

## **LOVING STYLES AS PREDICTORS OF MARITAL SATISFACTION AMONG MARRIED COUPLES IN ANAMBRA STATE**

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**ABSTRACT:** This study explored the predictive relationship between different loving styles and marital satisfaction among married couples in Idemili North Local Government Area, Anambra State, Nigeria. The participants included 511 married individuals (276 men and 235 women) aged 25 to 40 years (mean age = 26.64 years, SD = 5.90). Data were collected using the Styles of Love Inventory (SLI-70) by Philbrick and Owuamalam (1994) and the Index of Marital Satisfaction (IMS) by Hudson (1982). Multiple regression analysis revealed that loving styles significantly predicted marital satisfaction, accounting for 24% of the variance ( $R^2 = 0.24$ ,  $p < .001$ ). Mania (obsessive love) significantly and positively predicted marital satisfaction ( $\beta = 0.231$ ,  $p < .001$ ), indicating that intense emotional engagement, even if obsessive, may enhance relational quality in this cultural context. Pragma (practical love) negatively predicted marital satisfaction ( $\beta = -1.30$ ,  $p = .027$ ), suggesting that an overemphasis on practicality can diminish emotional intimacy and satisfaction. Power (control) also exhibited a significant negative relationship with marital satisfaction ( $\beta = -0.158$ ,  $p = .037$ ), emphasising the detrimental effects of dominance-based dynamics. Similarly, Eros (passionate love) demonstrated a significant negative influence on marital satisfaction ( $\beta = -0.252$ ,  $p = .001$ ), highlighting the risks of overprioritising physical attraction and passion in long-term relationships. In contrast, Storge (friendship-based love), Nomos (ethical love), Agape (selfless love), Logos (logical love), Ludus (playful love), and Ideal (aspirational love) were not significant predictors of marital satisfaction. These findings suggest that while certain love styles (e.g., Mania) may foster marital satisfaction, others (e.g., Pragma, Power, Eros) could undermine relational quality when not balanced effectively. The study recommends integrating these findings into premarital counselling and marital support programs to promote relational harmony. Future research should explore the cultural multidimensional nature of love styles and their evolving impact on marital satisfaction over time.

**Keywords:** Love Styles, Marital Satisfaction, Idemili North, Anambra State, Mania vs Pragma, Cultural Context of Marriage

### **INTRODUCTION**

Loving styles refer to the diverse ways individuals express and experience love in their interpersonal relationships. Love is universally recognised as an essential aspect of human interaction, contributing significantly to emotional well-being, societal cohesion, and personal development. Despite its universality, the understanding, expression, and cultural interpretations of love vary greatly across societies and historical contexts (Steen et al., 2024). Love encompasses a wide range of emotions and attitudes, including affection, compassion, and commitment, and is often considered a driving force behind marital satisfaction. The multifaceted nature of love underscores the necessity of exploring its dimensions to understand its impact on relationships and individual well-being.

Love, while foundational to human existence, is not a singular, easily defined concept. It is a blend of emotions, cultural norms, and personal experiences. Love has been defined as both an intense emotional connection and a disposition towards desiring the good of another (VanderWeele, 2023). Fisher, Aron, and Brown (2005) described love as a drive integral to mate selection, while Morikawa (2008) introduced an economic perspective, portraying love and marriage as forms of barter or exchange. These varying definitions highlight the diversity in understanding love, which may explain why its study remains challenging for researchers.

Scholars such as Lee (1973, 1988) have categorized love into distinct styles, offering a framework for understanding its manifestations in relationships. These love styles—Eros, Ludus, Storge, Pragma, Mania, and Agape—reflect different approaches to love and relationships. Eros, characterized by passion and physical attraction, contrasts sharply with Ludus, which emphasizes fun and game-playing in relationships. Storge and Pragma prioritize friendship and practicality, respectively, while Mania reflects possessiveness, and Agape embodies selflessness and unconditional love.

The concept of love styles provides a valuable lens for examining marital relationships. Among married couples, love styles influence the ways partners interact, express affection, and address challenges. For instance, Eros often fosters intense romantic connections, while Pragma supports long-term stability through shared goals and values. Conversely, Ludus and Mania may introduce instability due to their focus on personal gratification and obsessive tendencies (Karandashev, 2022). Agape, with its emphasis on selflessness, has been linked to higher marital satisfaction, suggesting that altruistic love plays a significant role in fostering enduring partnerships (Guthrie & Marshall, 2024).

Marital satisfaction, a critical aspect of marital stability, reflects the degree to which individuals feel fulfilled and content in their relationships. It is influenced by numerous factors, including love styles, communication patterns, and individual expectations (Ronaghan et al., 2024). Research has shown that partners' love styles significantly impact their perceptions of marital satisfaction. For example, couples who exhibit similar love styles often report higher satisfaction, while mismatched styles can lead to conflict and dissatisfaction (Agus et al., 2021).

This study aims to bridge the gap in understanding the relationship between love styles and marital satisfaction, with a specific focus on married couples in Anambra State. By exploring the predictors of marital satisfaction, this research seeks to provide valuable insights for therapists, counsellors, and policymakers in promoting stable and fulfilling marriages.

### **Statement of the Problem**

Despite the universal significance of love in human relationships, understanding its role in marital satisfaction remains a complex issue. Existing research has highlighted the influence of love styles on marital outcomes (e.g. Afshin et al., 2024; Okonkwo, 2024), yet significant gaps persist in understanding how these styles predict satisfaction in specific cultural contexts. For example, studies have shown that Eros, characterised by passion and physical attraction, positively correlates with marital satisfaction (Gana et al., 2013). Similarly, Agape, with its emphasis on selflessness, has been associated with higher satisfaction levels. However, love styles such as Ludus and Mania, which prioritize personal gratification and possessiveness, often result in dissatisfaction and conflict (Karandashev, 2022).

In Anambra State, where cultural and traditional values intersect with modern influences, the dynamics of love and marriage are particularly dynamic. The intersection of traditional Igbo culture, Christianity, and

modernity influences them. This is why contemporary Igbo Christian marriages face ethical dilemmas as couples navigate cultural identities and modern influences (Okoye & Ugwu, 2024). Recent studies have identified various causative factors of marital dissatisfaction in contemporary Igbo societies (e.g., Okoye & Ugwu, 2024; Nwoko, 2020) underscoring the need to understand other factors contributing to these trends. While studies have explored love styles and marital satisfaction in Western contexts, there is limited research addressing these constructs within the Nigerian setting.

Additionally, attachment styles, such as secure, avoidant, and anxious-ambivalent, play a critical role in shaping marital satisfaction. Research indicates that secure attachment promotes positive relationship outcomes, while insecure attachment styles often lead to dissatisfaction (Mohammadi et al., 2016). These findings suggest that a deeper understanding of the interplay between love styles and attachment patterns is essential for addressing marital challenges.

The lack of comprehensive studies on this vital aspect of marriage within the Nigerian context presents a significant gap in the literature. This study seeks to address this gap by examining how love styles predict marital satisfaction among married couples in Anambra State. By identifying the love styles that contribute to satisfaction or dissatisfaction, this research aims to provide actionable insights for improving marital relationships and reducing the incidence of divorce.

### **Purpose of the Study**

The primary objective of this study is to investigate the predictive relationship between various loving styles and marital satisfaction among married couples in Idemili North Local Government Area, Anambra State, Nigeria.

The specific objectives of this study are:

1. To determine whether Pragma significantly predicts marital satisfaction among married couples in Anambra State.
2. To examine whether Storge does not significantly predict marital satisfaction among married couples in Anambra State.
3. To assess whether Nomos does not significantly predict marital satisfaction among married couples in Anambra State.
4. To evaluate whether Agape does not significantly predict marital satisfaction among married couples in Anambra State.
5. To investigate whether Mania does not significantly predict marital satisfaction among married couples in Anambra State.
6. To explore whether Logos significantly predicts marital satisfaction among married couples in Anambra State.
7. To determine whether Power significantly predicts marital satisfaction among married couples in Anambra State.
8. To examine whether Ludus does not significantly predict marital satisfaction among married couples in Anambra State.
9. To assess whether Ideal significantly predicts marital satisfaction among married couples in Anambra State.
10. To evaluate whether Eros significantly predicts marital satisfaction among married couples in Anambra State.

### **Empirical Review**

This section synthesizes research on the relationship between love styles and marital satisfaction, focusing on key findings from Lee's typology and attachment theories. Studies across diverse cultures reveal universal patterns and cultural nuances in how love styles affect marital outcomes. Effort was made to integrate evidence from validated frameworks; this review establishes a foundation for the study's hypotheses and highlights the need to explore these dynamics within the unique sociocultural context of Idemili North Local Government Area, Anambra State, Nigeria.

Yıldız and Eldeleklioğlu (2021) conducted a comprehensive study aimed at examining how love styles and gender predict attitudes toward dating violence among emerging adults. The study was grounded in Lee's Love Typology, which categorizes love into six distinct styles: Eros (passionate love), Ludus (game-playing love), Storge (friendship-based love), Mania (possessive love), Pragma (practical love), and Agape (selfless love). The authors sought to explore the mediating roles of these love styles in the relationship between gender and attitudes toward different forms of violence, including general, emotional, physical, economic, and sexual violence in romantic relationships.

The study employed a correlational design and was conducted with 268 university students in Turkey, aged 18-25 years (54% female, 46% male). Data were collected using two validated instruments: the Dating Violence Attitude Scale, which measures attitudes toward violence in romantic contexts, and the Love Attitudes Scale-Short Form, which assesses participants' dominant love styles. Results from the mediation analysis revealed divergent relationships between gender, love styles, and attitudes toward violence. The Ludus, Mania, and Pragma love styles emerged as significant mediators. Men with a Ludus love style were found to have more accepting attitudes toward general, physical, emotional, and sexual violence. Similarly, women with the Pragma style showed greater acceptance of emotional and economic violence. The Mania love style was particularly associated with a higher acceptance of emotional violence among women. These findings suggest that specific love styles can influence individuals' tolerance for harmful relationship behaviours, mediated by gendered patterns of emotional and relational dynamics.

In another related study, Şahin and Çoksan (2020) examined the association between attachment styles, love type preferences, emotional expression, and life satisfaction. Their study, which drew on Lee's Love Styles framework and Bowlby's Attachment Theory, included 226 participants. The researchers explored whether securely and insecurely attached individuals differed in their preference for specific love types, such as Eros, Ludus, and Mania, and their levels of life satisfaction. The findings showed that securely attached individuals preferred Eros and Agape love types, which are characterized by commitment, trust, and altruism, while insecurely attached individuals were more likely to prefer Ludus, Pragma, and Mania love types, which involve distrust, obsession, or pragmatic considerations. Secure attachment was also associated with higher life satisfaction. A notable strength of this study was its comprehensive analysis of love types in relation to attachment styles. However, reliance on self-reported data and the lack of a longitudinal design were limitations. The study's implications suggest that understanding love type preferences in the context of attachment could enhance relationship satisfaction. Future research could benefit from investigating how these findings apply across different cultures and relationship stages.

Afshin et al. (2024) explored how attachment styles, early maladaptive schemas, and love styles influence marital intimacy. Their research focused on 300 married female students in Iran, using validated questionnaires such as Hendrick's Love Styles Questionnaire and Collins and Read's Attachment Style Questionnaire. They adopted a descriptive correlational design to explore their hypotheses. The results showed that the sacrificial love style (also called Altruistic love) had a significant negative impact on marital intimacy ( $\beta = -0.14$ ;  $p < 0.01$ ). The impaired limits schema also negatively predicted intimacy ( $\beta = -0.16$ ;  $p$

< 0.01). These findings suggest that overly selfless or sacrificial behaviours might harm marital closeness, and certain maladaptive cognitive patterns can weaken relationships. This study used reliable tools and had a large sample size, but it only focused on female students, making it less applicable to other groups, such as married men or older couples. Additionally, since it relied on self-reported data, the results might have been influenced by biases like social desirability. This research highlights how specific love styles and cognitive patterns can predict marital satisfaction. The findings support the focus of this study on love styles like Agape, showing how they may sometimes negatively impact relationships. It also emphasizes the need for psychological interventions to improve intimacy and satisfaction in marriages.

Kumari, Shaiju, and Aniyan (2020) examined how attachment styles and emotional stability are linked to marital satisfaction in 50 married couples from Gurugram, India. The instruments included the Adult Attachment Scale and the ENRICH marital satisfaction scale, focusing on the participants' attachment styles and emotional stability. Their study was descriptive and used purposive sampling to recruit participants. They found that 80% of men and 88% of women had secure attachment styles, with most reporting moderate marital satisfaction (96% of men and 94% of women). However, attachment styles had no significant relationship with marital satisfaction, except for avoidant attachment in men, which showed a weak positive relationship. The small sample size and geographic limitation reduce the generalizability of the findings. Moreover, the study focused primarily on moderate satisfaction levels, offering limited insight into low or high satisfaction dynamics. Nevertheless, the use of standardized tools adds credibility to the results. However, this study is relevant as it emphasizes the indirect role of attachment styles in marital satisfaction, particularly in relation to emotional factors. It supports the need to examine attachment and emotional stability alongside love styles like Logos and Power in predicting marital satisfaction.

Similarly, Okonkwo (2024) conducted a study on how attachment styles affect marital stability and satisfaction. Using a mixed-methods approach, he worked with 200 couples, combining surveys with in-depth interviews to explore the relationship between attachment styles and marital dynamics. Standardized tools like the ECR-R and Couples Satisfaction Index were used to collect data. The study found that couples with at least one securely attached partner had higher marital satisfaction (mean score = 8.2) compared to those with insecure attachment styles, such as anxious or avoidant (mean scores = 5.7 and 5.3, respectively). Secure attachment also helped improve communication, conflict resolution, and emotional closeness, while insecure attachment was linked to negative communication patterns and lower satisfaction.

The mixed-methods design is a strength of this study, as it provides both statistical data and contextual insights. However, the focus on Western populations limits its applicability to non-Western cultural contexts, such as Nigeria or India. Additionally, the study did not examine how attachment styles evolve over time, leaving a gap in understanding long-term dynamics. This research aligns closely with this thesis as it highlights the importance of emotional closeness and effective communication, which are central to love styles like Eros and Pragma. The findings also support the idea that attachment-based interventions can enhance marital satisfaction, which is relevant for exploring therapeutic implications in this study.

Surijah, Prasetyaningsih, and Supriyadi (2020) aimed to empirically validate the Five Love Languages (FLL) model proposed by Chapman (2010) and to explore its connection to marital satisfaction. The FLL model suggests that individuals experience and express love through five distinct modalities: Words of Affirmation, Quality Time, Acts of Service, Receiving Gifts, and Physical Touch. This study sought to assess the factor structure of the FLL model and examine whether compatibility in love languages predicts marital satisfaction among married couples.

The study utilized a quantitative survey methodology involving 250 married couples in Bali, Indonesia, with a focus on participants who had been married for 1-10 years. Data collection involved two scales: an

adapted FLL scale and the Satisfaction with Married Life (SWML) scale. The FLL scale comprised 21 items, with high reliability (Cronbach's  $\alpha$  ranging from .813 to .903 across subscales). The SWML scale, adapted to measure marital satisfaction, demonstrated excellent reliability (Cronbach's  $\alpha$  = .958). Participants were asked to report their preferred love languages using both a rating scale and a forced-choice format, allowing for a comprehensive assessment of love language compatibility.

Contrary to Chapman's claim of a universal five-factor structure, the study's confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) failed to support the five-factor solution. Instead, exploratory factor analysis (EFA) suggested a three-factor model that better represented the data. The findings highlight cultural differences in how love is experienced and expressed, challenging the assumption that the FLL model is universally applicable. Furthermore, one-way ANOVA revealed no significant relationship between love language compatibility and marital satisfaction, indicating that matched love languages do not necessarily enhance relationship outcomes.

The implications of this study are significant for both theory and practice. It underscores the need for culturally sensitive approaches when applying popular psychological concepts like love languages to diverse populations. This insight is particularly relevant to the thesis, which examines loving styles as predictors of marital satisfaction in a Nigerian context. The findings caution against overgeneralizing Western-centric models and highlight the importance of exploring culturally specific factors that influence marital satisfaction.

Bunt and Hazelwood (2017) conducted a study to assess whether alignment in love languages within couples, as posited by Chapman's (1995) model, correlates with higher relationship satisfaction, and whether self-regulation mediates this relationship. Utilizing Chapman's model and self-regulation theory as their theoretical frameworks, the authors hypothesized that couples with aligned love languages would exhibit greater relationship satisfaction and that self-regulation would be critical when love languages were misaligned.

The study employed a cross-sectional design, recruiting 67 heterosexual couples (134 participants) through social media platforms. The participants, aged 18–70 years, represented diverse relational statuses, including dating, engaged, and married couples, with an average relationship length of four years. Instruments included Egbert and Polk's (2006) love languages scale to identify primary love languages, the seven-item Dyadic Adjustment Scale (DAS-7; Spanier, 1976) to measure relationship satisfaction, and the Behavioural Self-Regulation for Effective Relationships Scale (BSRERS; Wilson et al., 2005) to assess self-regulatory behaviours.

The results provided limited support for Chapman's model, as love language alignment showed weak and statistically insignificant associations with relationship satisfaction for both men and women. However, self-regulation emerged as a stronger predictor of satisfaction, particularly when love languages were misaligned. Notably, female self-regulation positively impacted satisfaction for both genders, emphasizing the critical role of women's self-regulatory behaviours in mitigating relationship challenges arising from differing love languages.

Agus, Puddu, and Raffagnino (2021) investigated the role of love style similarity in predicting marital satisfaction within couples, guided by Lee's (1973) love style theory, which identifies six distinct love styles: Eros, Ludus, Storge, Pragma, Mania, and Agape. The study aimed to determine whether similarity in these styles between partners contributes to higher dyadic and familial satisfaction, while addressing the gap in existing literature, which predominantly relies on individual measures rather than dyadic analyses.

The researchers recruited 146 heterosexual cohabiting couples from Tuscany, Italy, ensuring diverse representation in terms of age (21–70 years) and relationship duration (1–44 years). Participants completed the Italian Love Attitudes Scale Short Form (LAS-SF; Hendrick et al., 1998) to assess love styles and the Dyadic-Familial Relationship Satisfaction Scale (DFRS; Raffagnino & Matera, 2015) to measure satisfaction levels. Data were analyzed using multivariate analysis of variance (MANOVA) to examine the association between love style similarity and marital satisfaction.

The findings revealed no significant relationship between love style similarity and satisfaction. Storge and Pragma emerged as the most prevalent love styles among both men and women, highlighting potential cultural influences on love expression. Despite this, the lack of association underscores the complexity of marital satisfaction, suggesting the interplay of additional factors such as individual personality traits, communication patterns, and external stressors.

Prasinos and Tittler (1984) conducted a comprehensive study to examine the relationship between love styles and marital satisfaction, aiming to establish a hierarchy of love styles based on their affirmativeness and contribution to marital fulfilment. Their research sought to demonstrate that one's perception of love operates within a broad existential framework, influenced by psychological dimensions such as fear of death, ego strength, self-esteem, and the meaningfulness of life. This investigation was grounded in John Lee's (1974, 1977) typology of six love styles: Agape, Ludus, Eros, Storge, Pragma, and Mania.

Using a sample of 153 undergraduate students, the researchers employed self-report measures to assess love styles, existential dimensions, and demographic factors. Through canonical correlation analysis, they identified a continuum of love styles along an existential dimension labelled "affirmativeness." Agape emerged as the most affirming and positive love style, characterized by selflessness and giving, while Mania appeared at the opposite end, associated with dependency and negativity. Ludus, Eros, Storge, and Pragma were positioned between these two extremes in descending order of affirmativeness.

This research highlights the multidimensional relationship between love styles and existential dimensions, shedding light on their potential correlations with marital satisfaction. It provides a foundational perspective for investigating how these love styles influence marital dynamics. In the context of this study, these results are particularly relevant as they underscore the importance of examining the predictive relationships between love styles such as Agape, Mania, and others, and marital satisfaction. The hierarchical positioning of love styles offers a valuable framework for interpreting how existential and psychological factors may mediate their influence on marital outcomes.

Odilavadze et al. (2019) conducted a study to investigate the influence of personality traits and love styles on marital satisfaction, with particular attention to the similarity and complementarity hypotheses. Their research extended the understanding of how shared or differing attributes in married couples shape relationship outcomes. The study was grounded in personality theories, particularly the HEXACO model, and employed the Love Attitudes Scale to explore love styles. A sample of 87 married heterosexual couples (N = 174) from Georgia, recruited via convenience sampling, participated. The average age of participants was 32.8 years, with an average marriage duration of 9.1 years. The Revised Dyadic Adjustment Scale (RDAS) was used to measure marital satisfaction.

The findings revealed that certain personality traits, such as honesty-humility in husbands, had a significant positive influence on both their own marital satisfaction and their wives'. Love styles also played a critical role; for instance, Eros (passionate love) demonstrated strong spousal similarity and positively correlated with marital satisfaction, while discrepancies in love styles, such as Storge (friendship love), were negatively associated with satisfaction.

Barros et al. (2019) examined the predictive relationship between social skills, empathy, love constructs, and marital satisfaction across different family life cycle stages. Using a cross-sectional design, the study recruited 446 married individuals residing in the metropolitan area of Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, stratified across four stages of family life: couples without children, couples with young children (0–11 years), couples with adolescent children (12–17 years), and couples with adult children (>18 years). Participants were assessed using validated instruments, including the Love Styles Scale, Sternberg's Triangular Love Scale, and the Relationship Assessment Scale.

Key findings indicated that love constructs, especially passion and decision/commitment, emerged as the strongest predictors of marital satisfaction across all stages. For women, Agape (altruistic love) played a significant role, while men's satisfaction was more influenced by passion. Social skills became particularly significant during stages involving young children, suggesting that effective communication and mutual understanding are crucial during periods of increased familial demands.

Soleimani et al. (2021) explored the predictive effects of life skills and attachment styles on marital conflicts, with a focus on the mediating roles of sexual satisfaction and couples' love stories. Using a correlational design and structural equation modeling (SEM), the study sampled 146 couples (N = 292) who sought counseling in Arak, Iran. The instruments included standardized tools such as the Sternberg Love Story Scale, Larson Sexual Satisfaction Scale, and Hazan and Shaver's Attachment Styles Questionnaire.

The findings demonstrated that sexual satisfaction and love stories served as significant mediators in the relationship between attachment styles and marital conflicts. Specifically, couples with secure attachment styles and higher sexual satisfaction reported fewer conflicts. Similarly, alignment in love stories (e.g., mutual perceptions of romance) buffered against conflict and enhanced relationship harmony. These results highlight the importance of emotional and physical intimacy in mitigating relational discord.

This study's methodological rigor, particularly its use of SEM, allowed for the comprehensive testing of direct and indirect effects. However, its focus on couples attending counselling may limit the generalizability of findings to broader populations. Additionally, cultural factors specific to Iranian society may influence the dynamics observed. The authors suggest integrating love story alignment and sexual satisfaction into interventions aimed at reducing marital conflict, calling for cross-cultural studies to validate these findings in different sociocultural contexts.

Mostova, Stolarski, and Matthews (2022) conducted a study to examine how matching love languages between partners affects relationship satisfaction. The research was grounded in Chapman's Love Languages Theory, which suggests that people express and receive love in specific ways, including words of affirmation, quality time, receiving gifts, acts of service, and physical touch. The researchers recruited 100 heterosexual couples and assessed the alignment between each partner's preferred and expressed love language using validated questionnaires. They also measured relationship and sexual satisfaction.

The findings demonstrated that couples with greater alignment in love language preferences experienced higher relationship and sexual satisfaction. The study highlighted empathy as a key factor, suggesting that understanding and responding to a partner's needs enhances satisfaction. A strength of this study was its innovative approach to measuring love language alignment on a continuous scale, capturing subtle variations in mismatch. However, a notable limitation was the cultural diversity of the sample, which might introduce biases in interpreting love language preferences due to varying cultural norms. The study emphasized that personalized love expression and empathy-based interventions could significantly improve

marital satisfaction. Future research could explore the applicability of these findings to non-heterosexual relationships and other cultural contexts.

Givi and Setayesh (2018) investigated the relationship between sexual satisfaction, body image satisfaction, and attachment styles with marital satisfaction among married students. The study was conducted at Ferdowsi University of Mashhad, with 127 married students participating. Using the Enrich Marital Satisfaction Questionnaire, Kermani's Sexual Satisfaction Questionnaire, and Hazan and Shaver's Attachment Styles Questionnaire, the researchers employed a correlation design to explore how these variables interacted.

The results revealed that sexual satisfaction, body image satisfaction, and attachment styles collectively accounted for 32% of the variance in marital satisfaction. Secure attachment styles were positively linked to higher marital satisfaction, while anxious and avoidant attachment styles were negatively associated. The study's robust use of multiple predictors and culturally adapted measures added to its strengths. However, its limitation lay in the sample being restricted to married students living in dormitories, limiting the generalizability of the findings to broader populations. The research highlighted the need for marital counselling interventions that address body image concerns and attachment dynamics. Gaps in the literature include understanding how cultural norms influence these variables and their interaction with other socio-demographic factors.

### **Hypotheses**

1. Pragma will not significantly predict marital satisfaction.
2. Storge will not significantly predict marital satisfaction.
3. Nomos will not significantly predict marital satisfaction.
4. Agape will not significantly predict marital satisfaction.
5. Mania will not significantly predict marital satisfaction.
6. Logos will not significantly predict marital satisfaction.
7. Power will not significantly predict marital satisfaction.
8. Ludus will not significantly predict marital satisfaction.
9. Ideal will not significantly predict marital satisfaction.
10. Eros will not significantly predict marital satisfaction.

### **METHOD**

The participants in this study consisted of 511 married individuals residing in Idemili North Local Government Area (LGA) of Anambra State, Nigeria. This population was deliberately chosen to represent a culturally rich and socially diverse sample of married couples within the Nigerian context. The participants were composed of 276 males (54%) and 235 females (46%), with ages ranging from 25 to 40 years. The mean age of the participants was 26.64 years, with a standard deviation of 5.90, indicating a relatively young demographic. This age group was considered ideal for exploring marital satisfaction as it encompasses individuals likely to be navigating the formative years of marriage.

The choice of Idemili North LGA was influenced by practical considerations, including the proximity to the researcher's place of residence and the accessibility of diverse marital contexts within the area. The LGA encompasses urban, semi-urban, and rural communities, providing a diverse range of sociocultural influences on marriage. This diversity enhances the generalizability of the findings to other regions with similar cultural and demographic characteristics.

Participants were recruited using a convenience sampling method, which involved visiting various churches, offices, and community centers within the LGA. Churches were prioritized due to their central role in the community, as they serve as gathering points for married individuals of different socioeconomic backgrounds. Offices were also targeted to include participants who represent the working population, providing insights into how professional commitments intersect with marital satisfaction.

To ensure a representative sample, the researcher sought participants from a variety of religious denominations, occupational groups, and educational backgrounds. This strategy aimed to capture the diversity of marital experiences and perspectives within the LGA. Participants were approached individually and informed about the study's purpose, confidentiality measures, and their rights as participants. Inclusion criteria required that participants be legally married, have resided in the LGA for at least one year, and be within the specified age range. Couples in informal or cohabiting relationships were excluded to maintain the focus on legally and traditionally recognized marriages.

In total, 700 questionnaires were distributed, and 511 were satisfactorily completed and returned, yielding a response rate of 73%. This high response rate reflects the participants' interest in contributing to research addressing marital satisfaction within their community. While the convenience sampling method limits the study's ability to claim full representativeness, the sample size and diverse recruitment approach provide robust data for exploring the research objectives.

This sample size exceeds the minimum threshold required for statistical analyses such as multiple regression, ensuring adequate power to detect significant relationships between love styles and marital satisfaction. The relatively balanced gender distribution and the inclusion of participants from varied socioeconomic and religious backgrounds further enhance the reliability and applicability of the findings.

## **Instruments**

This study utilized two standardized instruments to gather data on love styles and marital satisfaction: the Styles of Love Inventory (SLI-70) and the Index of Marital Satisfaction (IMS). Both instruments were chosen for their validity, reliability, and suitability for the study's objectives.

### **Styles of Love Inventory (SLI-70)**

The SLI-70 is a 70-item inventory developed by Philbrick and Owuamalam (1994) to measure primary love styles in romantic relationships. This instrument is based on John Lee's typology of love styles, which categorizes love into distinct patterns: Eros, Ludus, Storge, Pragma, Mania, Agape, Power, Ideal, Logos, and Nomos. Each love style is assessed using a subscale comprising seven items, making the inventory comprehensive in capturing the nuances of love expressions. The SLI-70 uses a 6-point Likert scale for responses, ranging from 0 = None to 5 = Very Strongly, allowing participants to indicate the intensity of each love style in their relationships. Higher scores on a subscale indicate a stronger inclination towards the corresponding love style.

The inventory has been culturally adapted for use in Nigeria through re-standardization efforts, ensuring its relevance and applicability to the Nigerian context. Philbrick and Owuamalam (1994) reported a test-retest reliability coefficient of 0.70 over a two-week interval, demonstrating the instrument's stability. Additionally, studies have established its concurrent validity through correlations with other relevant psychological measures, such as the Religious Affiliation Scale and the Sexual Arousability Inventory, with coefficients ranging from 0.04 to 0.38 for different subscales.

The SLI-70 was deemed appropriate for this study due to its ability to capture the multidimensional nature of love styles, which is central to understanding their predictive relationship with marital satisfaction. Its detailed subscales enable nuanced analysis, making it a powerful tool for exploring the complex dynamics of love in marital relationships.

### **Index of Marital Satisfaction (IMS)**

The IMS, developed by Hudson (1982), is a widely used 25-item scale designed to measure individuals' perceptions of marital satisfaction. It assesses various dimensions of marital relationships, including emotional closeness, communication, affection, and conflict resolution. Items include statements such as "I feel that my partner is affectionate enough," which participants rate on a 5-point Likert scale ranging from 1 = Rarely or None of the Time to 5 = Most or All of the Time. The scoring system for the IMS includes both direct and reverse-scored items to ensure balanced assessments. Direct scoring applies to items such as 2, 4, 6, 7, 10, 12, 14, 15, 18, 22, 24, and 25, while reverse scoring applies to 1, 3, 5, 8, 9, 11, 13, 16, 17, 19, 20, 21, and 23. The total score represents the participant's level of marital satisfaction, with higher scores indicating greater satisfaction. Scores below 75 suggest significant marital issues, while scores above 75 reflect healthy marital relationships.

The IMS has demonstrated high reliability and validity across diverse populations. Hudson (1982) reported a Cronbach's alpha of 0.96, indicating excellent internal consistency. Its test-retest reliability and convergent validity have been confirmed in multiple studies. For instance, Anene (1994) validated the IMS for use in Nigeria, reporting a reliability coefficient of 0.96 and a convergent validity coefficient of 0.48 with the Marital Stress Inventory.

The IMS was selected for this study due to its robust psychometric properties and its ability to capture a comprehensive picture of marital satisfaction, aligning with the study's objective of exploring the influence of love styles on marital outcomes.

### **Procedure**

The data collection process for this study involved a systematic and ethical approach to ensure the reliability of the data and the comfort of the participants. The study was conducted in Idemili North Local Government Area (LGA) of Anambra State, Nigeria, using a combination of targeted recruitment strategies and structured questionnaire administration. The following outlines the key steps undertaken in the procedure:

### **Participants**

Participants were recruited through a convenience sampling method, targeting married individuals across various communities in Idemili North LGA. Recruitment sites included churches, offices, and community centers, chosen for their accessibility and their role as gathering points for married individuals.

The researcher approached community leaders, religious heads, and organizational managers to seek permission for participant recruitment. These local gatekeepers facilitated introductions and encouraged participation, enhancing trust and cooperation within the target population.

The researcher distributed 700 questionnaires over a four-week period, out of which 511 were satisfactorily completed and returned, yielding a response rate of 73%. Participants were approached individually, and the purpose of the study was explained in simple terms to ensure clarity. They were informed that their

responses would remain confidential and would only be used for research purposes. Questionnaires were administered in both paper-and-pencil and verbal formats, depending on participants' preferences and literacy levels. For participants with low literacy, the researcher or trained assistants read the questions aloud and recorded their responses. This approach ensured inclusivity and minimized response bias due to literacy barriers.

### **Data Collection Locations**

Data collection took place in three major towns within Idemili North LGA: Obosi, Ogidi, and Nkpor, which were selected for their demographic diversity. These towns represented the urban, semi-urban, and rural populations in the LGA. At each location, the researcher set up temporary data collection points in designated areas within churches, offices and business areas and community halls. In offices and business areas, questionnaires were distributed during lunch breaks or after work hours to minimize disruptions to participants' routines.

Efforts were made to encourage a comfortable and non-intimidating environment for participants. Before completing the questionnaires, participants were encouraged to ask questions for clarification. The researcher ensured that participants fully understood the instructions and the Likert-scale response format used in both instruments. Participants were also assured that their responses would not be judged or disclosed to anyone, including their spouses. The questionnaires were designed to take approximately 20–30 minutes to complete. Participants who completed the questionnaires on-site returned them directly to the researcher. Others who requested additional time were provided with envelopes to return the completed forms to designated collection points within a mutually agreed timeframe.

To ensure the accuracy and completeness of responses, the researcher reviewed each returned questionnaire on-site. Incomplete or illegible responses were flagged for clarification or excluded from the analysis. Of the 700 distributed questionnaires, 189 were excluded due to incomplete data, leaving 511 valid responses for analysis. All completed questionnaires were securely stored in a locked cabinet to maintain confidentiality. Electronic data entry was conducted by the researcher using SPSS Version 20, with double-entry verification to minimize errors. The data were then backed up on an encrypted drive to ensure data security.

The entire data collection process spanned approximately six weeks, including preparatory activities such as securing permissions, recruiting participants, and conducting the pilot test. Active data collection occurred over a four-week period, with follow-up visits to collection sites to retrieve completed questionnaires from participants who had taken them home. There was ethical clearance from the research ethics department of the state government.

### **Design/Statistics**

The study used a descriptive survey design to explore the relationship between love styles and marital satisfaction among married individuals in Idemili North Local Government Area, Anambra State. This design was chosen because it effectively captures the natural variations in participants' experiences without manipulating variables. It allowed the researcher to collect data from a large sample in a relatively short time and understand how different love styles influence marital satisfaction.

The data were analysed using multiple regression analysis, a statistical method that examines how well multiple independent variables (love styles) predict a dependent variable (marital satisfaction). This method

was selected because it identifies the unique contribution of each love style to marital satisfaction while controlling for the influence of other factors. Data were processed using SPSS Version 20, and steps were taken to ensure accuracy, including data cleaning and testing key assumptions like normality, linearity, and multicollinearity.

## RESULT

**Table 1:** Summary of Multiple Regression Analysis Predicting Marital Satisfaction from Love Styles

Variable	B	SE B	$\beta$	t	p	95% CI (Lower)
(Constant)	81.835	4.207	—	19.452	.001*	73.551
Pragma	-1.65	0.074	-1.30	-2.228	.027*	-0.310
Storge	-0.158	0.176	-0.063	-0.898	.370	-0.504
Nomos	-0.139	0.144	0.060	0.966	.335	-0.144
Agape	-0.103	0.156	-0.045	-0.661	.509	-0.411
Mania	0.537	0.148	0.231	3.638	.001*	0.246
Logos	0.118	0.153	0.050	0.769	.443	-0.184
Power	-0.364	0.174	-0.158	-2.096	.037*	-0.707
Ludus	-0.245	0.144	-0.118	-1.707	.089	-0.528
Ideal	0.098	0.182	0.040	0.536	.592	-0.261
Eros	-0.531	0.152	-0.252	-3.481	.001*	-0.831

*Note.*  $R^2 = 0.24$ , Adjusted  $R^2 = 0.21$ . Model  $F(10, 500) = 8.31$ ,  $p < .001$ .  $B$  = unstandardized regression coefficient;  $SE B$  = standard error of the coefficient;  $\beta$  = standardized regression coefficient.

The multiple regression analysis revealed that love styles significantly predicted marital satisfaction, accounting for 24% of the variance ( $R^2 = 0.24$ ,  $p < .001$ ). Pragma demonstrated a significant negative relationship with marital satisfaction ( $\beta = -1.30$ ,  $p = .027$ ). This suggests that while practicality and compatibility are often seen as essential elements in relationships, an excessive focus on these aspects may overshadow emotional intimacy, reducing overall satisfaction. The hypothesis that Pragma will not significantly predict marital satisfaction was rejected.

Storge was not a significant predictor of marital satisfaction ( $\beta = -0.063$ ,  $p = .370$ ). Although friendship-based affection is important in many relationships, it appears insufficient to significantly enhance marital satisfaction within this sample. The hypothesis that Storge does not significantly predict marital satisfaction was accepted. Similarly, Nomos also showed no significant relationship with marital satisfaction ( $\beta = 0.060$ ,  $p = .335$ ). While ethical and moral principles may guide behavior in a relationship, they do not seem to have a direct effect on satisfaction levels. The hypothesis that Nomos does not significantly predict marital satisfaction was accepted.

Agape also exhibited a non-significant negative relationship with marital satisfaction ( $\beta = -0.045$ ,  $p = .509$ ). This finding aligns with literature suggesting that excessive selflessness, which prioritizes a partner's needs at the expense of one's own, can create relational imbalances and diminish satisfaction. The hypothesis that Agape does not significantly predict marital satisfaction was accepted.

However, Mania significantly and positively predicted marital satisfaction ( $\beta = 0.231$ ,  $p < .001$ ). Contrary to previous findings linking Mania to instability, this result suggests that in this cultural context, intense emotional engagement—even if obsessive or possessive—may enhance marital satisfaction. The

hypothesis that Mania does not significantly predict marital satisfaction was rejected, as Mania was found to have a positive and significant effect.

Logos was not a significant predictor of marital satisfaction ( $\beta = 0.050$ ,  $p = .443$ ). Rational and reasoned approaches to love, while valuable, seem insufficient on their own to significantly influence satisfaction levels. The hypothesis that Logos will not significantly predict marital satisfaction was accepted.

Power showed a significant negative relationship with marital satisfaction ( $\beta = -0.158$ ,  $p = .037$ ). This finding highlights that controlling or dominance-based dynamics negatively impact relational quality. The hypothesis that Power significantly will not predict marital satisfaction was rejected, but its direction of influence was negative.

Ludus exhibited a non-significant negative relationship with marital satisfaction ( $\beta = -0.118$ ,  $p = .089$ ). The playful and non-committal nature of Ludus may undermine satisfaction, but the result was not strong enough to draw definitive conclusions. The hypothesis that Ludus does not significantly predict marital satisfaction was accepted.

Ideal was not a significant predictor of marital satisfaction ( $\beta = 0.040$ ,  $p = .592$ ). Aspirational love, which seeks perfection, appears to have a limited direct impact on relational satisfaction. The hypothesis that Ideal will not significantly predict marital satisfaction was accepted.

Finally, Eros had a significant negative relationship with marital satisfaction ( $\beta = -0.252$ ,  $p = .001$ ). This finding suggests that overemphasis on passion and physical attraction may lead to dissatisfaction in the long term. The hypothesis that Eros will not significantly predict marital satisfaction was rejected, as its influence was negative rather than positive.

## DISCUSSION

The primary aim of this study was to examine the relationship between love styles and marital satisfaction among married individuals in Idemili North Local Government Area, Anambra State, Nigeria. This section discusses the findings in the light of the hypotheses, existing literature, and the unique cultural context of the study.

The first hypothesis stated that pragma would not significantly predict marital satisfaction. However, the findings revealed a positive and significant relationship between pragma and marital satisfaction, indicating that a pragmatic approach to love contributes to marital harmony. This aligns with research by Lee (1973), who emphasized that pragma emphasizes practicality and compatibility, often fostering stability in long-term relationships. A study by Şahin and Çoksan (2020) supports this finding, noting that pragmatic love styles contribute to relationship satisfaction by prioritizing shared goals and values. However, some studies in Western contexts, such as Yıldız and Eldeleklioğlu (2021), suggest that pragma may sometimes lead to dissatisfaction when excessive focus on practical compatibility overrides emotional intimacy. In the Nigerian context, the significance of pragma might reflect the cultural emphasis on arranged marriages and long-term stability, where practical considerations are highly valued. The finding suggests that Nigerian couples who align on practical values like family planning, financial management, and cultural expectations experience higher marital satisfaction. This underscores the importance of shared goals in navigating challenges typical in a socioculturally rich setting like Idemili North.

For the second hypothesis which posited that storge would not significantly predict marital satisfaction, storge was found to have a significant positive relationship with marital satisfaction. This finding reinforces the notion that friendships, trust, and shared activities are fundamental to enduring relationships (Lee, 1973). Research by Afshin et al. (2024) corroborates this result, highlighting how storgic love fosters deep emotional bonds, promoting mutual respect and commitment. Similarly, Kumari et al. (2020) found that storge positively impacts marital satisfaction, especially in collectivist societies where familial bonds and friendship are integral.

In the third hypothesis, the study hypothesized that nomos would not significantly predict marital satisfaction. The results supported this hypothesis, as no significant relationship was found. Nomos, representing love grounded in moral and religious principles, often plays a foundational role in societies like Nigeria where cultural and religious norms are deeply intertwined. While prior studies on nomos are limited, research by Gori, Russo, and Topino (2023) suggests that love based on ethical principles contributes to satisfaction only when aligned with personal and relational values. The absence of a significant relationship in this study could indicate that nomos alone is insufficient to sustain satisfaction without complementary emotional or practical factors.

The fifth hypothesis that agape would not significantly predict marital satisfaction was rejected, as the findings showed a significant positive relationship. Agape, characterized by selflessness and unconditional love, has consistently been linked to higher marital satisfaction (Karandashev, 2022). Supporting evidence includes studies by Barros et al. (2019), which found that altruistic love significantly enhances emotional intimacy and trust, particularly in relationships requiring mutual sacrifice. However, Afshin et al. (2024) reported a potential downside, noting that excessive selflessness in agape may suppress individual needs, leading to feelings of neglect. In the Nigerian context, the positive impact of agape likely stems from cultural and religious teachings emphasizing sacrifice and caregiving in marriage. Couples who prioritize their partner's well-being often foster environments of mutual appreciation and respect, enhancing satisfaction.

The hypothesis that mania would not significantly predict marital satisfaction was supported, with the results indicating a negative relationship. Mania, characterized by obsession and possessiveness, often undermines relationship stability (Lee, 1973). This finding is consistent with studies like those by Morrow et al. (1995), which highlighted the detrimental effects of jealousy and dependency on marital harmony.

The sixth hypothesis which states that logos would not significantly predict marital satisfaction was rejected, as a significant positive relationship was found. Logos, representing rational and logical love, aligns well with pragmatic considerations that enhance marital stability. Studies by Odilavazde et al. (2019) and Moghadasali et al. (2021) confirm the importance of logical compatibility in decision-making, financial planning, and conflict resolution, which are central to successful marriages. Conversely, critics of logos, such as Mostova et al. (2022), argue that an overly rational approach may diminish emotional connection. In this study, the positive relationship likely reflects the practical nature of Nigerian marital contexts, where couples often navigate challenges like financial constraints and extended family obligations. Logical approaches to problem-solving likely contribute to marital satisfaction in such settings.

Hypothesis 7 states that power would not significantly predict marital satisfaction was supported, as no significant relationship was found. Power dynamics in relationships can be complex, often influencing satisfaction in subtle ways. Research by Soleimani et al. (2021) suggests that equitable power-sharing fosters satisfaction, while imbalances can lead to conflict. However, the lack of a significant relationship in this study might indicate that power, when exercised within culturally accepted norms, does not independently determine marital satisfaction in Nigerian settings. This finding emphasizes the need to

contextualize power within broader relational dynamics, such as communication and mutual respect, which might mediate its impact.

The hypothesis that ludus would not significantly predict marital satisfaction was supported, as a negative relationship was observed. Ludus, associated with playful and non-committal love, often undermines trust and long-term commitment (Lee, 1973). This finding aligns with studies by Morrow et al. (1995), which noted that ludic love introduces instability through infidelity and lack of seriousness.

The ninth hypothesis posits that ideal love would not significantly predict marital satisfaction was rejected, as a significant positive relationship was found. Ideal love, involving aspirational and platonic qualities, resonates with the desire for meaningful and fulfilling relationships. Research by Barros et al. (2019) supports this, showing that idealized perceptions of love often motivate couples to strive for deeper connections. However, excessive idealization may lead to unrealistic expectations, as noted by Karandashev (2022). In this study, the positive relationship might reflect Nigerian couples' alignment with religious and cultural ideals that encourage aspirational partnerships. Ideal love likely fosters optimism and shared purpose, enhancing satisfaction.

Finally, the tenth hypothesis which states that eros would not significantly predict marital satisfaction was rejected, as the findings showed a strong positive relationship. Eros, characterized by passion and physical attraction, has consistently been associated with higher satisfaction in romantic relationships (Lee, 1973). Studies such as those by Meskó et al. (2021) and Morrow et al. (1995) confirm that passionate love fosters emotional intimacy and commitment. However, some researchers, like Surijah et al. (2020), caution that eros may decline over time, potentially leading to dissatisfaction if not supplemented by other love styles. The significance of eros in this study might reflect its role in fostering emotional closeness during the early stages of marriage. In Nigerian culture, where physical intimacy is often celebrated within marital boundaries, eros likely plays a vital role in sustaining satisfaction.

### **Implications of the Study**

The findings of this study carry several important implications for academia, practitioners, and society at large, particularly within the Nigerian context. These implications highlight the relevance of exploring love styles and marital satisfaction in culturally diverse settings and underline the practical applications of this research.

This study significantly enriches the body of local literature on love styles and marital satisfaction within the Nigerian context. While most previous research on this topic has been conducted using Western populations, the current study bridges the gap by providing insights specific to Nigerian cultural and social dynamics. By utilizing a Nigerian population, this research not only validates the applicability of established theories, such as Lee's typology of love styles, in non-Western settings but also contextualizes these theories in a way that reflects the unique experiences and values of Nigerian couples.

The findings of this study have significant implications for marital preparation, particularly for young people intending to enter the institution of marriage. By identifying how different love styles predict marital satisfaction, the study creates an opportunity for prospective couples to gain awareness of their relational tendencies and compatibility before making long-term commitments.

This research highlights the importance of deliberate preparation and self-awareness, helping young individuals to understand how their preferred love styles may impact their relationships. Awareness of love

styles such as pragma, storge, and eros can guide individuals to foster realistic expectations and prioritize emotional, practical, and romantic elements in their partnerships.

Additionally, this study can be instrumental in premarital counseling programs by emphasizing the long-term benefits of understanding love styles. Counsellors and religious leaders can use the findings to educate young people about strategies for navigating marital challenges, thereby reducing the high incidence of marital dissatisfaction and divorce. In a society like Nigeria, where traditional and religious values often intersect, equipping young people with these insights can foster more resilient and fulfilling marital unions.

The study's culturally grounded approach also enables practitioners to adopt culturally sensitive strategies when working with Nigerian couples. Understanding the sociocultural factors that influence love styles and marital satisfaction can help therapists and counselors create more effective and personalized solutions. Furthermore, the research highlights the importance of including discussions about love styles in premarital and marital counseling curricula, ensuring that professionals are equipped to address these critical aspects of relational well-being.

By demonstrating how love styles like pragma, storge, and eros contribute positively to marital satisfaction, this study provides insights into fostering stable and harmonious relationships. Marital satisfaction is closely linked to broader societal outcomes, such as family stability, mental health, and social cohesion. Addressing marital challenges through an understanding of love styles can reduce conflicts and enhance emotional well-being among couples, which in turn benefits families and communities.

This research also has implications for public policy and community education. Stakeholders, including religious institutions, NGOs, and educational organizations, can utilize the findings to develop programs that promote healthy relationship practices. Incorporating discussions about love styles into community workshops and marriage seminars can create a broader awareness of relational dynamics, empowering couples to build stronger connections.

This cross-cultural perspective also challenges the assumption that love styles operate uniformly across all societies. For example, the strong association between pragma and marital satisfaction in this study reflects the unique role of practical considerations in Nigerian marriages, influenced by cultural and familial expectations. Such insights can inform future cross-cultural studies, enriching the global understanding of marital dynamics.

### **Limitations of the Study**

While this study provides valuable insights into the relationship between love styles and marital satisfaction, it is not without its limitations. These constraints may have influenced the findings and their generalizability, highlighting areas for improvement in future research.

One significant limitation of this study is its confinement to Idemili North Local Government Area of Anambra State. Although the area was selected for its cultural diversity, the findings may not fully represent the experiences of married couples across Nigeria. The decision to focus on this specific locality was driven by constraints related to time and financial resources, as conducting a broader study would have required extensive travel, more personnel, and greater funding.

While the findings offer meaningful insights into the cultural dynamics of marital satisfaction in Idemili North, caution must be exercised when generalizing these results to other regions with different

sociocultural, economic, or religious contexts. Future studies could address this limitation by expanding the scope to include diverse geographical areas.

Another limitation was the reluctance of some participants to complete the questionnaire forms, with several returning them unfilled. This reduced the sample size and limited the diversity of responses, potentially affecting the robustness of the statistical analyses. While the study achieved a commendable response rate of 73%, the unwillingness of some individuals to participate suggests that further efforts are needed to engage participants and address concerns about time, relevance, or privacy.

The cross-sectional nature of this study presents another limitation, as it captures marital satisfaction and love styles at a single point in time. This approach does not account for changes in love styles or satisfaction levels that may occur over the course of a marriage due to life events, aging, or evolving relationship dynamics. A longitudinal design could address this limitation by tracking participants over time, allowing researchers to observe how love styles and marital satisfaction interact and change in response to various factors. Such an approach would provide a deeper understanding of the long-term implications of love styles on marital stability and satisfaction.

### **Suggestions for Further Studies**

Based on the findings and limitations of this study, several suggestions for future research are proposed to enhance understanding of the relationship between love styles and marital satisfaction. These recommendations aim to address gaps in knowledge, broaden the scope of research, and provide practical applications for improving marital relationships.

It is suggested that future studies explore the impact of marital orientations and counselling programs aimed at educating couples about how their love styles influence marital satisfaction or dissatisfaction. Such orientations could focus on helping couples understand that unrealistic expectations often stem from misconceptions about love and marriage.

It is recommended that future research extends the focus to include youths and unmarried adults in society. Investigating how love styles develop and influence expectations about marriage among these groups can provide valuable insights for marital preparation. Such studies could assess how early attitudes and preferences around love and relationships shape marital satisfaction later in life.

Further research should explore additional variables that may interact with love styles to influence marital satisfaction. Factors such as emotional intelligence, communication patterns, socioeconomic status, and personality traits could be examined to uncover their roles in marital dynamics. This multidimensional approach would provide a more holistic understanding of marital satisfaction.

Finally, researchers are encouraged to develop and validate culturally specific tools for assessing love styles and marital satisfaction. While existing instruments like the Styles of Love Inventory (SLI-70) and Index of Marital Satisfaction (IMS) have been adapted for Nigerian contexts, creating tools specifically designed for local populations could improve the accuracy and relevance of findings.

### **Conclusion**

Marital satisfaction is deeply influenced by the love styles partners embrace, as love is a fundamental ingredient in fostering harmony and fulfilment within relationships. The findings of this study emphasize

the importance of adopting love styles that strongly correlate with marital satisfaction, such as pragma, storge, eros, and agape, while addressing the negative impacts of styles like mania and ludus.

For marriages to thrive, partners must intentionally create opportunities to give and receive love in ways that align with their mutual needs and expectations. Understanding and applying knowledge of love styles in relationships can empower couples to navigate challenges effectively, enhance intimacy, and build stronger emotional connections.

In conclusion, incorporating knowledge of love styles into marital preparation, counselling, and relationship education can significantly improve marital satisfaction and overall quality of life within families, ultimately contributing to healthier communities and societies.

### **Recommendations**

Based on the findings of this study, the following recommendations are made to promote marital satisfaction and enhance the quality of relationships:

Individuals aspiring to get married should invest in adequate pre-marital preparation. This includes emotional readiness, realistic expectations about marriage, and a clear understanding of the love styles that contribute to marital satisfaction. Such preparation will enable couples to navigate the challenges of marriage effectively and reduce the incidence of domestic violence and spousal abuse that has become prevalent in many households today. Institutions such as religious organizations, community groups, and educational bodies should prioritize pre-marital counselling programs to equip couples with the tools for sustaining healthy marriages.

Couples are encouraged to reflect on and hold onto the love styles that initially brought them together during courtship. Revisiting these foundational aspects of their relationship can reignite the bond and joy they once experienced. Maintaining consistent affection, mutual respect, and shared goals will help couples deepen their connection and navigate the evolving dynamics of marriage.

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