

## **Communication Apprehension, Age, and Education as Predictors of Marital Conflict Among Couples in Ado- Ekiti, Ekiti State, Nigeria.**

**Bankole Emmanuel Temitope**

Department of Psychology & Behavioural Studies  
Faculty of the Social Sciences,  
Ekiti State University, Ado Ekiti, Nigeria.  
Email: Temitope.bankole@eksu.edu.ng

### **Abstract**

*Marital satisfaction is a major need for individuals in marital relationships. Inability to satisfy this needs often arise as a result of irreconcilable differences or inability to communicate marital preferences with partners. Conflict has been said to be either constructive or destructive and it is often described as inevitable in human relations, marriage inclusive. Every marriage inevitably experiences conflict, no matter how compatible the partners' maybe, even the healthiest of relationships occasionally descend to unpleasant conflicts. This study therefore aimed to investigate communication apprehension, age, and educational qualification as predictors of marital conflict among couples in Ado, Ekiti. Sample for this study comprised of 250 married participants of both male and female. The research employed a survey method in that the researcher administered the questionnaires to married participants in Ado- Ekiti, and all questionnaires were appropriately filled and retrieved. Four hypotheses were tested and result shows that communication apprehension has a significant influence on marital conflict ( $t(248) = 1.02, p < .05$ ). The result also revealed that age does not have significant influence on marital conflict ( $F(3, 246) = .295, P > .05$ ), educational qualification does not significantly influence marital conflict ( $F(5, 239) = .389, P > .05$ ). Results further revealed that sex does not have significant influence on marital conflict ( $t(24) = -1.540, P > .05$ ). It was recommended that effective communication should exist amidst couple in order to ameliorate deepened marital conflict.*

**Keywords:** *Communication, Apprehension, Age, Sex, Marital Conflict, Ekiti State, couples.*

### **Introduction**

Marriage is a union between a man and a woman whereby the couple leave their respective families to establish a new home. Marriage according to Courtois (2005) is the institution uniquely apt in conceiving and rearing children by securing the participation of both parents in ongoing union. Marriage could be justified by its role in protecting caring

relationships (Brake, 2012); it also provides caregivers who assist children in their upbringing (Hartley & Watson, 2012).

Conflict is inevitable in every marital relationship. Because of natural differences which become more and more apparent, conflicts come into the marriage, if the couple does not learn to resolve these conflicts; their love will be replaced with hostility and animosity. Marital relationship consists of a series of actions and motivations which are counterproductive sometimes. The more active the people, the more potential area of conflict can be expected (Houston & Boeing, (1992); Smith, (1992); Williams and Barefoot, (1998). Conflict need not to be fatal. In fact, some counselors suggest that conflicts are normal and can provide a creative force in marriage.

Conflict is natural in marriages and other close relationships. Ironically, one's experience of interpersonal conflict is often highest with one's spouse, compared to other long-term relationships (Argyle & Furnham 1983). Marital relationships are particularly prone to conflict because spouses develop a great deal of shared intimacy and interdependence. These qualities make the partners more vulnerable to one another. At the same time, cohesion strengthens the relationship such that partners can better withstand criticism from one another and the relationship can survive partner disagreements.

The term conflict often conjures up perceptions of hostile disputes and dysfunctional relationships. However, research has shown that the mere existence of conflict is not necessarily bad. In fact, some conflict produces positive outcomes. Conflict allows relational partners to express important feelings and to devise creative solutions to problems. Further, successfully managed conflict can strengthen relational bonds and increase relational cohesion and solidarity. Marital conflict also contributes to the social development of children.

Similar to attributions, perceptions of communication competence and communication satisfaction filter the association between relational quality and conflict behavior (Canary and Cupach 1988; Canary, Cupach, & Serpe 2001; Spitzberg, Canary, & Cupach 1994). Specifically, when one enacts constructive conflict tactics, one's partner is generally more satisfied with conflict interaction and the partner sees one as communicatively competent. Destructive behaviors, on the other hand, are associated with one's partner's communication dissatisfaction and with partner perceptions that one is communicatively incompetent. Feelings of communication satisfaction and perceptions of a partner's communication competence are associated, in turn, with relational qualities such as satisfaction, trust, control mutuality, liking, and loving. Thus, more communication satisfaction and greater perceptions of partner competence contribute to improved relational qualities including higher levels of relational satisfaction and trust.

Consequences of poor conflict management extend beyond the survival of the marriage. Increasingly, research suggests that negative conflict interactions can hurt one's health. For example, one research team found that negative conflict behaviors adversely affect blood pressure and immune systems (Kiecolt-Glaser, 1993). On-going hostilities between spouses can also adversely affect their children. Although separation and divorce are often blamed for child adjustment problems, the inability to constructively manage conflict between them is much more important (Amato & Keith 1991; Emery 1982, 1992). Hostile marital conflict adversely affects children by lowering their self-esteem, diminishing achievement in school, and increasing the likelihood of depression and antisocial behavior (Gottman 1994; Jenkins & Smith 1991; Montemayor, 1983). Moreover, young children learn their own methods of managing conflict by observing their parents (Minuchin, 1992). To the extent that parents are incompetent at managing differences, their children are at risk for being similarly

incompetent at managing conflict as grown-ups in their own families. The damaging effects of divorce on a child can be somewhat nullified if parents constructively manage their relational problems and breakups, and if parents provide positive support and do not use the child as a resource for winning the conflict.

Although the long-term effects of conflict interaction on health are unknown, this research suggests that negative conflict behavior in one discussion can harm physical well-being for at least a day. If negative conflict occurs routinely, it appears that one's health would be adversely affected over time.

Communication, according to Rymes (2012) is the act of conveying information for the purpose of creating a shared understanding; the word “communication” came from a latin word “communis” meaning to share. A marriage without effective communication is likely to crumble. Esere (2002) saw communication as the life wire of a marriage relationship. Communication was ranked as number one problem among couples in therapy (Hecker & Wetchler, 2003).

Two types of communication include verbal and non-verbal communication. According to Driver and Gottman (2004), verbal communication means a language expression, whereas non-verbal communication uses body language such as rolling of ones eyes, sighing, blinking of ones eyes, crying, etc. Lack of effective communication (for instance, where there is communication apprehension) in marital relationship can lead to more complicated problems, which leads to conflict behaviors like fighting, nagging, shouting, stalemate, etc. among couples.

Age is another variable that can lead to conflict. Age, many say, is just a number, but researchers reported that couples in age-gap relationships, with at least ten years of age

difference, reported experiencing more social disapproval and if not compatible leads to conflict among couples (Lemiller & Agnew, 2006).

Another variable in this study is education. Men's and women's education attainment has shifted dramatically over the past half century. Both men and women complete more schooling than in the past, but beginning in the mid-1980's women's education attainment began to surpass men's (Buchan & Diprete, 2006). Previous researches suggest that there is reversal of the gender-gap in education among husbands and wives. By 2003, 55% of married couples with different education levels with their spouses' went up from less than 40% in the mid-1970's (Schwartz & Mare, 2005).

Previous research has shown that couples are more likely to have high conflict when they do not share the same education background, particularly, they find it difficult to communicate well, since the partner who has higher education attainment tend to look down on the other spouse, thereby causing breakdown in communication which leads to conflict (Teachman, 2002). Some have found that having a highly educated couple or having middle or upper-class background increases the risk of divorce (Rogers, 2004).

### **Statement of the Problem**

Every marriage inevitably experiences conflict. No matter how compatible the partners' maybe, even the healthiest of relationships occasionally descend to unpleasant conflicts. Some casual disagreements often escalate to a high level of conflict. The ability of each partner in a relationship to navigate through these conflicts is critical. Children have been affected by conflicts in the families which lead to both physical and psychological problems thereby affecting the society and the country at large.

Marital conflict has affected a lot of marriages, both in Nigeria and beyond, which can lead to divorces when it is not well managed. In this vain, clergy, teachers, parents, policy psychologists are concerned that individuals be better prepared for a marital relationship. Most researches in the area of marital conflict come from the west, and researches considering communication, age, and education as variables in marital conflict are few. The researcher examined the impact of communication, age, and education play in marital conflict in the Nigeria context. The researcher addressed the following questions:

- 1) Does communication have an impact in marital conflict?
- 2) Does age have an impact in marital conflict?
- 3) Does education have an impact in marital conflict?

### **Purpose of the study**

The aim of the current research is to examine the impact of communication, age, and education in marital conflict. The purpose of the study therefore include the following

1. To find out the impact of communication in marital conflict among couples
2. To find out the impact of age in marital conflict among couples
3. To find out the impact of education in marital conflict among couples

### **Relevance of the Study**

The relevance of this study is vital to Nigerian society and the world in general because it check on the impact that communication, age, and education in marital conflict. This study will also enable us to discover the impact of communication, age, and education in marital conflict among couples and also the society at large. It will also teach intending couples and

even the married ones and the society in general to note the impact of communication, age and education in marital conflict.

This study will also enable psychologist, marriage counselors and sociologist to know the type of program to design in orientating couple, intending couples and the society at large on the impact that communication, age and education plays in marital conflict.

The result from this study can be used as guide for marriage counseling, or in counseling psychology. Many studies have established that communication, age and education have impacts in marital conflict and that this can lead to marital separation or divorce. Therefore, information that will be collected in this study will on the long run help a large population of people to understand the impact of communication, age and education in marital conflict.

## **Methods**

### **Research Design**

Research designed is a laid down pattern or procedure of work that makes the research work easier and simple to carry out. It is designed as a predetermined scientific process and a systematic study that helps guide the method of investigation, the instrument used and the source of data for making out decisions, the designed involved the use of structured to get observation questionnaire. The design of this study is cross-sectional. There are three independent variables – communication, age, and education, each with two levels, and one dependent variable – marital conflict. Three-Way analysis of variance was used for data analysis

## **Participants**

The researcher sampled 200 participants, 100 men and 100 women all married (couples), ages 18-70 years; mean age 42years. Participants were drawn from Ado Ekiti of Ekiti State. Volunteers were sought from among Local Government staff, business men and women, and civil servants. Participants were those that had at least secondary school education. The sampling of participants was based on participants' availability, and willingness to participate in the study, that is, those who volunteered to fill the questionnaire forms participated in the study.

## **Instrument**

Two instruments were used in the study. They are: The Personal Report of Spouse Communication Apprehension (PRSCA), and the Self-Report Conflict Behavior Scale (SRCBS).

**Personal Report of Spouse Communication Apprehension (PRSCA):** The personal report of communication apprehension was developed by Power and Hutchinson (1979). It was especially designed to measure couples communication apprehension. It assesses a person's CA in four separate communication contexts: public, small group, meeting, and interpersonal. The PSRC consist of 24 items, with Likert-type measure having 5 steps response format (1)strongly agree(2) agree (3) undecided(4) disagree (5) strongly disagree. An individual CA score on the PRCA-24 is determined by summing response across all four context (24-items).

**Reliability:** The personal report of communication apprehension scale has an internal reliability coefficient ranging from .93-.95. Alpha coefficients are slightly lower for the four



communication contexts. Moreover, test-retest coefficients greater than .80 have been reported indicating that the measure is stable across time.

**Validity:** construct and criterion validity have been supported. Scores in each of the four area (public, small group, meeting and interpersonal) predicted state anxiety experienced in a public speaking context. This findings was replicated for the public speaking component of the PRCA-24. Scores on the public speaking portion of the scale have predicted speech duration and avoidance/withdrawal behavior. PRCA-24 total scores are negatively correlated (-.70) with assertiveness.

**Self-Report Conflict Behavior Scale (SRCBS):** Self-report conflict behavior scale (SRCBS) was developed by Crohan (1996). It has 9 items. It measures marital conflict from the perspective of whether it is destructive or constructive. The first four items assess destructive conflict, whereas the last five items assess constructive conflict, the two dimensions of conflict form a single marital conflict scale. It is in a four-point Likert format - not all true (1), untrue (2), True (3), and very true (4). The value attached to each response option is reversed for constructive items. Thus, the higher the score, the more conflict in the person's marital relationship. Crohan (1996) reported that the alpha of the scale in several studies range from .60 to .81. After a pilot study involving seventy one married men and women, item analysis resulted in a Cronbach's alpha  $r = .72$ , split-half reliability  $r = .60$ .

**Concurrent validity:** An Index of Marital Satisfaction (IMS) scale was used to correlate self-report marital conflict scale (SRMCS). The IMS was developed by Hudson (1982). The 25 item inventory was used to measure the degree of marital quality of the participants. This scale measures the magnitude of the problems one spouse or partner perceives to be having in the marital relationship with his or her spouse. The IMS is a 5-point likert scale ranging from (1) rarely or none of the time to most of all the time (5). The

reliability co-efficient reported by Hudson (1982) was Cronbach's alpha internal consistency of  $r = .96$  and test-re-test reliability of  $r = .96$ . Anene (1994) revalidated the instrument and obtained concurrent validity co-efficient of 0.48 by correlating IMS with marital stress inventory (MSI), (Omoluabi. 1994). A pilot study was conducted by the researcher. 71 respondents, married men and women in from University of Nigeria, Nsukka workers filled the questionnaires. The result showed that the Self-report Conflict scale is significantly negatively correlated with the Index of Marital Satisfaction,  $r = -.32$ ,  $p < .01$

### **Scoring**

The PSRC consist of 24 items, with Likert-type measure having 5 steps response format (1) strongly agree (2) agree (3) undecided (4) disagree (5) strongly disagree. An individual CA score on the PRCA-24 is determined by summing response across all four context (24-items).

Self-Report Conflict Behavior Scale (SRCBS) contains nine items which measure marital conflict from perspective of whether it is constructive or destructive. It is in a four-point Likert format - not all true (1), untrue (2), True (3), and very true (4). The value attached to each response option is reversed for constructive items. Thus, the higher the score, the more conflict in the person's marital relationship

### **Procedure for data collection**

The questionnaire forms were given to volunteered participants individually to fill. Immediately after completion, each participant placed his/her completed forms in a cellophane bag designed for the purpose, this was to assure participants of anonymity of their responses. After all the forms were collected, they were scored and coded for analysis.

### Method of data analysis

The researcher administered the questionnaire to couples in Ado- Ekiti. In this research work, two hundred and fifty questionnaires were administered to the participants and all were retrieved and appropriately filled. Independent t-test and Analysis of variance were used to test the hypotheses in the study.

### RESULTS

Table 1: Independent t-test summary showing the influence of communication apprehension on marital conflict

Communication Apprehension		N	Mean	SD	SE	df	t	p
Marital Conflict	High	198	16.98	4.91	.349			
						248	-.402	>.05
	Low	52	17.29	4.56	.632			

The result of the table shows that, communication apprehension does not have influence on marital conflict ( $t(248) = -.402, p > .05$ ). Therefore, the hypothesis is supported. The comparison of the means scores shows that individual with low communication apprehension ( $x=17.29$ ) experience marital conflict than individual with high communication apprehension ( $x=16.98$ )

**Table 2: Analysis of variance summary table showing the influence of age on marital conflict**

Source	Type III sum of square	df	Mean square	F	p
Corrected model	86.78	3	28.912	1.242	>.05
Age	86.736	3	28.912	1.242	
Error	5728.688	246	23.287		
Total	78474.000	250			

The table shows that age does not have a significant influence on marital conflict. ( $F, (3,246) = .295, p > .05$ ). Therefore the hypothesis is accepted.

**Table 3: Analysis of variance summary table showing the influence of educational qualification and sex on marital conflict**

Source	Type iii sum of square	df	Mean square	F	Sign
Corrected model	232.526	10	23.253	.995	.448
Intercept					
	13228.603	1	13228.603	566.307	.000
Qe					
	45.400	5	9.080	.389	.856
Sex					
	1.559	1	1.559		
Qe sex					
	132.283	4	33.071	.067	.796
Error					
	5582.898	239	23.359	1.416	.229
Total					
	78474.000	250			
Corrected total					
	5815.424	249			

The table shows that educational qualification does not have significant influence on marital conflict. ( $F (5,239) = .389, p > .05$ ). Additionally, sex does not have influence on marital conflict ( $F(1,239) = .067, p > .05$ ). Therefore, the hypothesis is accepted.

**Table 4: Independent t-test summary table showing the influence of sex on marital conflict**

	Sex	N	Mean	SD	SE	df	t	p
Marital Conflict	Male	112	16.53	4.829	.456			
						248	-1.540	>.05
	Female	138	17.47	4.812	.410			

The table shows that sex does not have significance influence on marital conflict ( $t(24) = -1.540$   $P > .05$ ). Therefore, the hypothesis is accepted

## DISCUSSION

The research work was aimed at investigating the impact of communication, age, and education on marital conflict. The independent variables were communication, age and education. The dependent variable was marital conflict. The first hypothesis which stated that communication will not have a significant influence on marital conflict was accepted. The result of the hypothesis shows that individual with low communication apprehension experience marital conflict than individual with high communication apprehension. The result of the present findings is in line with the findings of Zuo (1992) who find out that there is no significant relationship between communication and marital conflict. However, Theiss and Solomon (2006), Gottman (1994), clement et al. (2004) revealed that effective communication is associated with low marital conflict.

Interaction between communication and education implies that marital conflict tends to be high among educated persons when there is no communication apprehension while highly educated couples experiences more marital conflict when there is communication apprehension. The findings of this study suggest that educated couples thrive better when communication is smooth. This is because given their high education, they can easily express themselves when communication is stalled, there is tendency for more conflict on the other

hand, and lower educated couples seem to have more conflict when communication is smooth. This may be because people of lower education do not place emphasis on communication as long as each couple plays his or her role, but when there is demand for clear communication, self-expression and the likes, conflict may ensue

The second hypothesis which stated that age will not have a significant influence on marital conflict was accepted. The result of the present study is contrary to the findings of Andah (1995), Levenson and Robert (2009), Onyeizugbo (2005), and Nwobi (1995) who found age differences in marital harmony with older couples. He suggested that younger marriages are likely to be prone to conflict than older marriages. This is supported by Andah (1990) who reported that younger couples are more emotional than older couples and are easily affected by conflict

Age per say may not have influence on marital conflict, it may have to interact with other demographic and personality factor to determine whether couples are in conflict or not.

However post-hoc analysis comparing couples low verse high in age gap shows that couples who had high age gap scored higher in conflict than those who have lower age gap. This findings is supported by Admin (2009) and Lehmiller and Agnew (2006) who found out that marriages with a big age-gap of ten years and above tend to be associated with conflict

This could be because communication is difficult among couples with high age gap; the younger person is likely to be over respectful of the older who may demand such respect thereby generating conflict in their marriage. Also, they may belong to varying age cohorts such that one partner, for instance the younger my want sex more frequently whereas the older may not. This may be a source of conflict in the marriage. This is an important

contribution in the marital conflict literature because studies investigating age-gap in marriage in Nigeria and elsewhere is quite scarce.

The third hypothesis which stated that education will not have a significance influence on marital was accepted. There was no difference in marital conflict between participant who have lower and higher education. The present findings differ from that of Glenn and Weaver (1978) that suggested that education influences marriage positively; it also improves communication thereby reducing conflict. Also, Rogers (2004) found that education is significant to marital conflict, with highly educated couples having middle or upper class background being more likely to increase the risk of divorce.

Inconsistency in the findings of different researchers may be due to situational or cultural factor. This is because even when different researchers used same instrument they came out with different result. The result of the present study reveals that variables such as communication, age and education, when studied independently does not have influence on marital conflict, but when they were studied in interaction (combining two or more variables) they tend to interact to influence marital conflict.

## **CONCLUSION**

Marital conflict is not a new concept in Africa. Most marriages in Africa even beyond have been experiencing conflicts in their marriages over the years, in different levels, some lead to stalemate in their marriage, though still together, some have temporary separation while other conflicts lead to divorce. In this study, investigations were made on the impact of communication, age and education in marital conflict. The result of this study showed that communication does not have a significant influence on marital conflict whereby the result of the hypothesis shows that individual with low communication apprehension (participants

score that is below the average mean) experience marital conflict than individual with high communication apprehension. Education was also found not have a significant impact on marital conflict but has to interact with some other demographical factors in order to have an impact in marital conflict. Further, communication interacted with education in marital conflict and finally, age was revealed as not having a significant impact in marital conflict as it has to interact with other factors as age gap to impact marital conflict Furthermore, a post-hoc analysis showed that age-gap played a significant role in marital conflict.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

The researcher suggests that other variables should be studied with age and marital conflict, such as studying the length of the marriage of the couples, instead of only the age of the couples; age-gap, as well as education gap. Future studies may build these into the study to see what contributions they may have toward understanding of marital conflict. A larger number of participants should be used for further study.

The researcher suggests that further studies are needed to extend the scope of the study from one culture to include more cultures for cross-cultural comparison. Also, more researches should be carried out to examine the impact of communication, age and education on marital conflict among couples

Appropriate communication skills should be learned by intending couples so as to reduce conflict.



## REFERENCES

- Abbey, D. & Douglas, U. (2001). The chief inducement? The idea of marriage as friendship. *Journal of Applied Philosophy*, 18(1), 37-52.
- Andah, N.W. (1990). Female labor force participation and marriage happiness: a study of selected married women in port Harcourt Local Government Area, Rivers State. Ph.D Thesis, University of Nigeria.
- Baby, G, (2002). Article released on October 25th, 2011, last update May 20th, 2010.
- Bandura, A. (1973). *Social Learning and Personality Development*. New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston.
- Bandura, A. (1969). *Principles of behavior Modification*. New York: Reinhart & Winston.
- Bandura, A. (1979). *The Exercise of Control*. New York: W. H. Freeman.
- Bandura, A. & Walters, R. (1963). *Social learning and personality Development*. New York: Reinhart & Winston. Birditt, K. (2010). Predicting divorce. *Science daily*. Retrieved, September 2012. <http://www.sciencedaily.com/ release/2010/09/100928152022>.
- Bokwala, J. (2005). The role of Journal of Marriage & Family, 56, 218-223. marital quality in physical health during the mature years. *Journal of Aging Health*, 17(1), 85-104.
- Brake, E. (2012). *Minimizing marriage: Marriage, morality and the law*. New York: Oxford university press.
- Booth, A. J. (2005). Declining in health and marital quality.
- Bramleh, M. D. & Mosher, W. D. (2002). Cohabitation, marriage divorce, and remarriage in the United States (vital and health statistics series 23, No. 22) Washington, D.C US. Government printing Office.
- Buchan, C & Diprette, T.A. (2006). The growing female Advantage in college completion. The Role of family
- Background and academic Achievement. *American Sociological Review*, 71, 515-541.
- Burgoon, J.L. (1993). Interpersonal expectations, expectancy violations and emotional communication. *Journal of Language and Social Psychology*, 12 (1-2), 30-48.
- Burleson, BR & Denton, W. H. (1997). The relationship between communication skill and marital satisfaction. Some moderating effects. *Journal of marriage and family*, 59, (4) 884-902.

- Carrere, S, Buehiman, K.T. Gottman, J.M, Coan, J.A, & Ruckstuhi, L. (2000). Predicting marital stability and divorce in newly wed couples. *Journal of Family Psychology*, 14(1), 42-58.
- Crohan.S. (1996). Marital quality and conflict across the transition to parenthood in African, American and white couples. *Journal of Marriage and the Family*, 58(5), 933-944.
- Clements, M.L., Stanly, S.M., & Markman, H.J. (2004). Before they said "I do" Discriminating among marital outcomes over 13years. *Journal of Marriage and the Family*, 58, 933-944.
- Card, C. (1996).Against marriage and motherhood. *Hypatia*, 11(3), 1-23.
- Driver. J. & Gottman J. (2004). Daily marital interactions and positive effect during marital conflict among newlywed couples. *Family process*, 43(3), 301-314
- Dunson, D. & Baird D.D. (2004).Increased infertility with age in men & women. *Obstetrics and gynecology*, 103(1), 51 – 60. 18
- Esere, M.O, (2002). Approaches to marital therapy.The Nigerian Journal of Guidance and counseling, 8 (1), 61-85.
- Fineman, M. (2004). The Autonomy myth: A theory of dependency. New York: The New Press.
- Flood, S. (2011). Psychological effects of marital conflict.  
[www.ehow.com/list\\_6184875\\_psychological-effects-marital-conflict.html](http://www.ehow.com/list_6184875_psychological-effects-marital-conflict.html)
- Glenn, N. D. & Weaver, C. N. (1978).A multivariate, multi survey study of marital happiness.*Journal of Marriage and the Family*, 40, 269-282.
- Gottman, J. M (1994). What predicts divorce? The relationship between marital processes and marital outcomes. Hills Date. N.J. Eribaum.
- Gottman, J. M., & Levenson, R.W (1992). Marital processes predictive of later dissolution, Behavior, psychology and health, *Journal of personality and social psychology*, 63, 221-233.
- Gottman.J. M, & Levenson, R.W, (1999). How stable is marital interaction over time? *Family process*, 38,159-165.
- Gottman, J.M, & Levenson, R.W, (2002). A two factor model for predicting when a couple will divorce, exploratory analyses using 14-year longitudinal data. *Family Process*, 41, 83 – 96.
- Heavy, C. L., Christensen, A. & Malamuth, N. M. (1995). The Longitudinal impact of demand and withdrawal during marital conflict. *Journal of consulting and clinical psychology*, 63, 797 – 801.

- Hartley, C. & Watson, L. (2012). Political Liberalism, Marriage and family. *Law and Philosophy*, 31(2), 185 – 212.
- House J. S., (2001). Social factors and inequalities in health. *Journal of Health and Social Behaviour* 43, 125 – 142.
- Houston, T. L., Caughlin, J.P., Houts, R. M., Smith, S.E, & George, L.J. (2001). The Connubial, Crucible: Newlywed years as predictors of marital delight, distress, and divorce. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 80, 237 – 252.
- Karney, B.R. & Bradbury, T.N. (1995). The longitudinal cause of marital quality and stability. A review of theory, methods, and research. *Psychological Bulletin*, 118, 3-34.
- Lemiller, J.J. & Agnew, C.R. (2007). Perceived marginalization and prediction of Romantic Stability. *Journal of marriage and family*, 69(4), 1036 – 1049.
- Lehmiller, J.J. & Agnew, C.R. (2006). Marginalized relationships: The impact of social disapproval on romantic relationship commitment. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin*, 32, 40-51.
- Levenson, L. & Robert.W. (2009). Psychology and Aging, 24(3), 604–613  
doi:10.1037/0016950.
- Mathew, L. S. Wickrama, K.A.S., & Conger, R. D. (1990). Predicting Marital Instability from Spouse and observer report of marital interaction. *Journal of Marriage and the family*, 58, 641 – 655.
- Mirowsky .J. & Ross C.E., (2003). Education, Social Status, and health. New York: Aldine de Gruyter.
- Nwobi, P. C. (1990). Personal background and environmental factors influencing marital adjustment among Anambra State couples: Implications for marital counseling. Ph.D thesis, Department of Education, University of Nigeria.
- Oggins, J, Veroff. J. & Leber, D. (1993). Perceptions of marital interaction among black and white newlyweds. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 65, 494–511.
- Omoluabi, F.F. (1994). Psycho-social causes and remedies of single parenthood. Paper presented at the first APQUEN conference Enugu. 19
- Onyeizugbo, E.U. (2005). The contributions of gender, age and education in marital adjustment. *Nigerian Journal of Psychological Research*, 4, 24-29.
- Orbuch, T. L., Veroff, J. Hassan; H & Harrocks (2002). Who will divorce? A 14 – year longitudinal study of Black couples and white couples. *Journal of social and Personal Relationships*, 19, 179 – 202.

- Orbuch, T.L. & Veroff .J. (2002). Sociodemographic and Divorce. *Journal of Marriage and the family*, 55, 815 – 826.
- Rauer, A. I. (2005). The role of husband & wives emotional expressivity in the marital relationship. *Sex Roles: A Journal of Research*, 577-587.
- Richmond V. P., MC Cross Key, J.C. & Roach K.D. (1997). Communication and decision Making Styles, power usage, and satisfaction in marital Dyads. *Communication Quarterly*, 45(4), 410.
- Reiss, C. L. & Benjamin, B. (1971). Predicting longevity. Lexington, D.C.: Health and Company.
- Remland, M. (2009). Non-verbal communication in everyday life. Boston: Allyn & Bacon.
- Rollof, M. (1981) Interpersonal Communication. The Social Exchange Approach. Beverly Hills.
- Rogers S. J. (2004). Dollar, dependency, divorce; four perspectives on the roles of communication and aggression in predicting adverse marital outcomes. *Journal of consulting and clinical psychology* 67, 340– 351.
- Rymes, (2012). Communication. [www.communicationstudies.com](http://www.communicationstudies.com) February 2012.
- Schwartz, C. R. & Mare R.D. (2005). Trends in Educational Assortative Marriage from 1940 – 2003. *Demography*, 42, 621 – 646.
- Smith, D.A, Vivian, D, & O’Leary, K. D. (1990). Longitudinal Prediction of marital discord from premarital expressions of affect. *Journal of Consulting and Clinical Psychology*, 58, 790 – 798.
- Socio economic status and marital conflict. The Canadian Journal of Sociology/Cahiers, Volume 19, No.1. Winter, [www.jstor.org/stable/3341237](http://www.jstor.org/stable/3341237)
- Stanley S. M. & Markman, H.J. (2009), Effect of parental divorce on marital commitment. *Journal of Family Psychology*, 22, 789 – 793.
- Standford, L. (2008). Social exchange theories. In LA. Engaging theories in Interpersonal Communication. Multiple perspective (PP – 377 – 389). Thousand Oaks.
- Strong B, Devault C. & Cohen T. F. (2005). The Marriage and family experience intimate relationship in a changing society (9th ed.) Belmont, C. A. Thomson Wadsworth.
- Stryker, S. & Burke, P.J. (2000). The past, present and future of identity theory. *Social Psychology Quarterly*, 63, 284 – 272.
- Susan, J. M. (2011). Family rank – Conflict – Couple Relationships; Family Relationships.e.How.com.

- Teachman, I. D. (2002), Stability across cohorts in divorce risk factors. *Demography*, 39, 331.
- Timothy, W., Bery C. & Cynthia, A. (2009). *Journal of Psychology and Aging*, 24(2) 259 – 273 doi. 10.1037/9D015609.
- Theiss, J. & Solomon D. (2006). Relational Turbulence Model of communication: About Irritation in romantic relationships. Retrieved April 14th 2008 from Psych. Infor. Database. Thibault J. W. & Kelly, H.H. (1952). *The Social Psychology of Groups*. New York John Wiley & Sons. 21
- Varilea C. A. (1990). Communication and Marital Satisfaction: Social desirability and nonlinearity. *Communication Research Report*, 7(1), 38 – 44. Weber, C. (2011). Types of marital conflict. [www.ehow.com/list\\_6784359\\_types-marital-conflict.html](http://www.ehow.com/list_6784359_types-marital-conflict.html)
- Powers, W. G. & Hutchinson, K. (1979). The Measurement of Communication Apprehension in the Marriage Relationship. *Journal of Marriage and family*. 41(1), 89-95. Published by National Council on Family Relations. URL: <http://www.jstor.org/stable/351734>. Accessed: 18/09/2012, 08:36.
- Zuo, J. (1992). The reciprocal relationship between marital interaction and marital happiness: A three- wave study. *Journal of Marriage and Family*, 54(4), 870 - 878.