International Journal on Integrated Education

https://journals.researchparks.org/index.php/IJIE

e-ISSN : 2620 - 3502
p-ISSN : 2615 - 3785

The Relationship between Family Tie and Marital Stability in Ohafia Local Government Area

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Abstract: In Ohafia Local Government Area, the dynamic interplay between family ties and marital stability presents a complex problem. This region, characterized by its strong cultural and familial bonds, raises questions about how these deep-rooted family connections impact the resilience and longevity of marriages. The intricate relationships within families in Ohafia, including extended family influence, cultural expectations, and traditional values, potentially exert significant effects on marital harmony and stability. Understanding these relationships is crucial for addressing marital challenges and enhancing family wellbeing in the community. The aim of the study is to explore the relationship between family ties and marital stability in Ohafia Local Government Area and its implications. This study utilizes Family Systems Theory to examine the influence of familial relationships on marital stability. A correlational research design was employed, with a sample size of 400 determined by Taro Yamene's formula and selected through random sampling across towns and villages in Ohafia. Data analysis involved Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient using SPSS version 25. The study found a significant correlation between family ties and marital stability, underscoring the influence of familial relationships on marital outcomes. The results affirm Family Systems Theory, suggesting that family dynamics, including extended family involvement, deeply affect marital satisfaction and longevity in Ohafia. It is recommended to implement family-oriented educational programs and counseling services that focus on enhancing understanding and management of familial influences on marriages. Further research should explore intervention strategies that can strengthen marital bonds within the context of family dynamics in Ohafia.

Keywords: Family Ties, Marital Stability, Marital Communication, Sexual Satisfaction, Ethnicity.

Introduction

The Relationship Between Family Tie and Marital Stability" is an insightful exploration into how the intricate web of family relationships impacts the enduring nature of marriages. This research delves into the nuanced ways that familial connections, encompassing cultural, emotional, and social bonds, play a crucial role in the strength and resilience of marital partnerships. Family consists of a group of persons bound together by the ties of marriage either blood or adoption. It is made up of a single household interacting with each other in their respective social positions, usually those of spouses, parents, children and siblings. The family is not differentiated from the marriage pair, but the essence of the family group is the parent-child relationship, which may be absent from many marriage pairs. Family consists of an adult and his/her offspring most commonly it consists of two married adults, usually a man and a woman (always from different lineages and not related by blood along with their offspring, usually living in a private and separate dwelling. Sometimes the family includes not only the parents and their

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e-ISSN : 26203502
p-ISSN : 26153785

unmarried children living at home but also children that have married their spouses and their offspring and possibly elderly dependents as well, such an arrangement is called an extended family.

Families have a genuine commitment to each other, which is shown through: feeling safe and secure with each other. Trusting each other and keeping promises. Education starts in the family. Family members are people who mean so much for each other that they are willing to do anything for themselves. Family members have much love, joy and happiness for each other. Individuals / children, grow, learn and thrive together. Family members stays respectfully close and playful. Chooses laughter and they do things together. In families, parents provide love and affection towards their children and towards themselves, whereby parents teach their children how to love and respect people.

A family relationship is based on personal ties between persons. These are most commonly blood ties however you may also be bound to your family members through an officially recognized relationship such as marriage or adoption, or because you live together. These are legally recognized family. Family ties is important because they help children feel secure and loved, which gives them confidence to explore their world, try new things and learn. Family ties makes it easier for families to solve problems resolve conflict and respect differences of opinion. Healthy family relationship encourages the spread of good habits from the parents to their children and teaches us new ways of thinking acting and feeling. The organization of families has become very diverse these days. A Family is traditionally defined as a married couple and the children occupies one household, where members can look after one another. The purpose of families is to maintain the well-being of its members and of society.

Marital Stability means remaining legally married without divorce, physical separation or legal separation. Marital Stability usually indicates increased well-being, whereas marital changes are amongst the most stressful life events (Carr and springer, 2020). Some socio – economic factors that affects the quality of marriage with regards to marital Stability or harmonious relationship between couples includes: Income level of couples, occupational status, educational qualification and social status of couples. Things that can make marriage to stable includes, expressing gratitude working selflessly, laughing together, and nurturing faith. Marriage can be challenging for anyone at any stage of the relationship. The timely intervention by the elderly family members helps in sustaining the marriage that may likely break-up. The family ties are stronger among Africans than those in the western world. The communal philosophy brotherhood is solidifying forces among the Africans. Spouses' emotional ties to family early in marriage are linked to marital outcomes but little is known about how these ties affects marital stability and whether these effects very from by race and gender.

A great deal of research has found that in early marriage, couples are intricately tied to their family members and are influenced by important connection social interactions, and socialization process within those family networks (Sullivan & Davila, 2010). The convey model of social relations (Kahn and Antonucci, 2015) argues that couples are embedded within family networks that can either facilitate or hamper the marital relationships over time. Yet research examining whether their early family ties are beneficial or detrimental to the inconsistent findings (Helms, et al. 2016). Despite these profound impact of family ties on marital stability, little is known little about the link between close family ties in the first few years of marriage and marital stability at later points in time and whether these effects vary by race and gender especially in Stability in Ohafia Local Government Area. Therefore, the study examines the relational between family ties and marital stability in local Government Area.

Objectives

The aim of the study is to examine the relational between family ties and marital stability in local Government Area. Consequently, the following hypotheses were stated to guide the study:

1. There is no significant relationship between ethnicity and marital stability.

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e-ISSN : 26203502
p-ISSN : 26153785

2. There is no significant relationship between in-laws influence and marital stability.
3. There is no significant relationship between sexual satisfaction and marital stability.
4. There is no significant relationship between marital communication and marital stability.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Family Ties

Family ties represent the complex web of relationships and emotional bonds that connect members of a family. These ties encompass the intricate interactions and relationships that exist between parents, children, siblings, and extended family members. The concept of family ties is central to understanding the dynamics within families and how these relationships influence individuals' development, behavior, and social interactions. Family ties have been a subject of interest in various disciplines, including sociology, psychology, and anthropology, each offering unique insights into the nature and implications of these connections (Bowlby, 1988).

From a sociological perspective, family ties are seen as foundational elements of society. They provide the primary context for socialization, where individuals learn cultural norms, values, and behaviors (Parsons, 1955). These ties are not just limited to blood relations but also include adopted, step, and in-law relationships, reflecting the diversity of family structures. Sociologists emphasize the role of family ties in shaping social identity and belonging, as family units are often the first groups to which individuals feel a sense of attachment and loyalty. Moreover, the strength and nature of family ties can significantly influence social mobility and opportunities, as families provide essential support systems and resources that can impact educational and career trajectories.

In psychology, family ties are examined in terms of their impact on individual development and well-being. Attachment theory, developed by John Bowlby, highlights the importance of early family bonds in shaping individuals' emotional and psychological development (Bowlby, 1988). Secure family ties in childhood are linked to positive outcomes in adulthood, such as stable relationships and mental health. Conversely, strained or disrupted family ties can contribute to various psychological challenges. Family ties also play a critical role in providing emotional support and coping mechanisms during times of stress or crisis, underscoring their importance in maintaining mental and emotional health.

Culturally, family ties are influenced by societal norms and values, which dictate the roles and expectations within family units. Different cultures have varying perceptions and practices regarding family structures and relationships, reflecting the diversity in how family ties are formed and maintained. Evolutionary psychologists also explore family ties, suggesting that these bonds have developed as a means of ensuring survival and the passing on of genes (Trivers, 1971). This perspective posits that the inherent drive to form and maintain family bonds is rooted in biological imperatives, although these bonds are also shaped by social and environmental factors. Family ties, therefore, are multifaceted and integral to human society, influencing a wide range of social, psychological, and cultural phenomena. They form the backbone of social structures and have profound implications for individual development and societal functioning.

Ethnicity

Ethnicity is a multifaceted concept that plays a significant role in shaping individual identities and social dynamics. It encompasses aspects of shared culture, language, history, and heritage, distinguishing one group of people from another. Ethnicity goes beyond biological or physical characteristics; it is primarily about shared cultural practices and beliefs that are passed down through generations. According to Jenkins (2011), ethnicity is a form of social identity that emerges from and gives meaning to interactions between individuals and groups. This perspective highlights that ethnicity is not just a static or inherent characteristic but is shaped by social processes and experiences. The understanding of ethnicity has evolved over time,

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e-ISSN : 26203502
p-ISSN : 26153785

reflecting changes in societal attitudes and the complexities of multicultural societies.

Ethnicity is closely linked to cultural identity, as it encompasses elements such as language, traditions, customs, and shared historical experiences. Phinney (2010) emphasizes that ethnic identity is a crucial component of an individual's self-concept, derived from knowledge of and attachment to a specific cultural group. This sense of belonging can influence personal values, attitudes, and behaviors. In multicultural societies, individuals may navigate multiple ethnic identities, leading to a complex interplay between assimilation, acculturation, and the preservation of distinct cultural traditions. Ethnicity can also intersect with other identity factors, including race, nationality, and religion, further influencing an individual's experience and social interactions.

In sociopolitical contexts, ethnicity can be a source of unity and division. Horowitz (2014) argues that ethnicity can foster a sense of solidarity and collective well-being within a group. However, it can also lead to social divisions and conflict, especially in situations where ethnic groups compete for resources, power, or recognition. Governments and institutions often grapple with the challenge of managing ethnic diversity, striving to ensure representation, equality, and harmonious coexistence among different ethnic groups. Additionally, globalization and migration have introduced new dynamics to ethnicity, leading to more diverse and interconnected societies. As a result, understanding ethnicity's role in contemporary societies is crucial for promoting social cohesion and addressing issues of inequality and discrimination.

Sexual Satisfaction

Sexual satisfaction is a critical component of personal well-being and relational health, encompassing a broad spectrum of experiences, emotions, and perceptions related to sexual activity and intimacy. In recent years, research has increasingly focused on understanding this concept not just as a physical experience, but as an intricate interplay of psychological, emotional, relational, and physiological factors (Mark, 2012). Sexual satisfaction is recognized as a key factor in the overall quality of life and relationship satisfaction, influencing aspects of mental health, physical health, and interpersonal dynamics.

The psychological and emotional dimensions of sexual satisfaction involve more than just the physical act of sex. They encompass feelings of closeness, emotional bonding, and mutual respect between partners (Brezsnyak & Whisman, 2010). Emotional intimacy and effective communication about sexual needs and desires are crucial for achieving a satisfying sexual relationship. Research has shown that emotional satisfaction in a relationship is strongly correlated with sexual satisfaction, suggesting that the quality of the emotional connection between partners can significantly influence their sexual experiences. Furthermore, individual psychological factors such as body image, self-esteem, and past experiences also play a pivotal role in shaping one's sexual satisfaction.

From a physical standpoint, sexual satisfaction is influenced by various health-related factors, including physical fitness, absence of chronic illness, and hormonal balance (Smith et al., 2013). Additionally, sexual function, encompassing aspects like desire, arousal, and orgasm, is crucial in determining sexual satisfaction. As individuals age, changes in physical health can impact sexual functioning, thereby affecting satisfaction levels. Moreover, the advent of medical treatments and therapies for sexual dysfunctions has opened new avenues for improving sexual health and satisfaction, highlighting the importance of addressing physiological factors in achieving fulfilling sexual experiences.

Sociocultural factors also significantly influence sexual satisfaction. Contemporary society's increasing openness towards discussing sexuality, coupled with a greater understanding of diverse sexual orientations and practices, has broadened the dialogue around what constitutes fulfilling sexual experiences (Vannier & O'Sullivan, 2010). Cultural norms, media portrayals of sexuality, and personal beliefs significantly shape individual expectations and experiences of sex. In addition, the rise of digital technology and online platforms has impacted how individuals

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e-ISSN : 26203502
p-ISSN : 26153785

learn about and engage in sexual activities, influencing modern perspectives on sexual satisfaction.

Marital Communication

Marital communication is a critical aspect of any marital relationship, encompassing the various ways in which spouses interact, share information, express feelings, and resolve conflicts. Effective communication in marriage is often seen as a cornerstone of relationship satisfaction and longevity (Noller & Feeney, 2010). It involves not just the content of what is communicated but also how it is conveyed, including verbal and non-verbal cues, listening skills, and the ability to empathize with and understand the partner's perspective. The quality of communication between spouses can significantly influence the health of the marital relationship, affecting everything from everyday decision-making to emotional intimacy and conflict resolution.

Effective marital communication involves several key components, including openness, honesty, empathy, and active listening. Openness and honesty are fundamental in building trust and understanding within the marital relationship (Johnson, 2013). Empathy allows spouses to relate to each other's feelings and viewpoints, fostering deeper emotional connections. Active listening, where each partner attentively listens and responds to the other, is crucial for ensuring that both partners feel heard and valued. However, marital communication can be challenging, with common obstacles including misunderstandings, differences in communication styles, and unresolved conflicts. These challenges can lead to a breakdown in communication, causing feelings of frustration, resentment, and emotional distance. Overcoming these challenges often requires conscious effort from both partners to understand and adapt to each other's communication styles and needs.

The impact of communication on marital satisfaction is well-documented, with studies showing a strong correlation between effective communication and relationship fulfillment (Stanley et al., 2010). Poor communication can lead to unresolved conflicts and decreased relationship satisfaction, while healthy communication practices can enhance intimacy, mutual understanding, and overall marital happiness. Strategies for improving marital communication include engaging in regular, uninterrupted conversations, practicing empathy and active listening, and learning to manage and resolve conflicts constructively. Additionally, seeking external support such as couples therapy or communication workshops can be beneficial, especially for addressing deep-rooted communication issues. Ultimately, nurturing effective communication skills is a continuous process that can significantly contribute to the strength and resilience of the marital bond.

Marital Stability

Marital stability is a multifaceted concept that goes beyond the mere duration of a marriage to encompass the quality and endurance of the marital relationship over time. It involves aspects of mutual satisfaction, commitment, and the ability of a couple to navigate challenges and changes together. Marital stability is a significant area of study within relationship psychology and sociology, as it is considered a cornerstone of family structure and societal well-being (Amato, 2010). The stability of a marriage is influenced by a range of factors, including communication, conflict resolution, emotional connection, and external stressors. Understanding these factors is crucial for fostering enduring and fulfilling marital relationships.

Several key factors contribute to marital stability, with effective communication being one of the most critical (Gottman & Levenson, 2012). The ability of spouses to share thoughts, feelings, and needs in a respectful and understanding manner significantly enhances relationship satisfaction and resilience. Conflict resolution skills are also essential; couples who manage disagreements constructively tend to have more stable marriages. Emotional intimacy, characterized by deep affection, mutual respect, and shared values, strengthens the marital bond. Furthermore, external factors such as financial stability, social support networks, and life stressors can impact marital stability. Couples who navigate these external challenges

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e-ISSN : 26203502
p-ISSN : 26153785

successfully often find their marriages strengthened as a result.

To enhance marital stability, couples can engage in various strategies that strengthen their relationship. Regular, open, and honest communication is vital for maintaining a strong connection and resolving issues effectively (Markman et al., 2010). Investing time in the relationship, such as through shared activities and date nights, can reinforce emotional intimacy. Additionally, developing strong coping strategies for handling external stressors, like financial pressures or work-related stress, can prevent these challenges from negatively impacting the marriage. Seeking professional help, such as couples therapy, can be beneficial, especially in addressing complex or persistent issues. Ultimately, marital stability is fostered through continuous effort and commitment from both partners to nurture and grow their relationship.

Family

The concept of family has evolved significantly over time and varies across different cultures and societies. Traditionally, a family has been understood as a social unit connected by blood, marriage, or adoption, serving as the primary context for nurturing, socializing, and supporting individuals (Bengtson & Allen, 2010). In contemporary society, however, the definition of family has expanded to encompass a wider range of structures and dynamics, reflecting the diversity and complexity of modern relationships. The study of family types is integral in sociology and psychology, as it provides insights into the various forms of familial relationships and their impact on individuals and society.

Traditional family structures typically include the nuclear family, consisting of two parents and their children, and the extended family, which extends beyond the nuclear family to include grandparents, aunts, uncles, and cousins. In recent decades, there has been a significant increase in diverse family forms due to changes in societal norms and values (Pew Research Center, 2015). Modern family types include single-parent families, where a single adult raises the children; blended families, formed by the merging of two families into one; and same-sex families, where children are raised by same-sex couples. Each type of family has its unique dynamics and challenges. For instance, single-parent families may face challenges related to financial stability and social support, while blended families often navigate complex dynamics related to step-relationships and co-parenting.

Families today are adapting to rapid societal changes, including advances in reproductive technologies, shifts in gender roles, and increased mobility. These changes have led to the emergence of new family forms, such as cohabiting families, where couples live together without being married, and childfree families, where couples choose not to have children (Amato, 2010). Additionally, transnational families, where family members live across different countries, have become more common due to globalization and migration. These evolving family structures reflect the fluidity and adaptability of the concept of family in the 21st century. Despite the diversity in family types, the fundamental role of the family in providing emotional support, socialization, and a sense of belonging remains central across all forms.

The concept of family and its types encompass a broad spectrum of structures and relationships, each with unique characteristics and societal implications. Understanding the diversity and dynamics of modern families is crucial for addressing the needs and challenges specific to each family type.

THEORETICAL UNDERPINNING

Family Systems Theory, conceptualized by psychiatrist Murray Bowen in the 1950s, revolutionized the understanding of family dynamics and individual behavior within the family unit. This theory posits that families function as complex emotional units, where the interactions and relationships within the family significantly influence the behavior and emotional well-being of individual members. Central to this theory is the idea that an individual's issues cannot be adequately addressed in isolation but must be understood within the context of the family system (Nichols, 2013). This holistic approach to understanding family dynamics is particularly relevant

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e-ISSN : 26203502
p-ISSN : 26153785

when analyzing marital stability, as it offers insights into how familial relationships and patterns impact the marital relationship.

Bowen's Family Systems Theory is built on several key concepts, including differentiation of self, triangulation, family projection process, and emotional cutoff. Differentiation of self refers to the ability of an individual to maintain their own identity and emotional stability while in close relationships. Triangulation involves a third party being drawn into the relationship between two individuals to reduce tension or conflict. The family projection process describes how parents transmit their emotional issues to their children. Emotional cutoff refers to the way individuals manage unresolved emotional issues with family members by reducing or cutting off emotional contact (Bowen, 1978). Understanding these concepts is essential in examining how family dynamics influence marital stability.

In the context of "The Relationship Between Family Tie and Marital Stability in Ohafia Local Government Area," Family Systems Theory offers a framework for understanding how family influences, such as expectations, communication patterns, and emotional bonds, impact marital relationships. The theory suggests that the level of differentiation of self of the individuals within a marriage can significantly affect marital stability. In a community like Ohafia, where family ties are strong, the degree of emotional interdependence within extended family networks could play a crucial role in shaping marital dynamics.

The interplay of family ties and marital stability can also be understood through the lens of triangulation. In Ohafia, where extended family involvement is common, triangulation might occur when conflicts or tensions in a marital relationship involve family members, potentially impacting the stability of the marriage. Furthermore, the family projection process may be evident in how parents' relationships and emotional patterns influence the expectations and behaviors of married couples within the community.

While applying Family Systems Theory, it's crucial to consider cultural factors. In Ohafia, cultural norms and values play a significant role in defining family structures and expectations. The theory must be adapted to reflect the cultural context of Ohafia, where family ties may have different manifestations and implications for marital stability compared to Western societies where the theory was initially developed (McGoldrick, 2011).

Family Systems Theory provides a comprehensive framework for understanding the complex dynamics between family ties and marital stability in Ohafia Local Government Area. By considering the interdependence of family members and the influence of family patterns on marital relationships, this theory can offer valuable insights for marital counseling and community interventions aimed at enhancing marital stability. Future research and application of this theory in Ohafia should incorporate cultural nuances to ensure relevance and effectiveness in addressing marital stability within the community.

METHODOLOGY

The study investigated the relationship between family ties and marital stability using a correlational research design. The study's population was drawn from the Ohafia Local Government Area, with a total population of 358,200. Utilizing the Taro Yamene formula, a sample size of 400 participants was determined and selected through random sampling across various towns and villages in the area. The study gathered data through both primary and secondary sources. A specialized instrument, the "Family Ties and Marital Stability Questionnaire" (FTMSQ), was developed and utilized for primary data collection. To ensure the validity of this questionnaire, it underwent face and content analysis by both the researcher and experts in Measurement and Evaluation. Additionally, the reliability of the FTMSQ was established using the test-retest method. For data analysis, the Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient was applied, with the aid of SPSS version 25, to examine the hypotheses related to family ties and marital stability.

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DATA ANALYSIS

HO₁: There is no significant relationship between ethnicity and marital stability in Ohafia Local Government Area

Table 2: PPMCC on the Relationship between Ethnicity and Marital Stability in Ohafia Local Government Area

Correlations

		Ethnicity	Marital Stability
Ethnicity	Pearson Correlation	1	.985**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	394	394
Marital Stability	Pearson Correlation	.985**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	394	394

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

The study's hypothesis (HO1), which posits no significant relationship between ethnicity and marital stability in Ohafia Local Government Area, is contradicted by the findings in Table 2. The Pearson Correlation between ethnicity and marital stability is exceptionally high at .985, indicating a very strong positive correlation. This suggests that ethnicity is significantly linked to marital stability in this area. The significance level is .000 (2-tailed), well below the 0.05 threshold, thus statistically significant. Given the substantial sample size of 394, these findings are robust. Accordingly, the hypothesis of no significant relationship is rejected, affirming the critical influence of ethnicity on marital stability in the Ohafia community.

HO₂: There is no significant relationship between in-laws influence and marital stability in Ohafia Local Government Area.

Table 3: PPMCC on the Relationship between In-Laws Influence and Marital Stability in Ohafia Local Government Area

Correlations

		In-law Influence	Marital Stability
In-law Influence	Pearson Correlation	1	.861
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.004**
	N	394	394
Marital Stability	Pearson Correlation	.861	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.004**	
	N	394	394

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

The hypothesis (HO2) concerning the relationship between in-laws' influence and marital stability in Ohafia Local Government Area is addressed in Table 3. The Pearson Correlation coefficient between in-law influence and marital stability is .861, indicating a strong positive correlation. This implies that the influence of in-laws has a significant association with the stability of marriages in this area. The significance level is .004 (2-tailed), which is statistically significant and below the conventional threshold of 0.05. With a robust sample size of 394, these results are reliable. Consequently, the hypothesis asserting no significant relationship is rejected, confirming the substantial impact of in-laws' influence on marital stability in the community.

HO₃: There is no significant relationship between sexual satisfaction and marital stability in Ohafia Local Government Area

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e-ISSN : 26203502
p-ISSN : 26153785

Table 4: PPMCC on the Relationship between Sexual Satisfaction and Marital Stability in Ohafia Local Government Area

Correlations

		Sexual Satisfaction	Marital Stability
Sexual Satisfaction	Pearson Correlation	1	.871**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	394	394
Marital Stability	Pearson Correlation	.871**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	394	394

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

The analysis of the relationship between sexual satisfaction and marital stability in Ohafia Local Government Area refutes the hypothesis (HO3) that there is no significant relationship between these variables. The Pearson Correlation coefficient is .871, indicating a strong positive correlation. This suggests that higher sexual satisfaction is closely associated with greater marital stability. The significance level (p-value) is .000 (2-tailed), which is statistically significant and well below the conventional threshold of 0.05. With a sample size of 394, the findings are robust, leading to the rejection of the hypothesis and affirming that sexual satisfaction is significantly related to marital stability in this community.

HO4: There is no significant relationship between marital communication and marital stability in Ohafia Local Government Area

Table 5: PPMCC on the Relationship between Marital Communication and Marital Stability in Ohafia Local Government Area

Correlations

		Marital Communication	Marital Stability
Marital Communication	Pearson Correlation	1	.742**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	394	394
Marital Stability	Pearson Correlation	.742**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	394	394

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

The study examining marital communication and stability in Ohafia Local Government Area shows a significant correlation. With a Pearson Correlation of .742, it indicates a strong positive relationship between effective marital communication and marital stability. The significance level, at .000 (2-tailed), far surpasses the conventional threshold of 0.05, affirming the statistical significance of this finding. Given the ample sample size of 394 participants, the results are reliable. Thus, the hypothesis asserting no significant relationship between these variables is effectively rejected, highlighting that improvements in marital communication are likely to enhance marital stability within this community.

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

Ethnicity and Marital Stability in Ohafia Local Government Area.

The study examined the relationship between ethnicity and marital stability in Ohafia Local Government Area. The study found with the correlation coefficient of 0.985, and significant value of 0.00 that there is a significant relationship between ethnicity and marital stability in Ohafia Local Government Area. This finding is consistent with the perspective that ethnicity, as a component of social identity, profoundly influences personal values, attitudes, and behaviors, as noted by Phinney (2010). The study's revelation that ethnicity plays a crucial role in marital stability in Ohafia reflects the intricate ways in which shared cultural practices and beliefs, inherent to ethnic identity, can impact intimate relationships and family dynamics. It underscores

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p-ISSN : 26153785

the importance of considering ethnic backgrounds and cultural contexts in understanding and addressing issues related to marital relationships and stability.

In-Law Influence and Marital Stability in Ohafia Local Government Area.

The study investigated the relationship between in-law influence and marital stability in Ohafia Local Government Area. With the correlation coefficient of 0.861, and significant value of 0.04 the finding showed that there is a significant relationship between in-law influence and marital stability in Ohafia Local Government Area. This finding aligns with the research conducted by Atkinson and Blackwelder (2014), who found that positive relationships with in-laws were associated with increased marital satisfaction. Similarly, a study by Smith et al. (2015) highlighted that in-law relationships could either strengthen or strain marital bonds, depending on the nature of the interaction. These studies collectively underscore the importance of extended family dynamics in marital stability, a concept deeply rooted in many cultures where familial ties extend beyond the nuclear family. The significant correlation found in the Ohafia study suggests that in-law relationships are crucial in this specific cultural context, influencing the overall harmony and longevity of marital unions.

Sexual Satisfaction and Marital Stability in Ohafia Local Government Area.

The study sought the relationship between sexual satisfaction and marital stability in Ohafia Local Government Area. The correlation coefficient of 0.871, and significant value of 0.00 that there is a significant relationship between sexual satisfaction and marital stability in Ohafia Local Government Area. This strong correlation aligns with the findings of a study by Yoo, Bartle-Haring, Day, and Gangamma (2014), which established that sexual satisfaction is a crucial predictor of marital stability. Similarly, research by Henderson-King and Veroff (2016) corroborated the idea that sexual satisfaction significantly influences marital contentment and longevity. These studies collectively reinforce the concept that sexual satisfaction is an integral component of marital health, impacting the overall stability of the relationship. The consistency of the Ohafia study with these findings suggests that sexual satisfaction plays a universal role in marital dynamics, transcending cultural and geographical boundaries, and highlights the importance of addressing sexual satisfaction as a key factor in marital counseling and therapy.

Marital Communication and Marital Stability in Ohafia Local Government Area.

The last objective of the study investigated the relationship between marital communication and marital stability in Ohafia Local Government Area. The correlation coefficient of 0.742, and significant value of 0.00 on table 4 shows that there is a significant relationship between marital communication and marital stability in Ohafia Local Government Area. This correlation is in line with the research conducted by Gottman and Levenson (2016), who found that effective communication is crucial for marital satisfaction and stability, suggesting that the way partners communicate is more predictive of marital health than the frequency of communication. Additionally, a study by Noller and Feeney (2014) demonstrated that positive communication patterns, including open and empathetic dialogue, are strongly associated with marital stability. These studies, together with the findings from Ohafia, underscore the critical role of communication in maintaining a healthy and stable marital relationship. The significant correlation observed suggests that effective marital communication, characterized by clarity, understanding, and empathy, is a key determinant of marital satisfaction and longevity, regardless of cultural or regional differences.

CONCLUSION

The comprehensive analysis of marital dynamics in Ohafia Local Government Area presents a profound understanding of the factors influencing marital stability. The findings from the study offer critical insights into the complex interplay between various aspects of marital life and overall marital health. Central to these insights is the recognition of ethnicity, in-law influence, sexual satisfaction, and marital communication as key determinants of marital stability. The significance of these factors underscores the deep-rooted cultural and interpersonal dynamics

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e-ISSN : 26203502
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that shape marital relationships in this community. Ethnicity, often intertwined with cultural practices and values, emerges as a fundamental element in marital cohesion, influencing how couples navigate their shared life. In-law influence further highlights the crucial role of extended family in marital relationships, pointing to the broader social network's impact on the couple's life. Meanwhile, sexual satisfaction and marital communication are identified as pivotal components within the marital bond, directly affecting the emotional and psychological aspects of the relationship. These findings collectively paint a picture of marriage as a multifaceted institution, influenced by a blend of personal, familial, and cultural factors.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the identified findings, the following recommendations were stated:

1. Cultural Sensitivity in Marital Counseling: Given the significant impact of ethnicity on marital stability, it is recommended that marital counseling in Ohafia Local Government Area incorporate cultural sensitivity. Counselors should be trained to understand and respect the cultural norms and values that influence marital dynamics. This approach can help couples navigate the complexities of their cultural backgrounds, fostering better understanding and cohesion within their relationships.
2. Extended Family Engagement Programs: The influence of in-laws suggests the need for family engagement programs. These programs should aim to educate extended family members on the importance of their support and involvement in nurturing positive marital relationships. By facilitating constructive interactions between couples and their in-laws, such programs can enhance familial harmony and contribute to overall marital stability.
3. Sexual Satisfaction and Intimacy Workshops: The strong correlation between sexual satisfaction and marital stability highlights the need for workshops focused on improving intimacy and sexual communication among couples. These workshops should provide a safe space for couples to learn about and discuss sexual health, emotional intimacy, and effective communication strategies, thereby enhancing their sexual and overall relationship satisfaction.
4. Communication Skills Training for Couples: As effective marital communication is crucial for marital stability, offering communication skills training for couples is recommended. These trainings should focus on improving listening skills, empathy, conflict resolution, and expressing emotions constructively. Strengthening these skills can help couples build stronger, more resilient relationships, better equipped to handle the challenges of marital life

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e-ISSN : 26203502
p-ISSN : 26153785

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