1 Research Design

The research design adopted for this study is the descriptive survey method. It also focuses attention on the people; their beliefs, opinions, perceptions, motivation attitudes, and behaviours.

2.2 Population, Sample and Sampling Procedure

The sample is a fair representative group selected from the target population and the sampling procedure is a systematic process employed to select a required proportion of the target population. Based on the population of the study, random sampling was used to select 200 respondents from public places in the Ilorin metropolis.

2.3 Instrumentation

Instrumentation is a way of developing measuring devices and methods for gathering data in educational research. The instrument that was used in collecting useful information for this study is a questionnaire entitled "Factors Responsible for Marital Conflicts Questionnaire (FRMCQ) which was designed by the researcher.

The instrument has two sections namely: Section A dealt with demographic data and B focused on factors responsible for marital conflicts.

2.4 Psychometric Properties of the Instrument

The psychometric property is determined by establishing the validity and reliability of the instrument.

2.5 Procedure for Instrument Administration and Data

The questionnaire was administered by the researcher. In the process, the researcher first seeks their informed consent in order to abide by ethical rules.

2.5.1 Procedure for scoring the instrument

The questionnaire items were scored based on the format of each of the section.

Section 'A' was scored using frequency counts and percentages. While

Section B with 20 items was scored using four Likert-type rating scales as follows:

Strongly Agree (SA) means 4 Points; Agree (A) means 3 Points; Disagree (D) means 2 Points; Strongly Disagree (SD) means 1 Point

2.5.2 Method of Data Analysis

The data generated was analyzed using appropriate statistical analysis, thus percentages and mean scores were used to analyze the data obtained from the demographic section and the main research question. The t-test and Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) were used to test the research hypotheses. All hypotheses were tested at 0.05 alpha level.

3 RESULTS

This research presents the result of the study. The data collected were analyzed using both descriptive and inferential statistics. For the demographic data; percentages were employed, the major research questions were answered using mean and rank order analysis, while t-test and Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) statistical tools were adopted to analyze the hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance.

3.1 Demographic Data Analyses

This section presents the results of data obtained on the respondents in frequency counts and percentages.

Table 1 Percentage Distribution of Respondents Based on Gender

Gender	Frequency	Percentage
--------	-----------	------------

Male	100	50.0
Female	100	50.0
Total	200	100

Table 1 presents the percentage distribution of respondents based on gender. The table shows the distribution of respondents by gender, the table shows that 100 (50.0%) of the respondents were male and female respectively.

Table 2 Percentage Distribution of Respondents based on Age

Age	Frequency	Percentage
18-23 Years	58	29.0
24-30 Years	64	32.0
31 Years & above	78	39.0
Total	200	100

Table 2 presents the percentage distribution of respondents based on age. The table indicates that 58 (29.0%) of the respondents are between 18-23 years, 64 (32.0%) of the respondents are between 24-30 years and 78 (39.0%) of the respondents are between 31 years and above.

Table 3 Percentage Distribution of Respondents Based on Educational Qualification

Edu. Qual.	Frequency	Percentage
SSCE	28	14.0
NCE/OND	62	31.0
First Degree/HND	95	47.5
Postgraduate	15	7.5
Total	200	100

Table 3 presents the percentage distribution of respondents based on educational qualification. the table shows that 28 (14.0%) of the respondents were SSCE holders, 62 (31.0%) of the respondents were NCE/OND holders, 95 (47.5%) of the respondents were first degree/HND holders and 15 (7.5%) of the respondents were postgraduate degree holders.

Research Question: What are the factors responsible for marital conflicts among newly married couples in Ilorin, Kwara State?

Table 4 Mean and Rank Order on the Respondents' Expression on Factors Responsible for Marital Conflicts

Item No.	As far as I am concerned, the following are factors responsible for marital conflicts:	Mean	Rank
9	friend's interference into the marital affairs of the couple	3.62	1 st
13	poor home background of either spouse	3.56	2 nd
10	lack of parenting skills	3.26	3 rd
5	inability to satisfy the sexual demands of the spouse.	3.11	4 th
14	lack of proper guidance before marriage	3.10	5 th
1	poor communication between couples	3.03	6 th
6	infidelity on the part of the couples	2.87	7 th
2	immature age at marriage	2.86	8 th
7	interference by in-laws in family matters	2.73	9 th
11	inability of the wife to conceive within a reasonable period of time	2.60	10 th
12	jealousy between spouses	2.55	11 th
3	ignorance of individual differences	2.53	12 th
8	marrying outside one's cultural boundary	2.52	13 th
19	disagreement on number of children	2.51	14 th
20	substance abuse by either of the couple	2.50	15 th
4	noticeable gap in educational attainment	2.50	15 th
16	inadequate knowledge of conflict resolution in marriage	2.47	17 th
17	disagreement on family menu	2.31	18 th
18	disagreement of financial obligation	2.25	19 th
15	disagreement on religious matters	2.14	20 th

Table 4 presents the mean and rank order of respondents' expressions on factors responsible for marital conflicts among newly married couples. The result in the table revealed that item 9 which states that friends interfere in the marital affairs of the couple was ranked 1st with a mean score of 3.62, item 13 which states that the poor home background of either spouse was ranked 2nd with a mean score of 3.56, and item 10 which states that lack of parenting skills was ranked 3rd with a mean score of 3.26. On the other end, item 17 which states that disagreement on the family menu was ranked 18th with a mean score of 2.31, item 18 which states that disagreement of financial obligation was ranked 19th with a mean score of 2.25, and item 15 which states that disagreement on religious matters was ranked 20th with a mean score of 2.14. The table indicates that most of the items have mean scores that are above the mid-cut-off point of 2.50; this indicates that the respondents attested to factors responsible for marital conflicts among newly married couples listed above.

3.2 Hypotheses Testing

Three null hypotheses were postulated and tested for this study. The hypotheses were tested using t-test and ANOVA statistical methods at 0.05 level of significance.

3.2.1 Hypothesis one

There is no significant difference in the factors responsible for marital conflicts among newly married couples in Ilorin, Kwara State based on gender.

Table 5 Mean, Standard Deviation and T-value on the Respondents' Expression of Factors Responsible for Marital Conflicts based on Gender

Gender	N	Mean	SD	df	Cal. t-value	Crit. t-value	p-value
Male	100	40.85	2.61	198	0.97	1.96	.336
Female	100	41.21	2.52				

Table 5 indicates that the calculated t-value of 0.97 is less than the critical t-value of 1.96 with a corresponding p-value of .336 which is greater than 0.05 level of significance. Since the calculated t-value is less than the critical t-value, the hypothesis which states that there is no significant difference in the factors responsible for marital conflicts among newly married couples in Ilorin, Kwara State based on gender is therefore not rejected.

3.2.2 Hypothesis two

There is no significant difference in the factors responsible for marital conflicts among newly married couples in Ilorin, Kwara State based on age.

Table 6 Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) showing the Respondents' Expression on Factors Responsible for Marital Conflicts based on Age

Source	SS	Mean Squares	Df	Cal. F-ratio	Crit. F-ratio	P-value
Between Groups	7.941	3.971	2	0.61	3.00	.546
Within Groups	1288.779	6.542	197			
Total	1296.720		199			

Table 6 indicates that the calculated F-ratio of 0.61 is less than the critical F-ratio of 3.00 with a corresponding p-value of .546 which is less than 0.05 level of significance. Since the calculated F-ratio is less than the critical F-ratio, the null hypothesis is therefore not rejected; thus, there is no significant difference in the factors responsible for marital conflicts among newly married couples in Ilorin, Kwara State based on age is therefore not rejected.

3.2.3 Hypothesis three

There is no significant difference in the factors responsible for marital conflicts among newly married couples in Ilorin, Kwara State based on educational qualification.

Table 7 Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) showing the Respondents' Expression on Factors Responsible for Marital Conflicts based on Educational Qualification

Source	SS	Mean Squares	Df	Cal.F-ratio	Crit.F-ratio	P-value
Between Groups	12.361	3.971	3	1.48	2.60	.421
Within Groups	1284.359	6.542	196			
Total	1296.720		199			

Table 7 indicates that the calculated F-ratio of 1.48 is less than the critical F-ratio of 2.60 with a corresponding p-value of .421 which is less than 0.05 level of significance. Since the calculated F-ratio is less than the critical F-ratio, the null hypothesis is therefore not rejected; thus, there is no significant difference in the factors responsible for marital conflicts among newly married couples in Ilorin, Kwara State based on educational qualification is therefore not rejected.

4 DISCUSSION

The study revealed that the factors responsible for marital conflicts among newly married couples in Ilorin, Kwara State are friend's interference in the marital affairs of the couple, poor home background of either spouse and lack of parenting skills among others. The findings were in line with Ani [2] who stressed that crises are crucial times, the turning point in a marriage, that is a decision moment that varies from person to person according to individual experiences and the way people view situations. Stressed couples may suffer inadequate experience on the dimensions of marital conflicts and therefore result in physical attacks in which the husbands in most cases exercise masculinity to perpetrate wife battering. The extent of such assault will define the enormity of wife battering perpetrated.

Another finding revealed that there was no significant difference in the factors responsible for marital conflicts among newly married couples in Ilorin, Kwara State based on gender. This was supported who stressed the lifetime pattern of intimate partner violence in women and its association with gender, age, education, and living in rural vs. urban areas.

Findings also revealed that there was no significant difference in the factors responsible for marital conflicts among newly married couples in Ilorin, Kwara State based on age. This was in line with that about 50% of women have been battered by their husbands. Shockingly, women within the first 10 years of marriage (newly married) accounted for 65% against 35% of the older. The findings corroborated those who opined that all hostile acts committed by any family member against another, spouse, parents, child, siblings, grandparents, in-laws, etc, differ in status, race, age, religion, or emotional state.

Another finding revealed that there was no significant difference in factors responsible for marital conflicts among newly married couples in Ilorin, Kwara State based on educational qualification. This was corroborated by those who posited that when there is a wide educational gap between spouses, their approaches to life will be at variance a problem may arise as the less educated person may be more superstitious, traditional, or conservative and there may be difficulty in reasoning together and when these disparities exist in wedlock it is often difficult to maintain peace and stability. Many studies have revealed a negative relationship between the education of both partners and intimate partner violence.

5 CONCLUSION

The study investigated factors responsible for marital conflicts among newly married couples in Ilorin, Kwara State. The study revealed that the factors responsible for marital conflicts among newly married couples in Ilorin, Kwara State are friends' interference in the marital affairs of the couple, poor home background of either spouse, and lack of parenting skills among others. Also, there were no significant differences in factors responsible for marital conflicts among newly married couples in Ilorin, Kwara State based on gender, age, and educational qualification.

6 RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings of this study, it is recommended that:

- i. Counsellors in collaboration with other agencies should set up campaigns on the need to prevent marital conflicts particularly denying wives the right to interact with friends, financial starvation, use of derogatory words on the wives, and inflicting physical injury (assault) and others.
- ii. The government and stakeholders in society should establish counselling centers in strategic locations where couples can be educated on different patterns of marital conflicts and how to prevent perpetrating them.
- iii. Counsellors and other agencies should synergize to educate couples on how to get committed, avoid conflicting on the issue of fertility, and develop a lasting attraction to their wives in order to prevent domestic violence.
- iv. While sensitizing society on factors responsible for marital conflicts, special attention should be paid to the educational qualification of the individuals because this could bring variation in their preparation.

COMPETING INTERESTS

The authors have no relevant financial or non-financial interests to disclose.

REFERENCES

- [1] Vincent-Osaghae G. Marriage and the Nigerian family. In Idahosa, S. Nigerian peoples and culture. (Benin: Benson Idahosa University. G.S.T. Unit), 2017.
- [2] Ani D M. Failed marriage crises in Nigeria: A case study of married indigenes of Benin City. Unpublished thesis, University of Benin, 2019.
- [3] Rubio J H. A Christian theology of marriage and family. Paulist Press, 2013.
- [4] Ezeokoli R N. An empirical assessment of the utilization of voluntary counselling and testing services among university students. Babcock University Journal of Education (BUJED), 2015, 3: 23-31.

- [5] Grych JH, Fincham FD. *Inter-parental conflict and child development: Theory, research, and applications*. New York: Cambridge University Press, 2011.
- [6] White JM, Klein DM. *Family theories* (2nd ed.). California: Sage, 2012.
- [7] Whiteman SD, McHale SM, Crouter AC. Longitudinal changes in marital relationships: The role of offsprings pubertal development. *Journal of Marriage and Family*, 2007, 69: 1005-1020.
- [8] Onyechi K C. *Some correlates of family stability among couples in Anambra State*. Unpublished Ph.D. Thesis. Department of Educational Foundations. University of Nigeria, Nsukka, 2013.
- [9] Chris M H, Tekin E. *The impact of child care subsidies on child well being: evidence from geographic variation in the distance to social service agencies* (working paper, National Bureau of Economic Research, Cambridge, MA, 2010, August.
- [10] Dew J P, Dakin J. Financial disagreements and marital conflict tactics. *Journal of Financial Therapy*, 2011, 2(1): 2342.
- [11] Eva Melis, Victoria Esquivel-Korsiak. *Engaging citizens through mediation in Kaduna State, Nigeria*. the World Bank, IBRD-IDA, 2016.
- [12] Samani S. The important factors of marital conflict between married students in Shiraz University. *Journal of Family Research*, 2008, 3(3): 657–68.
- [13] Okorie G O. *Relationship between personal factors and marital conflict resolution strategies among married people in Enugu State, Nigeria*. A thesis submitted to the Department of Guidance and Counselling Unit Faculty of Education, University of Nigeria Nsukka, 2009.