SOURCES OF MARITAL CONFLICT AMONG THE NEWLY MARRIED COUPLES IN OBIO/AKPOR LOCAL GOVERNMENT OF RIVERS STATE

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Sources of Marital Conflict among Newly Married ozor & Amadi

SOURCES OF MARITAL CONFLICT AMONG THE NEWLY MARRIED COUPLES IN OBI- AKPOR LOCAL GOVERNMENT OF RIVERS STATE

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Abstract
The study investigated the sources of marital conflict among newly married in Obio/Akpor Local Government Area of Rivers State. One research question and two hypotheses were formulated to guide the study. The population of the study comprised all the newly married couples in the area. Stratified random sampling technique was used in selecting sample for the study. A sample of 200 newly married couples was drawn for the study. The instrument for data collection was a self made questionnaire titled "Marital conflicts Inventory (MCI)". The research question was analysed using mean score while the hypotheses were tested using independent t-test at 0.05 level of significance. The results showed that: (1) lack of effective communication, sexual dissatisfaction, financial difficulties, infidelity, influence of in-laws, teenage/early marriage, abandonment, poor socio-economic background and difference in the level of education among couples results in marital conflict. (2) There is no significant difference in the sources of marital conflict among the newly married couples with regard to their socio-economic background (table 2). (3) There is no significant difference in the sources of marital conflict among the newly married couples with regard to their educational background in the area (table 3). Based on the findings of the study, recommendations were made while suggestions for further studies were stated.

Background to the Study
Marriage as an institution is a universal phenomenon, which plays a vital role in the society and life itself. 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 may be as a result of...
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differences in opinions, values, needs, desires and habits. Conflicts and disagreements are inevitable in every close relationship, including the newly married couples. It is a normal part of married life, and some degree of it is actually necessary to keep a marriage dynamic rather than static (Ashford, Lecroy and Cortle, 2006). When two people come together in marriage, conflict is bound to happen because each person has had different life experience, and undoubtedly has different expectations of marriage from his or her spouse; therefore each person is going to react differently to life challenges (Krudek, 1995). From the beginning, virtually all the couples want their marriage to succeed, unfortunately, some marriages have run into trouble and not all the couples were able to salvage their hopes and dreams. For this reason marriage has been said to be a very difficult task, if not the most impossible social enterprise. It brings both joy and excruciating pains. A strong and loving marriage as 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 says (Okoli, 2001). Marriage is the first institution in the world and is also the oldest. It is said to be an arrangement of social structure which results in the establishment of a relationship legal, customary or religious between a man and his woman for the prolongation of family root through procreation and sharing in various degree of other acceptable relationship norms (Ofoegbu, 2002). However, marital conflict is the existence of high level of disagreement, stressful and hostile interactions between spouses, disrespect and verbal abuse. It can stem out of unmet needs, wants and desires that is, when one person needs or wants something badly enough, without consideration for the capabilities, plans or goals of his spouse and the other person is unable to meet that need, resentment grows and the situation will become ripe for open conflict (Goftman, 1994). Much of the researchers conducted on marital conflict proved that marital conflicts are very common among couples especially during the first six months to one year of their marriage. The reason is because the trend entering into marriage is always with exhilarating experience not knowing that the journey through marriage life is full of darkness and delight (Ebhohime, 2006). Many newly married couples find it so difficult to adjust in marriage. This is because...
and habits. Conflicts close relationship, normal part of married to keep a marriage (Curtie, 2006). When this bound to happen experience, and age from his or her differently to life, virtually all the opportunities, some couples were able to marriage has been most impossible social gains. A strong and as in life and also a problematic one can says (Okoli, 2001). is also the oldest. It which results in the religious between family root through other acceptable marital conflict is the peaceful and hostile marital abuse. It can that is, when one enough, without of his spouse and involvement grows and gets (Goffman, 1994). in literature conflict proved that many disciplines especially during their marriage. The reason is age is always with exhilarating new through marriage life is full. Many new names in marriage. From this it is

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involves adapting to the myth and expectations of the marriage learning how to effectively communicate with deriving from satisfaction spouse, relationship and learning how to deal with conflict (Crych, and Fincham, 2001). In the time past, people do not go into marriage with hurry or without the approval from both parents. In these days, it requires the entire elders and kindred of the bride and grooms to come together in agreement before a marriage could be contacted. During that time newly married couples normally live together till death and the cases of marital conflict were really heard while in this recent time, the opposite is what is obtainable as the marriage institution is gradual it losing place of pride in the society due to conflict and disagreement which can lead to separation or better still divorce which has become the trend in contemporary time (Odocha, 2004). Nevertheless, the focus of this research project is to investigate and ascertain the possible sources of marital conflict among the newly married couples in Obio-Akpor Local Government Area of Rivers State.

Research Question

This research question has been formulated to guide this study;
1. What are the sources of marital conflict among the newly married couples in Obio-Akpor Local Government Area of Rivers State?

Hypothesis

The following hypothesis will guide the conduct of this study.
1. There is no significant difference in the sources of marital conflict among the newly married couples with regard to their socio-economic background in Obio/Akpor Local Government Area of Rivers State.

ii. There is no significant difference in the sources of marital conflict among the newly married couples with regard to their educational background in Obio/Akpor Local Government Area of Rivers State.

Definition of Terms

Marriage: Marriage helps to do with the socially legitimate and legal union between a husband and wife.
Sources of Marital Conflict among Newly Married Couples

Conflict: This expresses a situation of serious disagreement, argument and disharmony among people.

Marital Conflict: It is referred to serious disagreement, instability or disharmony between husband and wife.

Couples: This is used to describe two people especially husband and wife.

Divorce: This can be defined as the legal ending of a marriage, so that both husband and wife can freely go into another marriage.

Separation: This is a situation where a husband and wife decide to live apart while they are still legally married.

Newly Married Couples: This is used to describe husband and wife that married newly or husband and wife that are not more than one year old in marriage.

Research Design
This study used descriptive survey design to investigate the sources of marital conflict among the newly married couples in Obio/Akpor Local Government Area of Rivers State because this research work was aimed at finding out the opinions and belief of the newly married couples with conflict.

Population of the Study
The population of this study comprised all the newly married couples in Obio/Akpor Local Government Area.

Sampling Technique
The sampling technique that was used for this study was the stratified random sampling techniques to reflect all the variables of the study.

Sample of the Study
The sample consisted of 200 couples randomly selected from four communities in Obio/Akpor Local Government Area, Rumuolumeni, Rumuomasi, Rumuokwuta and Rumuepirikom.

Instrument for Data Collection
This study used self-formulated questionnaire that was divided into two sections. Section A was to elicit information on the couples biographical data, while section B was to measure sources of conflict. The couples are to rate statements on a 5-point scale with frequency (SA), Agree (A), Disagree (D), and Not Applicable (NA).

Validation of the Instrument
The instrument was tested on 20 respondents. The instrument was considered valid by the conclusion of the study.

Method of Data Analysis
The researcher used Pearson correlation, while independent t-test was used to determine the level of significance.

Presentation and Analysis
What are the sources of marital conflict among newly married couples in Obio/Akpor Local Government Area?

Table 1: Mean analysis

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>S/N</th>
<th>Sources of Conflict</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Without communication</td>
<td>impossible married couple, loving relationship</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>The primary source among newly married couples lies in the couples not being effectively equipped.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
serious disagreement, so people especially husbands are unable to describe the roles these are not more than one person to investigate the sources of marital divorce or cheaters. A husband and wife decide to end a marriage, so that are not more than one

on to investigate the sources of marital conflict among newly married couples in Obio/Akpor because this research work is and belief of the newly

Validation of the Instrument
The instrument was validated by the researcher's supervisor after its development.

Administration of the Instrument
The instrument was administered directly by the researcher to the respondents. The instruction guiding the filling of all the sections of the instrument was explained for clarity. Collection was done after the conclusion of the filling of the questionnaire accordingly.

Method of Data Analysis
The researcher used mean score to analyze the research questions while independent t-test was used to test the hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance.

Presentation and Analysis of Research Question
What are the sources of marital conflict among the newly married couples in Obio/Akpor Local government Area of Rivers State?

Table 1: Mean analysis of Sources of Marital conflict.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>S/N</th>
<th>Sources of Marital Conflict</th>
<th>Responses</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>X</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>CM</th>
<th>Result</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Without effective communication, it is impossible for the newly married couples to maintain a loving relationship.</td>
<td>200</td>
<td>3.56</td>
<td>1.21</td>
<td>2.5</td>
<td>Accept</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>The prime cause of conflict among newly married couples lies in the inability of the couples to communicate effectively.</td>
<td>200</td>
<td>3.15</td>
<td>1.19</td>
<td>2.5</td>
<td>Accept</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Sources of Marital Conflict among Newly Married Couples

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sources of Conflict</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Ignoring non-verbal communication</td>
<td>Can end up tearing newly married couples apart</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Financial difficulties</td>
<td>Are responsible for fighting and squabbling among some newly married couples</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Inability of the newly married couples to satisfy each other sexually</td>
<td>Always amount to marital conflicts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Financial hardship</td>
<td>Affects couples negatively at the early year of their marriage</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Inadequate understanding of sexuality among the newly married couples</td>
<td>Most crises among newly married couples develop out of sexual dissatisfaction</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Financial crises</td>
<td>Why some newly married couples engage in extramarital affair</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Financial difficulties</td>
<td>Result in infidelity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Financial difficulties</td>
<td>Denial of sexual benefits</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Most crises among newly married couples</td>
<td>Engage in extramarital affair</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. Financial difficulties</td>
<td>Amount to marital conflicts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. Financial difficulties</td>
<td>Can result in infidelity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12. Financial difficulties</td>
<td>Denial of sexual benefits</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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Couples who do not take time to discuss small issues grow into big ones.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th>Accept</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>200</td>
<td>3.68</td>
<td>1.23</td>
<td>2.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>200</td>
<td>3.64</td>
<td>1.22</td>
<td>2.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>200</td>
<td>2.89</td>
<td>1.14</td>
<td>2.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3.06</td>
<td>1.20</td>
<td>2.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>200</td>
<td>2.92</td>
<td>1.16</td>
<td>2.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>200</td>
<td>3.65</td>
<td>1.23</td>
<td>2.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>200</td>
<td>2.91</td>
<td>1.16</td>
<td>2.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>200</td>
<td>2.66</td>
<td>1.12</td>
<td>2.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>200</td>
<td>3.01</td>
<td>1.18</td>
<td>2.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>200</td>
<td>2.96</td>
<td>1.16</td>
<td>2.5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Sources of Marital Conflict among Newly Married**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th>Accept</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>13. Infidelity is the most hurtful and heart wrecking aspect of marital conflict.</td>
<td>200</td>
<td>2.88</td>
<td>1.14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14. Infidelity causes marital disruption and distrust.</td>
<td>200</td>
<td>2.97</td>
<td>1.17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15. Extramarital affair has nothing to do with marital conflict.</td>
<td>200</td>
<td>1.46</td>
<td>0.58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16. Infidelity increases separation and divorce proneness</td>
<td>200</td>
<td>3.04</td>
<td>1.19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17. In-laws and relations interference have a negative effects on marriage.</td>
<td>200</td>
<td>3.49</td>
<td>1.15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18. Many new marriages have crumbled as a result of in-laws interference.</td>
<td>200</td>
<td>3.53</td>
<td>1.21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19. Extending help to your relations without the consent of your spouse can lead to marital conflict.</td>
<td>200</td>
<td>2.82</td>
<td>1.13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20. Giving unequal preference to your in-laws can cause marital conflict.</td>
<td>200</td>
<td>2.79</td>
<td>1.12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21. Teenage couples always have problems in their marriage as a result of their age.</td>
<td>200</td>
<td>2.57</td>
<td>1.09</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22. Marriage couples are always faced with the problems of immaturity and inexperience.</td>
<td>200</td>
<td>2.98</td>
<td>1.17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23. Teenage couples are always faced with the problems of intolerance and lack of self control.</td>
<td>200</td>
<td>2.85</td>
<td>1.15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24. Early marriage has nothing to do with marital conflict.</td>
<td>200</td>
<td>1.83</td>
<td>0.79</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Newly married couples always have problem of intimacy, if they don't spend much time together.

I feel less valued if my spouse does not spend much time with me.

Time apart can cause a newly married couples feel abandoned.

Feeling of loneliness is a source of marital conflict among newly married couples.

Table 1 showed that 26 items out of the 28 items identified as sources of marital conflict were accepted by the respondents while two items 15 and 24 were rejected. This is because their mean (X) were less than the criterion mean (2.5). Item 15 has a mean (X=1.46) while item 24 have a mean (X=1.83). A closer observation of the Table 1 showed that item 3 has the highest mean (X=3.68), followed by item 8 (X=3.65) and then item 4 (X=3.64).

Hypothesis One
There is no significant difference in the source of marital conflict among the newly married couples with regard to their socio-economic Background in Obio/Akpor Local Government Area of Rivers State.

Table 2: T-test analysis of responses with regard to socio-economic Background.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Socio-Economic Background</th>
<th>n</th>
<th>X</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>t-cal</th>
<th>t-crit</th>
<th>Result</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>High</td>
<td>76</td>
<td>33.77</td>
<td>4.32</td>
<td>398</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1.764</td>
<td>Not significant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low</td>
<td>124</td>
<td>34.96</td>
<td>5.23</td>
<td></td>
<td>1.96</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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Table 2 show that the calculated t-value (-1.764) is less than the critical t-value (1.96) at df of 198 and 0.05 level of significance. The null hypothesis is therefore accepted. The result is that there is no significant difference in the sources of marital conflict among newly married couples with regard to their socio-economic background in Obio/Akpor Local Government Area of Rivers State.

Hypothesis Two
There is no significant difference in the source of marital conflict among the newly married couples with regard to their educational background in Obio/Akpor Local Government Area of Rivers State.

Table 3: t-test analysis of responses with regard to Educational Background

Table 3 show that the calculated t-value (-0.950) is less than the critical t-value (1.96) at df of 198 and 0.05 level of significance. The null hypothesis is therefore accepted. The result is that there is not significant difference in the source of marital conflict among newly married couples with regard to their Educational Background in Obio/Akpor Local Government Area of Rivers State.

Discussion of Result and Finding
The finding of research question (table 1) showed that sources of marital conflict include: lack of effective communication, sexual dissatisfaction, financial difficulties, infidelity, influence of in-laws, teenage/Early marriage, abandonment, socio-economic background and difference in the level of education. This finding does not limit or restrict the sources of marital conflict to these factors identified above for other factors such as pressure of work; ill-health etc can still lead to marital conflict. This fin dig is in agreement with William (1998), Nancy (1989), Veblacker (2003), Thomas & Danna (2006) Odoch (2004), Fujuno (2008), Okoli (2011), Kevin and Hugh (19999)
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who also listed some of the factors identified in this study as being responsible for marital conflict among the newly married in Obio/Akpor Local Government Area of Rivers State. The finding of hypothesis one show that there is no significant difference in the sources of marital conflict among the newly married couples with regard to their socio-economic background in Obio/Akpor Local Government Area of Rivers State (Table 2). This is because the calculated t-value (-1.764) is less than the critical t-Value (.96) at df of 398 and 0.05 level of significance. This because the sources of marital conflict identified in this study applied to both couples form high and low socio-economic background. Such factors as lack of effective communication, sexual dissatisfaction, financial difficulties, infidelity, influence of in-laws, abandonment, socio-economic background and difference in level of education can lead to marital conflict among newly married in Obio/Akpor Local Government Area of Rivers State. The marriage of newly married couples from the high and low socio-economic background is exposed to marital conflict. Apart from the source identified in this study, pressure of work (as a result of persistent travels) influence of friends, ideological differences, incompatibility, dressing pattern are some other sources of marital conflict. This findings is in disagreement with Frisby (2008), James (2009) an Coudmanson (2007) who explained that newly married couples from low socio-economic background are exposed to marital conflict than newly married couples form high socio-economic background.

The findings of hypothesis two (table 3) shows that there is no significant difference in the sources of marital conflict among the newly married couples with regards to their education background in Obio/Akpor Local Government Area of Rivers State. The sources of marital conflict identified in this study applies to both couples who have spouse that is highly educated etc. When a man is more educated than the wife, this brings respect and submission. It is only in very rare cases that the wife may be more educated. In such cases the wife still respects the man as the head of the home. Such home is built on mutual understanding of both parties. There is always a balance somewhere. Thus, the findings of hypothesis two is in disagreement with (2002).

Summary
This research on newly married in Obio/Akpor Local Government Area of Rivers State. A stratified random structured questionnaire data collection method was used. The study presented the data generated from the study above; (1) There is no significant difference in the marital conflict among the newly married Local Government Area of Rivers State. (2) There is no significant difference in the marital conflict among the newly married Local Government Area of Rivers State. (3) There is no significant difference in the marital conflict among the newly married Local Government Area of Rivers State.

Conclusion
From the findings, various sources of marital conflict among the newly married couples in Obio/Akpor Local Government Area of Rivers State. The finding shows that there is no significant difference in the marital conflict among the newly married couples with regards to their socio-economic background. Such factors as lack of effective communication, sexual dissatisfaction, financial difficulties, infidelity, influence of in-laws, abandonment, socio-economic background and difference in level of education can lead to marital conflict among newly married in Obio/Akpor Local Government Area of Rivers State. The marriage of newly married couples from the high and low socio-economic background is exposed to marital conflict. Apart from the source identified in this study, pressure of work (as a result of persistent travels) influence of friends, ideological differences, incompatibility, dressing pattern are some other sources of marital conflict. This findings is in disagreement with Frisby (2008), James (2009) an Coudmanson (2007) who explained that newly married couples from low socio-economic background are exposed to marital conflict than newly married couples form high socio-economic background.

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Factors identified in this study as being among the newly married in Area of Rivers State. The finding of is no significant difference in the among the newly married couples with background in Obio/Akpor Local (Table 2). This is because the than the critical t-Value (.96) at dence. This because the sources of study applied to both couples form background. Such factors as lack of dissatisfaction, financial difficulties, abandonment, socio-economic level of education can lead to marital Obio/Akpor Local Government Area newly married couples from the background is exposed to marital identified in this study, pressure of travels) influence of friends, ability, dressing pattern are some This findings is in disagreement with odmanson (2007) who explained socio-economic background are newly married couples form high level of education (table 1).

(2) There is no significant difference in the sources of marital conflict among the newly married couples with regard to their socio-economic background in the area (Table 2).

(3) There is no significant difference in the sources of marital conflict among the newly married couples with regard to their educational background in Obio/Akpor Local Government Area of Rivers State.

Conclusion
From the findings of this study, the researcher concludes that various sources of marital conflict exist among the newly married couples in Obio/Akpor Local Government Area, there is no significant difference in the sources of marital conflict among the newly married couples with regard to their socio-economic background and there is no significant difference in the sources of marital conflict among the newly married couples with regard to their educational background in Obio/Akpor Local Government Area of Rivers State.


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Recommendation

The researcher proposed the following recommendations.
(1) Newly married couples should ensure that they are open to their spouse rather than hiding secrets.
(2) There should be effective communication between the couples to avoid misunderstanding.
(3) Newly married couples should go for medical examination as soon as sexual dissatisfaction is observed as well as eat quality food and exercise.
(4) Couples should identify ways they can contribute to supporting the family rather than leaving only one partner to provide the needed finances.
(5) Understanding the future of the spouse will help in avoiding the temptation of infidelity. In addition, love for each other will help also to overcome the temptation of infidelity.
(6) Teenage or early marriage should be discouraged as marriage is not for children but for mature minds.
(7) As much as practicable, couples should try to be in each other company especially during outings. This may help to curb abandonment.
(8) The couples should learn to settle their problems by themselves. This will reduce the interference of in-laws in the marriage.
(9) Couples should encourage themselves to update themselves or acquire more skills and knowledge. This may help to bridge the gap in levels of education.
(10) As soon as practicable, couples should go for counseling.
(11) Couples should not hesitate to say sorry where the needed arises. Humility will bring unity and peace in marriage.

Limitations of the study

The limitations of this study are in the following areas:
(1) The exact population of the respondents for the study could not be ascertained or provided in the study. Consequently, an estimated population was used for the study. This may have affected the composition of the sample.
(2) The nature of the topic and problem being investigated made some respondents to be shy and unwilling to fill the questionnaire. It is possible the questionnaire did not gain information as it relates to the study.

References


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recommendations. To ensure that they are open to settings, communication between the spouses will help in avoiding adaption of infidelity. They should be discouraged as mature minds. They should try to be in each outing. This may help to settle their problems by interference of in-laws in selves to update themselves pledge. This may help to go for counseling. We are sorry where the needed peace in marriage.

References


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