

MARITAL SATISFACTION AMONG MARRIED PEOPLE IN AWKA: A FACTORIAL STUDY OF INTIMACY AND LIBIDO

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Abstract

The study investigated marital satisfaction among married people in Awka: A Factorial Study of Intimacy and Libido. A total number of 165 married men and women, who were randomly selected, using simple random sampling techniques from the Faculty of social sciences, Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka, participated in the study. The ages of the participants ranged from 25 to 44, with a mean age of 29.56 years and a standard deviation of 4.02. The index of marital satisfaction by Hudson (1982), Personal Assessment of Intimacy in Relationship Scale by Schaefer and Olson (1981), and sexual Libido scale by Barton, Wilwerding, and carpenter, (2004) were used for the data collection. The data was analyzed using 2- WAY ANOVA. The result showed in hypothesis one that intimacy had a significant influence on marital satisfaction. The result showed in hypothesis two that libido had a significant influence on marital satisfaction. Finally, the result showed a significant interaction effect of intimacy and libido on marital satisfaction. Based on the findings, the researcher recommended that married people should be reoriented on the need to improve on their intimacy and ensure a reasonable level of sexual libido in their marital relationships as that will help to stabilize and maintain adequate level of marital satisfaction.

Keywords: Marital Satisfaction, Intimacy, Libido, Married People, Awka

Introduction

Contemporary, marriage and marital relationship is the start of forming a family. Marriage has been documented in every known culture. More than 90% of the world's population will marry at least once (Bradbury, Thomas, Fincham, Frank, Beach, & Steven, 2000). In literature, marriage is described as a normative, personal life event in adulthood and involves the living together of two people with different characteristics and needs. In general, people get married for specific purposes such as finding meaning in life and loving for a better quality of marital life.

However, it is worth noting that continuation of marriage may depend on a lot of factors such as marital relationship; because matrimony is more successful when spouses establish a sense of satisfaction with each other. Marital relationship is defined in terms of marital satisfaction, dyadic adjustment, and communication or conflict resolution style. The concept of

marital satisfaction is a multifaceted and multidimensional concept including psychological, socioeconomic and spiritual components. Measures of marital satisfaction, in fact, vary from one researcher to another and their operational definition of marital satisfaction differs. In particular, the criteria for a satisfying marital relationship may be highly varied and may depend on a unique set of culturally enforced norms; obligations, and values, satisfaction is simply the degree of contentment regarding certain of marital relationship as well as the whole relationship. According to some previous researches, marital satisfaction refers to a subjective and evaluation of the relationship. It is a situation in which, couples have satisfaction and feel happy for living together. According to Bradbury, Finchman and Beach (2000), marital satisfaction is a mental state that reflects perceived benefits and costs of marriage to a particular person. The more a marriage partner inflicts on a person, the less satisfied one generally is with the marriage and with the marriage partner. Similarly, the greater the perceived benefits are, the more satisfied one is with the marriage and with marriage partner (Baumeister, 2007).

Marital satisfaction is an overall evaluation of the state of one's marriage and a reflection of marital happiness and function (Schoen, Astone, Rothert, Standish, & Kim, 2002). It has been comprehensively investigated in many studies of marriage and family. Family life and marital satisfaction, in particular, are known as main predictors of overall quality of life (Stutzer & Frey, 2006). Marital satisfaction can affect not only the physical and mental health of both spouses (Holt-Lunstad, Birmingham, & Jones, 2008), but also children's development, well-being, academic performance, social skills, and relationships (Cummings & Davies, 2010; Hetherington & Kelly, 2002).

Meaok (2017) posits that marital satisfaction is the degree of happiness and satisfaction of a married couple regarding their marriage. The marital satisfaction is affected by various social and cultural factors and their interactions. Moreover, the quality of a woman's life is significantly affected by the marital satisfaction. Most prior studies discuss marital satisfaction duly for what the respondent feels on a particular matter regarding marriage. However, the marital satisfaction of a woman is more than a feeling on a particular problem, but includes emotional and physical stableness and achievements. Marital satisfaction can be achieved through the adjustment process between spouses, which then produce marital satisfaction. Furthermore, intimated environment and atmosphere support easier adjustment, producing comfort and caring feelings.

Marital satisfaction research has resulted in the identification of a multitude of factors that

contribute to a satisfactory marital union. These factors include feelings of love, trust, respect and fidelity (Kaslow & Robinson, 1996; Rosen-Grandon, 1998), social support, and commitment, equity of tasks, gender roles, and sexual interaction (Bradbury, Thomas, Fincham, Frank, Beach, & Steven, 2000; Kaslow & Robinson, 1996; Rosen-Grandon, 1998; Veroff, Douvan, Orbuch, & Actelli, 1998). Numerous studies have also been conducted to investigate marital satisfaction in relation to communication and interpersonal processes (Bradbury, et al 2000; Greeff, 2000). Another line of research examines partner similarities, or congruence, such as shared interests in leisure, shared interests in children (Kaslow & Robinson, 1996), similar cognitive processes, religious beliefs and philosophy of life {Bradbury, 2000 et al; Chinitz, 2001; Greeff. 2000; Greenberg 1996; Kaslow & Robinson, 1996; Kohn 2001; Rosen-Grandon, 1998).

Indeed, marital satisfaction is influenced by many factors, for example, safe and pleasurable sexual relationship is mentioned to be one of the most important factors noticed in many researches. Research findings have indicated that sexual affairs are amongst the many reasons for getting married. Sexual satisfaction can bring about a favorable and convenient marriage. Sexuality is one of the most complex and important aspects of women's life. Sexual satisfaction has been defined as "an effective response arising from one's subjective evaluation of the positive and negative dimensions associated with one's sexual relationship".

Marital satisfaction can be achieved through the adjustment process between spouses, which then produce marital satisfaction. Furthermore, intimated environment and atmosphere support easier adjustment, producing comfort and caring feelings. Scholarly assumptions suggest that the important positive emotions in marital relationship cut across many dimensional factors among which are libido and intimacy.

Libido is a Latin word that means 'desire. It has been defined as the urge for, interest in, or drive to seek out sexual objects or to engage in sexual activity (Barton, Wilwerding, Carpenter, & Loprinzi, 2004; Diamond, 2003). People expectations regarding their sexual encounters include several different motivators and may help determine their sexual and relationship satisfaction (Case, 1998). It is a species-typical phenomenon, a complex construct that includes generation of spontaneous sexual thoughts and fantasies, attentiveness and responsiveness to erotic stimuli, awareness of sexual cues and the arousal response to sexual stimuli; these elements are strongly influenced by social and cultural factors (Levine, 1984; Soran & Wu, 2005).

The first step in the traditional model of sexual arousal and orgasmic release is the occurrence of sexual thoughts, fantasies or neediness and hunger. This is the psychological stimulation necessary to experience the buildup and release of sexual tension for both the physiological enjoyment of that process and the avoidance of negative feelings associated with its deprivation (Arcos, 2004; Carson, 2017). Males and females experience pleasure from different stimuli owing to the interplay of the differing sex hormones (Salamon, Esch, & Stefano, 2005). Physiological processes play an important role in human libido as humans learn to feel sexual desire in certain situations and at certain times (Diamond, 2003). With biological roots, both endocrine and neuro-chemical, with both motivational and relational components, complex interplay among these physiological processes can be either inhibiting or enhancing (Bancroft, 2005; Barton, 2004; Basson, 2002; Graziottin, 2000). The male and female sexual cycle is regulated by the amygdala through mediation of the estrogen/androgen related signaling molecules via coupled nitric oxide (NO) release; where NO acts as a neurotransmitter and a locally acting hormone (Salamon, 2005).

The physiological functional integrity of the male sexual organ is dependent only on the nervous and muscular tissues of the corpora cavernosa, but on the endocrine and psychic factors from higher centers of the brain (Saroon & Wu, 2005). An erection occurs, in part, due to release of NO in specific nerve endings in the corpora cavernosa (Murphy & Lee, 2002). The role of testosterone in male sexual function is complex, it is the primary male hormone synthesized in the testes and regulates many physiologic functions, including libido as well as local mechanisms penile tumescence "a swollen bodily organ" (Evans, 2004; Saroon & Wu, 2002). There is a positive effect of testosterone on male libido (de Graaf, Brouwers, Diemont, 2004; Saroon & Wu, 2005). Attempts to have intercourse occur more frequently by the male around the time of female ovulation. This is possibly due to subtle cues from the woman or the woman's production of cycle-dependent pheromones (Wilcox et al., 2004). "A spontaneous sexual act represents the final manifestations of a series of complex and meticulously synchronized processes".

THE CONCEPT OF MARITAL SATISFACTION

Marital satisfaction is thought of as "an attitude of greater or lesser favorability towards one's own marital relationship" (Roach, Frazier & Bowden, 1981). The concept of marital

quality, "defined as a subjective evaluation of a married couple's relationship" (Arrindell, Boelens, & Lambert, 1983), reflecting numerous characteristics of marital interaction and functioning, is concerned with how a marriage or long lasting intimate relationship functions and how the partners feel about that relationship.

The term is often used interchangeably with marital satisfaction, marital adjustment, marital success and marital happiness (Arrindell, et al 2005). The Locke-Wallace Marital Adjustment Test has been widely used to assess marital quality over the last thirty years and continues to be used despite the development of newer scales (Freeeston & Plechaty, 1997). The concept of marital satisfaction has a prominent place in the study of marriage and family relationships and is probably the most frequently studied dependent variable in this field, despite disagreement over its defining criteria (Arrindell, 1983). Marital satisfaction has a central role in individual and family well-being and benefits to society; thus, there is a large body of research on factors that influence marital satisfaction; however, much of it focuses on newlyweds or couples in counseling (Hurlbert, Pierce, & White, 1996; Kurdek, 1998). Factors that influence marital satisfaction include the ability to give and receive positive support, the use of blame, anger or rejection in conflict resolution, self-disclosure and partner disclosure, ethnicity, sexual satisfaction, presence of children, number of marriages and length of marriage (Jose & Alfons, 2007; Kurdek, 1998; Schneewind & Gerhard, 2002). There appears to be no good clinical or theoretical reason to believe that the quality of one's sexual or marital relationship is markedly affected by age, gender, or socioeconomic status or by either a liberal or conservative stance concerning human sexual expression (Hudson, Harrison, & Crosscup, 1981). People have certain expectations of what their intimate relationship will be like, and how these expectations are met often determines how much pleasure one gets from that relationship (Case, 1998). There is a decline in positive feelings regarding the marital relationship among first-time parents and a normative decline in marital satisfaction in the early years of marriage (Hackel & Ruble, 1992; Kurdek, 1995). Sexual satisfaction is related to relationship satisfaction; sexually satisfied women were found to have higher relationship satisfaction than sexually dissatisfied women according to (Hurlbert and Apt 1994). Postpartum women and their partners with less sexual intimacy and greater conflict appear less satisfied with the marital relationship (Hackel & Ruble, 1992). It has been reported that the presence of children decreases marital satisfaction, while increased child spacing increases satisfaction; socioeconomic status has an indirect effect on marital satisfaction (Hatch & Bulcroft, 2004; Miller, 1976). Role transition,



or role strain, is one aspect which could affect marital satisfaction, and it appears that those couples who prepare for the transition to parenthood often have decreased marital satisfaction. A likely explanation for this apparent contradiction is expectancy disconfirmation; these couples have higher expectations; so when unmet, they experience greater dissatisfaction (Hackel & Ruble, 1992). Age appears to have a negative effect on sexual satisfaction among first married as does one's level of education (Jose, Alfons; & Gold, 2006). Marital satisfaction has continued to be a widely investigated topic in the research on marriage and family therapy (Nye, 2006; McKenry & Price, 1998; Spanier & Lewis, 1980). According to Schoen (2002), the concept of marital satisfaction is a global evaluation of the state of one's marriage and a reflection of marital happiness and functioning. In the contribution of (Roach, Frazier, & Bowden, 2001), marital satisfaction refers to a global level of favorability that individual spouses report with their marital relationship. Therefore, marital satisfaction is often viewed as an individual's interpretation of the overall quality of the marriage or the person's happiness with the marriage. From an evolutionary perspective, marital satisfaction can be viewed as a psychological state of regulated mechanisms that monitor the benefits and costs of marriage to a particular person (Shackelford & Buse, 2000).

Factors that influence or contribute to marital satisfaction may also differ across cultures. Husband's income was a more important variable for marital satisfaction in Japan as compared to United States. In another instance, marital satisfaction, life satisfaction, and self-esteem were determined by parents' and children views' of family functioning as reported by Shek (1998).

Longitudinal Theories of Marriage

It is widely accepted among researchers that satisfaction follows a U-shaped trajectory: a pattern of early decline followed by a leveling out during the parenting years and an improvement when children leave home (Van Laningham, Johnson & Amato 2001). However, there is also evidence to suggest that marital satisfaction declines regardless of the presence or absence of children (Clements, Cordova, Markman & Laurenceau 1997). In addition, other patterns of change in marital happiness have been found, with continuous declines, continuous increases, and relatively little change across the life span having been reported.

Support for the U-shaped curve tends to come from cross-sectional research (Karney & Bradbury 1997; Orbuch, House, Mero & Webster 1996), although contradictory results



are to be found among such studies. Linear trends have been found via longitudinal analyses, but these studies may also be reflecting period effects 'changes due simply to growing older' (de Vaus, 2001) rather than actual developmental changes. The issue is further complicated if satisfaction is reported retrospectively. Findings based on retrospective reports of satisfaction tend in general to be viewed with caution, although retrospective reports actually may be more accurate because the distance afforded by time provides a more balanced perspective (Mackey & O'Brien 1995).

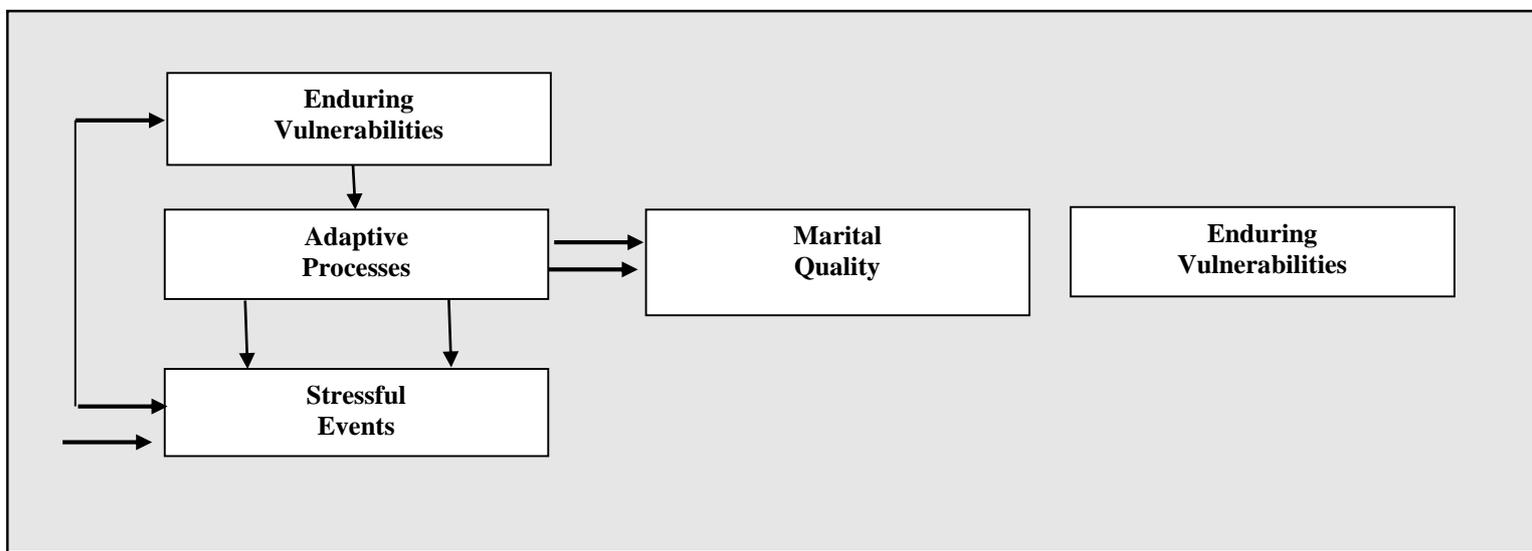
in spite of a large body of research, there are few studies following couples over periods of more than ten years, but researchers have yet to achieve a clear understanding of the trajectory of marital satisfaction in the longer term (Van Laningham, 2001). As with cross-sectional studies, the outcomes of longitudinal research have also been inconsistent. Until recent years the consistency of findings could have been due in part to the inability of statistical techniques to deal adequately with the extent and rate of individual change (Karney & Bradbury, 1997). The problem is that while two individuals may be similarly satisfied at a given point in time, their journey to that point may have been vastly different. As well as being likely to have commenced the relationship with different levels of satisfaction, any changes in satisfaction across a given period of time may have been rapid for one individual and slow for the other; the same event may trigger a rise in satisfaction for one and a decline for the other. In addition, Karney and Coombs (2000), noted that analyzing mean patterns of change which can conceal 'variability across individuals. Although satisfaction in their sample of wives showed an overall decline across a twenty-year period, for a substantial minority of women satisfaction remained constant or increased across assessment intervals. It will take time for studies employing advanced techniques that do allow for analysis of variability across individual trajectories and to generate sufficient data to allow firm conclusions about changes in relationship patterns over extended periods.

In a landmark paper, Karney and Bradbury (1995) advanced a theoretical framework to explain changes in marital quality and stability across time and across couples. Based on their review of over 100 longitudinal studies of marriages and an evaluation of the utility of four commonly-cited theoretical perspectives-social exchange theory (Levinger 1965), attachment theory (Bowlby 1969), crisis theory (McCubbin & Patterson 1982), and behavioural theory - Karney and Bradbury identified some general themes that could provide the basis for understanding

how and why marriages survive or break down. Elements of the four theories highlight aspects of relationships that can provide the foundations for an integrated theoretical framework. For instance, social exchange theory suggests that the perception of a relationship is coloured by the rewards and costs, associated with the relationship, the sort of relationship the individual thinks he or she deserves is their perception of the rewards and costs of being in a relationship with someone else. Attachment theory specifies certain characteristics of each partner that will contribute to the functioning of the relationship. Crisis theory suggests that events such as the transition to parenthood or the experience of unemployment will have an impact on marital quality. Behavioural theory points to the importance of couple interaction and how members of couples cope with relational issues, conflicts and transitions.

Based on their analyses of previous research, Karney and Bradbury identified three classes of variables that, when combined in a single framework, optimize what we can learn about the processes by which marital satisfaction and stability change over time. The three key elements of their theory are outlined below. The relationship of the elements to each other is presented in Figure 1.

Figure 1 A vulnerability-stress-adaptation model of marriage



Enduring Vulnerabilities: the individual strengths and weaknesses each spouse brings to the relationship. These stable characteristics can include their personality, beliefs and attitudes about marriage, their family of origin and social background.

Stressful Life Events: incidents, transitions, or circumstances encountered by the couple that can impinge on their relationship and create tension or stress.

Adaptive Processes: the ways in which a couple addresses conflict, how they communicate, how they support each other and the ways in which they think about marriage, their spouse and their spouses' behaviour

According to Karney and Bradbury's model, the ways in which couples deal with the life events they encounter are the key contributors to the couple's perceptions of the quality of their marriage. The couple's adaptive processes a product of the interaction between the individual spouse's enduring vulnerabilities and the type and severity of the life events they encounter. Thus satisfaction and stability may be relatively high for a couple who have few enduring vulnerabilities and poor adaptive processes if those qualities tested infrequently. On the other hand, repeated or chronic exposure to stressful events may test even those marriages where the spouses are normally well equipped in terms of their individual capacities to cope and their particular patterns of interaction. As Halford (2000) points out, life events can have both negative and positive effects on a relationship depending on the strength of the couple's adaptive processes. A couple's accrued experience in dealing with difficult or stressful circumstances will alter spouses' perceptions of the quality of their relationship and vice-versa: Satisfaction with the marriage is likely to lead to more positive interactions and behaviours, while engaging in positive interactions and behaviour is likely to enhance marital satisfaction and perceptions of quality. Alternatively, unrealistic expectations or dysfunctional patterns of communication may increase the likelihood of relationship problems and declines in satisfaction over time (Halford & Behrens 1999). Ultimately, repeated failures of adaptation will undermine the stability of the marriage, leading to increasing frequency of thoughts of divorce; successful adaptation will strengthen or maintain the relationship and reduce the chances of eventual dissolution of the marriage.

Karney and Bradbury's (1995) theory incorporates personality, family variables, and life events into an integrated framework that allows for the processes underlying marital change to be clearly revealed and examined. The following theory by John Gottman is more narrowly focused, drawing particular attention to the ways in which marital quality and stability can be eroded.

Several empirical studies have been carried out to assess several factors and their influence on marital satisfaction. From past studies on marital satisfaction intimacy is thought to be



one of the most important contributors to marital satisfaction (Prager, 1995). Some researchers have suggested a positive linear relationship between the overall level of intimacy and marital satisfaction (Burke, Weir & Harrison, 1996). According to Merves-Okin, Amidon and Bernt (1991), however, it is possible for a relationship with a low level of intimacy to be satisfying if both partners are happy with it. For example, when both partners are content with low levels of self-disclosure (an aspect of verbal intimacy), they will report their relationship as being satisfying (Merves-Okin, Amidon, & Bernt, 1991).

A study conducted by Sternberg and Barnes (1985), on 24 student couples using Rubin's (1990) Love Scale as a measure of intimacy found that the strongest predictor of relationship satisfaction was the discrepancy between the partners' desired and perceived levels of intimacy in the relationships. The greater the discrepancy, the less satisfying the relationship (Sternberg & Barnes, 1985).

The relationship of intimacy to marital satisfaction is not as direct as it may seem. According to Tolstedt and Stokes (1983), various types of intimacy differ in importance to the determination of marital satisfaction. In their study, an attempt was made to determine the relationship of verbal, affective and physical intimacy with marital satisfaction. Verbal intimacy was defined as self-disclosure, affective intimacy as "...a perception of closeness and emotional bonding in the relationship ...", and physical intimacy as attractiveness of the spouse and physical and sexual activities engaged in by the couple. Participants in the study were 43 couples (ages 18- 59), who had been married for an average of eight years and who were seeking help for marital difficulties. The study required participants to complete a ten item questionnaire assessing their perception of the closeness of the relationship, a self-disclosure questionnaire, and a questionnaire assessing physical and sexual activities. Participants also completed a measure of marital satisfaction, and a measure of behaviours indicative of the potential for divorce. The results of the study suggested that verbal, affective, and physical intimacy were all related to marital satisfaction. However, verbal and emotional intimacy was more predictive of marital satisfaction than physical intimacy.

Unfortunately, Tolstedt and Stokes did not report data on sex differences that may have been present. The relative importance of the three types of intimacy may have been

different for men and women. The results of Tolstedt and Stokes' (1983) study suggest that different types of intimate behaviour may not contribute equally to marital satisfaction. If verbal and affective intimacy is more important to marital satisfaction than physical intimacy, relationships with strong verbal and emotional intimacy may be satisfying despite a lack of physical intimacy (Tolstedt & Stokes, 1983). Similarly, relationships lacking emotional and/or verbal intimacy may be less satisfying, even if the level of physical intimacy is high.

Tolstedt and Stokes (1983) study had several limitations. First, the majority of the couples were experiencing difficulties in their managing and seeking help for them. Thus, the generalizability of the results to non-distressed couples is questionable. Second, the age range of the participants was large. Younger couples, and those with shorter relationships durations, may have different intimacy profiles from older couples (Prager, 1995). Another important limitation of the study was the use of unstandardized measures with no established psychometric properties which could undermine the validity of the results.

Another study assessing the relationship of various types of intimacy to marital satisfaction was conducted by Schaefer and Olson (1991). The definition of intimacy used in this study was developed by Olson (1985) and attempted to integrate previous conceptualizations. Olson distinguished what he called "intimate experience" from intimate relationships. Olson defined intimate experience as "...a feeling of closeness or sharing with another in one or more of ... seven areas." These areas included: emotional intimacy, the feeling of closeness to another person; social intimacy, the sharing of friends and social networks; intellectual intimacy, the sharing of ideas with another person; sexual intimacy, the sharing of affection and/or sexual activity; recreational intimacy, sharing an interest in a particular hobby or sport; spiritual intimacy, having similar religious beliefs, and aesthetic intimacy, the sharing of perceptions as to what is beautiful. An intimate relationship, as defined by Olson (1985) is "...one in which an individual shares intimate experiences in several areas, and there is the expectation that the experiences and relationship will persist over time." Olson feels that intimacy is a process which develops and fluctuates over time. Intimacy is an unstable state, it cannot be "achieved," it must be worked on to be maintained.

In order to empirically measure Olson's (1985) definition of intimacy, Schaefer and Olson (1991) developed a questionnaire called the Personal Assessment of Intimacy in Relationships (PAIR). The PAIR has items pertaining to five of Olson's seven proposed areas of intimacy: emotional, social, sexual, recreational, and intellectual. The other two types of intimacy, ritual and aesthetic were omitted from the questionnaire due to their lack 'conceptual clarity (Olson, 1985). In their validation study of the PAIR, Schaefer and Olson analyzed the relationship between different types of intimacy and couples' scores on the Locke-Wallace Marital Adjustment Test (Kimmel & Van der Veen, 1974). Participants included 192 couples who had been married at an average of 12 years, and ranging in age from 21-60. The results of the study suggested that each type of intimacy was significantly correlated with marital satisfaction, but to differing degrees. For example, there were consistently high correlations between marital adjustment and emotional, recreational, and intellectual intimacy.

A small number of studies have been conducted on the relationship between libido and marital satisfaction. One of the obstacles to conducting research in this area is the lack of an adequate definition of libido. Research on the relationship of libido to marital satisfaction does suggest that the two are linked; however, the relationship between marital satisfaction and libido does not appear to be as strong as the relationship between intimacy and marital satisfaction (Van den Broucke, Vandereycken, & Vertommen, 1995). Patton and Waring (1985) conducted a study assessing the relationship between libido and marital intimacy. They used the Waring [intimacy Questionnaire (WIQ) which assesses Waring's (1981) proposed types of intimacy: conflict resolution, affection, cohesion, sexuality, identity, compatibility, autonomy and expressiveness. Their participants were 250 couples obtained randomly from the community using a telephone directory. The participants' average age was 47, and couples had been married on an average of 22 years. For the analysis, scores on the libido subscale were correlated with the other subscales of the WIQ. The results of this study suggested that men tend to see their sexual relationship as separate from the amount of intimacy in their marital relationship (Patton & Waring). For women, on the other hand, the amount of sexual desire and sexual satisfaction were closely linked to marital satisfaction



In a similar study, Fortin and Theriault (1995) examined the relationship between sexual drive (libido)/sexual satisfaction and marital satisfaction. Participants were 130 males and 130 females, with an average age of 30-34 years (range 20-55+). Each individual was in a relationship ranging from 1 to 2 years. Sexual desire/satisfaction and marital satisfaction were significantly correlated for both males and females, and no sex differences were found in the experience of sexual desire/satisfaction or marital satisfaction. Much research has been conducted to determine whether or not gender has influence on marital satisfaction, but there are no know research on marital satisfaction as affected by intimacy and libido among couples, and this has necessitated the present study.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

World over, satisfaction in marriage is an important topic to many people. Marital satisfaction is thought of as an attitude of greater or lesser favorability towards one's own marital relationship. It is a social phenomenon that plays a central role in individual and family well-being and benefits to the society.

However, a lot of scholarly researches have been conducted to elucidate detailed information concerning marital satisfaction. Surprisingly, despite the abundance of research in this area, rare investigations have been conducted on Nigerian couples with regards to influence of some factors such as libido and intimacy on marital satisfaction. Hence, the present study seeks to cover the lacuna in literature and will want to find answers to the following questions:

Will there be no significant difference on marital satisfaction across married people with adequate and inadequate intimacy?

Will there be no significant difference on marital satisfaction across married people with high and low sexual libido?

Will there be no significant interaction effect of intimacy and sexual libido on marital satisfaction among married people?

PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

The main purpose of the study is to investigate marital satisfaction: a moderating effect of intimacy and libido among married people in Awka. Specifically, the main objectives of the study are to find out whether there will be no significant difference on marital satisfaction



across married people with adequate and inadequate intimacy. It also hopes to examine if there will be no significant difference on marital satisfaction across married people with high and low sexual libido. Finally, it wants to investigate if there will be no interaction effect of intimacy and sexual libido on marital satisfaction among married people.

RELEVANCE OF THE STUDY

This research will be helpful in the identification of some factors affecting marital satisfaction. Improving this awareness may persuade healthcare providers to develop context-based program in addressing marital satisfaction, thereby, increasing marital satisfaction, which may in turn lead to family stability.

Prior to the literature support of researches on variables/factors relating or associated with marital satisfaction, the current study will be an additional text to the existing body of research in this field.

OPERATIONAL DEFINITION OF KEY STUDY VARIABLES

Libido- is the urge for, interest in, or drive to seek out sexual objects or to engage in sexual activity.

Intimacy – it the experience obtained by conversing over private matters and sharing personal experiences.

Marital Satisfaction –The overall evaluation of the state of one's marriage and a reflection of marital happiness and function

HYPOTHESES

1. There will be no significant differences on marital satisfaction across married people with adequate and inadequate intimacy.
2. There will be no significant differences on marital satisfaction across married people with high and low sexual libido.
3. There will be no significant interaction effect of intimacy and sexual libido on marital satisfaction among married people.

MATERIALS AND METHOD

PARTICIPANTS

One hundred and sixty-five (165) married men and women who are students Continue Education Programme (CEP), were randomly selected using stratified random sampling techniques from Faculty of Social Sciences, Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka, participated in the study. Stratified random sampling, is a sampling procedure which involves selecting participants from researchers predetermined cluster of people. The participants consisted of 28 married people from Sociology Department, 52 from Psychology Department, 30 from Political Science, 33 from Economics, 22 from Department of Mass Communication. They comprised of 52 males' ad 113 females. Their ages range from 25 and 44, with the mean age of 29.56 and standard deviation of 4.02.

INSTRUMENT

Three instruments were used for data collection. They comprised of: 1) Index of Marital Satisfaction developed by W.W Hudson (1982) to measure problems associated with marital satisfaction. 2) Personal Assessment of Intimacy in Relationship Scale (PAIR) developed by Schaefer & Olson, (1981) to assess intimacy in relationship and Sexual Libido Scale, Barton, Wilwerding, and Carpenter, (2004) to measure aspects of sexual libido such as quick sexual arousal, interest and impersonal penetrative sex.

RELIABILITY/VALIDITY

The reliability coefficients reported by Hudson (1982) are: Cronbach alpha internal consistency = .96, 2 - hour test-retest = .96. A concurrent validity coefficient of .48 was obtained by Anene (1994) by correlating IMS with Marital Stress Inventory (MSI) (Omoluabi, 1994). Schaefer & Olson, (1981) reported alpha coefficients reliability of 0.70.

The researcher adapted the scale sexual libido, which the project supervisor saw to the face validity of the scale. The researcher conducted a pilot study with one hundred (100) students of Nnamdi Azikiwe University, to ascertain the internal consistency of the scale and obtained a reliability coefficient of 0.76.

PROCEDURE

The researcher met the married men and women in Faculty of Social Sciences (consisting of Economics Department, Sociology Department, Psychology Department, Mass Communication Department and Political Science Department) in small groups and introduced herself to them.

After the introduction and with their affirmation of interest, the researcher sampled each of the group using simple random sampling techniques. This is a sampling techniques that allows everybody equal chance to participate in the study. And this was done through the selecting of folded papers put together in a bowl, in which the researcher wrote a YES and NO. Those that picked YES participated in the study and were the actual participants of the study, whose responses were analyzed. The researcher administered a total number of 180 questionnaires but 165 were found valid for the study.

DESIGN/STATISTICS

The study is a survey one. It comprised of two independent variables with two levels each (Libido - High and Low Libido; Intimacy - Adequate and Inadequate Intimacy) and one dependent variable (Marital Satisfaction). The researcher adopted 2X2 factorial design and 2-Way ANOVA was used for data analysis and testing of the hypotheses.

RESULT

Table 1: Showing the mean and standard deviation of intimacy and libido on marital satisfaction.

Marital satisfaction

Intimacy	Mean	N	Std
Adequate Intimacy	71.20	112	11.53
Inadequate Intimacy	80.09	53	13.55
Total	74.05	165	12.86
Libido			
High Libido	71.72	114	11.86
Low Libido	79.27	51	13.60
Total	74.05	165	12.87

The mean table above showed that participants with adequate intimacy recorded the mean of 71.20 with the standard deviation of 11.53. While the participants with inadequate intimacy

recorded the mean of 80.09, with the standard deviation of 13.55. This result showed that there is significant difference between the participants that have adequate intimacy and those that have inadequate intimacy on marital satisfaction among people studied.

The mean table above also showed that participants with high sexual libido recorded the mean of 71.72 with the standard deviation of 11.86. While participants with low sexual libido recorded the mean of 79.27, with the standard deviation of 13.60. This result showed that there is no significant difference between participants with high libido and those with low libido on marital satisfaction among people studied.

Table II: Showing the summary of two-way. ANOVA of intimacy and libido on marital satisfaction

Source	Type III sum of squares	Df	Mean square	F	Sig.
Corrected	25676.734 ^a	59	435.199	30.922	.000
Model	349705.125	1	349705.125	24847.516	.000
Intercept	8893.898	23	386.691	27.475	.000
Intimacy	7552.254	25	302.090	21.464	.000
Libido	1206.063	8	150.758	10.712	.000
Intimacy * Li	1477.775	105	14.074		
Error	932027.000	165			
Total					

The above table indicates that intimacy has a significant influence on marital satisfaction $F(165) = 27.48, P < .05 = .000$. Therefore, the hypothesis which stated that "There will be no significant differences on marital satisfaction across couples with adequate and inadequate intimacy, was confirmed.

Again, the same table shows that libido has a significant influence on marital satisfaction $F(165) = 21.46, P < .05 = .000$. Therefore, the hypothesis which stated that "There will be no significant differences on marital satisfaction (across couples with high and low sexual libido," was also confirmed.

Finally, the table also shows that there was a significant interaction effect between libido and intimacy on marital satisfaction $F(165) = 10.71, P < .05 = .000$. Therefore, the



hypothesis which stated that "There will be no significant interaction effect of intimacy and sexual libido on marital satisfaction among couples," was confirmed.

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

The study examined "marital satisfaction: a moderating effect of intimacy and libido among married people in Awka," During the course of the study, copies of questionnaires were administered, collected and analyzed. Based on the analysis made, the researcher found out that:

The hypothesis I, which stated that "There will be no significant differences on marital satisfaction across married people with adequate and inadequate intimacy," was accepted. The result of the analysis made showed that intimacy significantly influenced marital satisfaction. It is plausible therefore to say that one of the things that determine how marriage works and the rate of satisfaction married people have in their marital relationships is strongly tied to the level of intimacy between the partners involved. It goes however to say that if the level of intimacy between spouse are inadequate, satisfaction with their marriage will be negatively affected. But, if the reverse is the case (that is if the intimacy is adequate), satisfaction with their marriage will be positively affected, leading to marital satisfaction. This strongly may be implicated on the lack of difference in their levels of intimacy.

However, this is also in line with the findings Schaefer and Olson (1981). In their validation study of the PAIR, Schaefer and Olson analyzed the relationship between different types of intimacy and couples' scores on the Locke-Wallace Marital Adjustment Test (Kimmel & Van der Veen, 197-U Participants included 192 couples who had been married an average of 12years, and ranging in age from 21-60. The results of the study suggested that each type of intimacy was significantly correlated with marital satisfaction, but to differing degrees. For example, there were consistently high correlations between marital adjustment and emotional, recreational, and intellectual intimacy. This result is similar to that found by Tolsted and Stokes (1987) in that emotional, or affective intimacy, was more important to marital satisfaction than physical or sexual intimacy. Interestingly, the correlations between the different types of intimacy and marital satisfaction were stronger for women than for men. Unfortunately, Schaefer and Olson (1991) did not report whether or not the difference between correlations

for men and women were statistically significant.

Hypothesis II, which stated that "There will be no significant differences on marital satisfaction across married people with high and low sexual libido," was accepted. The result of the 2-Way ANOVA showed that libido significantly influenced marital satisfaction. In line with the findings, it makes sense however to opine that libido as one of the major factors in marriage and marital relationship, influences to a greater extent the partners' satisfaction with their marriage. It is worthwhile therefore to assert that while low intimacy may affect marital satisfaction negatively, high libido is believed to have a positive effect on marital satisfaction. This aggregate of contribution between these (two) factors may account for lack of difference between them on marital satisfaction.

However, this is in line with the findings of Patton and Waring (1985), who conducted a study assessing the relationship between libido and marital intimacy. They used the Waring Intimacy Questionnaire (WIQ) which assesses proposed types of intimacy: conflict resolution, affection, cohesion, sexuality, identity, compatibility, autonomy and expressiveness. Their participants were 250 couples obtained randomly from the community using a telephone directory. The participants' average age was 47, and couples had been married an average of 22 years. For the analysis, scores on the libido subscale were correlated with the other subscales of the WIQ. The results of this study suggested that men tend to see their sexual relationship as separate from the amount of intimacy in their marital relationship (Patton & Waring). For women, on the other hand, the amount of sexual desire and sexual satisfaction were closely linked to marital satisfaction.

In a similar study, Fortin and Therinault (1995) examined the relationship between sexual drive (libido)/sexual satisfaction and marital satisfaction. Participants were 130 males and 130 females, with an average age of 30-34 years (range 20-55). Each individual was in a relationship ranging from 1 to 2 years. Sexual desire/satisfaction and marital satisfaction were significantly correlated for both males and females, and no sex differences were found in the experience of sexual desire/satisfaction or marital satisfaction.

Finally, the third hypothesis which stated that "There will be no significant interaction effect of intimacy and sexual libido on marital satisfaction among married people," was accepted. The reason may be implicated on the fact that both are marriage-related constructs, which have

been proven to contribute to marital satisfaction according to literally documentations and empirical findings. Based on the findings, the researcher concludes that: (1) Libido significantly influenced marital satisfaction. (2) Intimacy significantly influenced marital satisfaction and (3) there was an interaction effect between libido and intimacy on marital satisfaction.

LIMITATION OF THE STUDY

The main limitation of the study was the horizon of the study and small sample size used in the study. A greater number of samples from round the country would yield a credible result for generalization.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Having seen that libido and intimacy influenced marital satisfaction across married people in Awka, the researcher therefore recommends that:

Psychologists, Family therapists, counselors, and religious leaders should inculcate the knowledge of the study in helping their clients who may be facing problematic marital satisfaction, which has a link with lack of intimacy and lack of sexual desire. This will enable such families to build up these factors for marital satisfaction through the help of such personnel.

Married people should find ways of improving in the level of intimacy in their marital relationship.

Also, they should heighten the level of their sexual experiences in order to improve the level of their marital satisfaction.

SUGGESTION FOR FURTHER STUDIES

The researcher suggests that future research on marital satisfaction should investigate the relationship between other factors such as marital stress, infidelity etc and marital satisfaction to ascertain whether these factors also influence partners' marital satisfaction. Finally, the researcher suggests that future research on marital satisfaction should be widened to accommodate different cities in South east, and this larger scope for spatial generalization.

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