

RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN PARENTING STYLES AND MARITAL ADJUSTMENT OF MARRIED TEACHERS IN SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN OBIO/AKPOR LOCAL GOVERNMENT AREA OF RIVERS STATE

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ABSTRACT

Marriage is a sacred institution meant to bring happiness to concerned husbands and wives. However, sometimes marriage may turn out to be a source of worries and sorrow. In some cases, method of rearing children may be a contributory factor in dissatisfaction arising from marriage. In this study, therefore, relationship between parenting styles and marital adjustment of married teachers in secondary schools in obio/akpor local government area of Rivers State was addressed. A total of 1107 married teachers in Obio/Akpor Local Government Area of Rivers State participated in the study. Two research questions and two hypotheses were formulated to guide the study. The instruments for data collection were Marital Adjustment Scale and Parenting Styles Questionnaire which were validated by four experts in Psychology, Measurement and Evaluation. The reliability coefficients of Marital Adjustment Scale and Parenting Styles Questionnaire are 0.83 and 0.80 respectively. The data obtained from these instruments were subjected to multiple regression analysis using SPSS and the results showed that there was a low, positive and significant relationship between authoritative parenting style and marital adjustment. The relationship between authoritarian parenting style and marital adjustment was very low, positive and insignificant. The relationship between permissive parenting style and marital adjustment was also very low, positive and insignificant. There was a low, positive and significant joint relationship between the parenting styles and marital adjustment of married teachers in secondary schools in Obio/Akpor Local Government Area of Rivers State. Based on the findings, it was recommended that parents in Obio/Akpor Local Government Area of Rivers State should strive to adopt authoritative parenting style as a method for rearing their children. This recommendation has become imperative because authoritative parenting style has been demonstrated to separately correlate significantly with marital adjustment of married teachers in secondary schools in Rivers State.

KEYWORDS: Authoritarian, authoritative, permissive parenting styles, democratic parenting, marital adjustment, relationship, marriage, conflict, demandingness and responsiveness.

INTRODUCTION

Marriage is a legal union between a man and a woman as husband and wife, and the word 'spouse' refers only to a person of the opposite sex who is a husband or wife (Arshad, Mohsin & Mahmood, 2014). Marriage is a sacred institution which brings together non-blood related man and woman into union as husband and wife. Marriage

brings with it a high hope and expectation for the couples involved. The life of a man and a woman united in marriage is said to be responsible and complete. This is because marriage is supposed to lead to blissful life for the husband, wife and children in a family. However, marriage is not all that rosy as some people would want to describe it negatively as collision of two universes or worlds (Veenboven, 1983).

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Hence, marriage requires care, love and a lot of sacrifices for it to succeed. Poorly-managed marriage can lead to dissatisfaction, acrimony, hostility, divorce or even death of the husband, wife or children. Some major sources of friction in marriage include issues concerning sex, religion, social life, job, mutual friends, in-laws, money, education, lack of children or number or sex of children.

Marital adjustment was defined as the condition in which there is usually a feeling of pleasure and contentment in husband and wife and with each other (Hashmi, Khurshid, & Hassan, 2007). Marital adjustment is a state in which there is an overall feeling between a husband and wife of happiness and satisfaction with their marriage and with each other (Thomas, 1977). It refers to the management of the post-marriage issues arising as a result of living together and striving to achieve a common purpose for ultimate satisfaction of the couples. In other words, it refers to the management of issues arising from the two colliding worlds to the satisfaction of the couples concerned. Margolin (2000) recognized ten areas of values, couple growth, communication, conflict resolution, affection, roles, cooperation, sex, money and parental style as potential sources of conflict between husbands and wives that needed adjustment. Husbands and wives should avoid insensitivity but place serious premium on consideration of each other's feelings and needs. They should strive to strike a balance when dealing with each other so as to reduce ill-feeling. A study on marriage and marital adjustment in USA presented social activities and recreation, training and disciplining of children, religion, in-law relationship, financial matters, sexual relationship, communication, mutual trust and companionship as major areas of marital adjustment (Smith, 2011). Some people advocate against early marriage to enable the spouses acquire more life experiences needed to regulate their attitudes, utterances and treatment of each other. A study conducted by Vaishnavranja (2010) revealed that overall dissatisfaction level is high with women-respondents who got married at early age. Akhiani, Rathi and Mishra (1999) found that women who married at advanced age had better marital adjustment than women of early marriage. The result of a longitudinal study conducted by Bahre and Richard (2004) showed that couples who made their marriages in later ages, got more education, and did not face any financial uncertainty, stayed in long and stable

marriages. David (1987) found that early marriage was the most significant variable that affected divorce. The results of the study conducted on marital adjustment and life satisfaction among early and late marriages by Arshad, Mohsin and Mahmood (2014) showed that marital adjustment correlated positively and significantly with age at marriage ($r=0.33$, $P<0.05$) and that there was a significant difference in marital adjustment between those involved in early marriages and late marriages.

Parents are presumed to have vision for the children they bring into life. For this purpose, parents develop some strategies they use to see the children move through stages of life towards realizing the vision and conforming to acceptable social norms. They also devise child-rearing practices which involve specifying parents' expectations, performance demands, attentiveness to rules, etc, as well as the style of discipline that the parent's utilize to enforce their expectations. The instrument which parents often use to direct and shape the lives of their children is the parenting style. Parenting style is a psychological construct representing standard strategies that parents employ in their child-rearing practices to realize their tacit goals for their children (Spera, 2005). It refers to the manner in which parents raise their children. Parenting is a complex activity that includes many specific behaviours that work individually and together to influence child-rearing outcomes. The construct of parenting style is used to capture normal variations in parents' attempts to control and socialize their children (Baumrind, 1991). Baumrind (1991) assumes that normal parenting revolves around issues of control. Although parents may differ in how they try to control or socialize their children and the extent to which they do so, it is assumed that the primary role of all parents is to influence, teach, and control their children so as to become fulfilled individuals. Parenting style involves two important aspects of parenting: parental responsiveness and parental demandingness (Maccoby & Martin, 1983). Parental responsiveness refers to the extent to which parents intentionally foster individuality, self-regulation, and self-assertion by being attuned, supportive, and acquiescent to children's special needs and demands (Baumrind, 1991). On the other hand, parental demandingness refers to the claims parents make on children to become integrated into the family whole, by their maturity demands, supervision, disciplinary efforts and

willingness to confront the child who disobeys (Baumrind, 1991).

Based on whether parents are high or low on parental demandingness and responsiveness, four classes of parenting styles have been identified. They include indulgent, authoritarian, authoritative, and uninvolved parenting styles (Maccoby & Martin, 1983). Each of these parenting styles reflects different naturally occurring patterns of parental values, practices, and behaviours and a distinct balance of responsiveness and demandingness (Baumrind, 1991).

Authoritative parenting style refers to a situation whereby parents guide their children through life stages by setting out standards for children to observe which the parents oversee by giving well-explained directives and administering corrective punishment for nonconformity (Berger, 2011). Authoritative parents are both demanding and responsive. They monitor and impart clear standards for their children's conduct. They are assertive, but not intrusive and restrictive. Their disciplinary methods are supportive, rather than punitive. They want their children to be assertive, socially responsible, self-regulated as well as cooperative (Baumrind, 1991).

The authoritarian parenting style involves a situation where children are expected to follow the strict rules established by parents without questioning and failure to adhere to such rules usually results in punishment (Berger, 2011). Authoritarian parents are highly demanding and directive, but not responsive. They are obedience- and status-oriented, and expect their orders to be obeyed without explanation from them or questioning from their children (Baumrind, 1991). These parents provide well-ordered and structured environments with clearly stated rules. Authoritarian parents can be divided into two types: nonauthoritarian-directive, who are directive, but not intrusive or autocratic in their use of power, and authoritarian-directive, who are highly intrusive.

Indulgent/permissive/nondirective parenting style is a pattern of parenting in which parents are accepting, make few demands on their children and rarely attempt to control their behaviour (Berger, 2011). Indulgent parents are more responsive than they are demanding. They are nontraditional and lenient. They do not require mature behaviour. They allow considerable self-regulation and avoid confrontation (Baumrind, 1991). Indulgent parents may be further divided into two types:

democratic parents, who, though lenient, are more conscientious, engaged, and committed to the child, and nondirective parents who think children need to learn by their mistakes.

Uninvolved parents are low in both responsiveness and demandingness. In extreme cases, this parenting style might encompass both rejecting-neglecting and neglectful parents, although most parents of this type fall within the normal range. Because parenting style is a typology, rather than a linear combination of responsiveness and demandingness, each parenting style is more than and different from the sum of its parts (Baumrind, 1991).

In addition to differing on responsiveness and demandingness, the parenting styles also differ in the extent to which they are characterized by a third dimension: psychological control. Psychological control "refers to control attempts that intrude into the psychological and emotional development of the child" (Barber, 1996) through use of parenting practices such as guilt induction, withdrawal of love, or shaming. One key difference between authoritarian and authoritative parenting is in the dimension of psychological control. Both authoritarian and authoritative parents place high demands on their children and expect their children to behave appropriately and obey parental rules. Authoritarian parents, however, also expect their children to accept their judgments, values, and goals without questioning. In contrast, authoritative parents are more open to give and take with their children and make greater use of explanations. Thus, although authoritative and authoritarian parents are equally high in behavioural control, authoritative parents tend to be low in psychological control, while authoritarian parents tend to be high.

Early research in parenting and child development found that parents who provide their children with proper nurture, independence and firm control, have children who appear to have higher levels of competence and are socially skilled and proficient (Perkins, 2000). In a study by Spera (2005) on the impact of parenting styles on adolescents' self-esteem and internalization of values, it was found that style of parenting is related to two self-esteem dimensions, academic and family and to the self-transcendence and conversation values. Adolescents of indulgent parents show highest scores in self-esteem whereas adolescents from authoritarian parents obtain the worst results. In contrast, there were no differences between the

priority given by adolescents of authoritative and indulgent parents to any of the self-transcendence and conservation values, whereas adolescents of authoritarian and neglectful parents showed differences in self-transcendence and conservation values. It should be noted that this present study is delimited to only three parenting styles of authoritative, authoritarian and permissive parenting styles.

Statement of the problem

Two persons involved in a marriage relationship are expected to adopt one acceptable parenting style suitable to both of them. This is necessary to ensure peace and harmony and to enjoy some level of happiness and satisfaction in the family. A situation whereby one of the spouses prefers one parenting style while the other prefers another may be a recipe for anarchy especially if none of the spouses is prepared to cede ground or adjust. Wives must realize that in times of divergent opinions on how to nurture the children, the wishes of husbands should be allowed to prevail and the wives should make some adjustments even if only to see the provisional outcomes. Alternatively, a situation whereby both spouses are compatible in terms of choice of parenting style to adopt may probably reduce friction or dissatisfaction in the family and make fruitful the concerted efforts of the couples towards realizing the vision for the children and also reduce the need for adjustment in regard to child rearing practices. It was uncertain if parenting styles of married teachers in Obio/Akpor Local Government Area of Rivers State correlate with their marital adjustment. This study, therefore investigated relationship between parenting styles and marital adjustment of married teachers in secondary schools in Obio/Akpor Local Government Area of Rivers State.

Purpose of the study

This study was geared towards investigating the relationship between parenting styles and marital adjustment of married teachers in secondary schools in Obio/Akpor Local Government Area of Rivers State. In specific terms, the objectives of the study were to;

(1) determine the separate relationship between parenting styles and marital adjustment of married teachers in secondary schools in Obio/Akpor Local Government Area of Rivers State.

(2) determine the joint relationship between parenting styles and marital adjustment of married teachers in secondary schools in Obio/Akpor Local Government Area of Rivers State

Research questions and hypotheses

To address the objectives of the study, two research questions and two hypotheses were formulated. Research question one was answered using beta value while research question two was answered with r-value both of which were obtained from multiple regression analysis. Hypothesis one was tested using independent sample t-test while hypothesis two was tested using ANOVA associated with multiple regression analysis. The hypotheses were tested at 0.05 alpha level and appropriated degrees of freedom. The research questions and hypotheses include;

R_{q1}: What is the separate relationship between parenting styles and marital adjustment of married teachers in secondary schools in Obio/Akpor Local Government Area of Rivers State?

R_{q2}: What is the joint relationship between parenting styles and marital adjustment of married teachers in secondary schools in Obio/Akpor Local Government Area of Rivers State?

H_{o1}: There is no significant separate relationship between parenting styles and marital adjustment of married teachers in secondary schools in Obio/Akpor Local Government Area of Rivers State

H_{o2}: There is no significant joint relationship between parenting styles and marital adjustment of married teachers in secondary schools in Obio/Akpor Local Government Area of Rivers State.

METHOD

The study involved 1107 married teachers in Obio/Akpor Local Government Area of Rivers State. The 20 government secondary schools in Obio/Akpor Local Government Area participated in this study. Through the use of purposive sampling technique, 1107 teachers were drawn from the 20 public secondary schools available in the local government area. The instruments for data collection were Marital Adjustment Scale (MAS) and Parenting Styles Questionnaire (PSQ). These two instruments are non-cognitive assessment questionnaire

designed to measure marital adjustment and parenting styles respectively of married teachers in the secondary schools in the local government area. The Marital Adjustment Scale contained two sections; section A and section B. Section A elicited personal data on teachers' gender and educational level, while section B contained 20 items measuring marital adjustment with a minimum score of 20 and maximum score of 80. The parenting Style Questionnaire (PSQ) contained 10 items measuring parenting styles including authoritative, authoritarian and permissive parenting styles. The minimum score obtainable by a married teacher from this instrument was 10 as the maximum score obtainable was 40. The items on both instruments were responded to on 4-point Likert scale format of strongly agree, agree, disagree and strongly disagree weighted 1, 2, 3, 4 for negatively-keyed items and 4, 3, 2, 1 for positively-keyed items. The instruments' validities were determined by requesting two experts from Measurement and Evaluation, and two experts from Psychology to vet the items for validity. The suggestions made by these experts were incorporated and integrated into the final versions of the instruments.

The reliabilities of the instruments were determined through test-retest method. A sample of 80 married teachers was given the instruments to respond to. When they had done so, the instruments were retrieved and scored. After a period of two weeks, the instruments were again given to the same set of married teachers to respond to. When they had done so for the second time, the instrument were retrieved and

scored. The scores obtained following the first and second administrations of the instruments were collated and analyzed to obtain the reliability indices of the instruments. The reliability coefficient of Marital Adjustment Scale (MAS) was found to be 0.83, while the reliability coefficients of sub-sections of Parenting Style Questionnaire were 0.76 for authoritative parenting, 0.82 for authoritarian parenting, 0.78 for permissive parenting and 0.80 overall. These instruments were finally administered to 1107 married teachers who constituted the sample of the study. The data obtained from the instruments were subjected to analysis using SPSS (version 17).

RESULTS

The data obtained from the respondents following the administration of the instruments were analyzed and the following results obtained.

R_{q1}: What is the separate relationship between parenting styles and marital adjustment of married teachers in secondary schools in Obio/Akpor Local Government Area of Rivers State?

H₀₁: There is no significant separate relationship between parenting styles and marital adjustment of married teachers in secondary schools in Obio/Akpor Local Government Area of Rivers State

The data obtained from the respondents were analyzed using multiple regression analytical tools in order to answer research question one and hypothesis one. The result obtained is shown in table 1.

Table 1: Multiple regression analysis of the separate relationship between parenting styles and marital adjustment.

Model	Unstandardized coefficients		Standardized coefficient		
	B	Std. Error	Beta	t _{cal}	t _{crit}
constant	36.192	2.316		15.627	1.96
Authoritative	.475	.118	.381	4.025	1.96
Authoritarian	.196	.118	.098	1.661	1.96
Permissive	.038	.118	.017	0.322	1.96

From table 1, it can be seen that the beta value for authoritative parenting style is 0.381 which implies a low and positive relationship

between authoritative parenting style and marital adjustment of secondary school teachers. The beta value is 0.098 for authoritarian parenting

style which implies a very low and positive relationship between authoritarian parenting style and marital adjustment of secondary school teachers. The beta value for permissive parenting style is 0.017 which implies a very low and positive relationship between permissive parenting style and marital adjustment of secondary school teachers. These values also imply that of the three types of parenting styles surveyed, authoritative parenting style had the greatest relationship with marital adjustment of secondary school teachers. Authoritarian parenting style had the second greatest relationship with marital adjustment of secondary school teachers. Permissive parenting style had the least relationship with marital adjustment of secondary school teachers. The table also showed that the calculated t-value for authoritative parenting style is 4.025 which is greater than the critical t-value of 1.96 obtained at 1105 degrees of freedom and alpha level of 0.05. Since the calculated t-value for authoritative parenting style is greater than the critical t-value, the null hypothesis is therefore rejected. This implies that there is a significant relationship between authoritative parenting style and marital adjustment of married teachers in secondary schools in Obio/Akpor Local Government Area of Rivers State. The calculated t-value for authoritarian parenting style is 1.661 which is less than the critical t-value of 1.96 obtained at 1105 degrees of freedom and alpha level of 0.05. Since the calculated t-value for authoritarian parenting style is less than the critical t-value, the null hypothesis is accepted. This implies that

there is no significant relationship between authoritarian parenting styles and marital adjustment of married teachers in secondary schools in Obio/Akpor Local Government Area of Rivers State. The calculated t-value for permissive parenting style is 0.322 which is less than the critical t-value of 1.96 obtained at 1105 degrees of freedom and alpha level of 0.05. Since the calculated t-value for permissive parenting style is less than the critical t-value, the null hypothesis is accepted. This implies that there is no significant relationship between permissive parenting styles and marital adjustment of married teachers in secondary schools in Obio/Akpor Local Government Area of Rivers State. The table also shows that the model is best explained by the equation, $Y=36.193+0.475X_1+0.196X_2+0.038X_3$, where y represents teachers' marital adjustment, x_1 represents the contribution of authoritative parenting style, x_2 represents the contribution of authoritarian parenting style and x_3 represents the contribution of permissive parenting style to the magnitude of marital adjustment of married teachers in secondary schools in Obio/Akpor Local Government Area of Rivers State.

R_{q2}: What is the joint relationship between parenting styles and marital adjustment of married teachers in secondary schools in Obio/Akpor Local Government Area of Rivers State?

To answer this research question, the r-value was obtained from multiple regression analysis of the data generated from the instruments. The result is shown in table 2.

Table 2: Multiple regression analysis of the joint relationship between parenting styles and marital adjustment.

Variables	\bar{x}	Sd	R	R ²	Adjusted R ²
Authoritative	43.06	5.24			
Authoritarian	31.74	4.49	.389	.151	.148
Permissive	24.48	3.81			
Marital adjustment	61.08	8.03			

Table 2 shows that r-value for the joint relationship between parenting styles and marital adjustment of married teachers in secondary schools in the local government area is 0.389.

This value shows that there is a low positive joint relationship between the parenting styles and marital adjustment of married teachers in secondary schools in the local government area.

The r-square value for the joint relationship between parenting styles and marital adjustment of married teachers in secondary schools is 0.151. This value implies that 15.1% of variations in marital adjustment of married teachers can be accounted for by the joint effect of authoritative, authoritarian and permissive parenting styles, while the remaining 84.9% of variations in marital adjustment of married teachers cannot be explained by the joint effects of authoritative, authoritarian and permissive parenting styles.

H₀₂: There is no significant joint relationship between parenting styles and marital adjustment of married teachers in secondary schools in Obio/Akpor Local Government Area of Rivers State.

To test this hypothesis, the f-value was obtained from ANOVA associated with multiple regression analysis of the data generated from the instrument. The result is shown in table 3.

Table 3: ANOVA of the multiple regression analysis of the joint relationship between parenting styles and marital adjustment.

Model	Sum of squares	df	Mean square	F _{cal}	F _{crit}
Regression	4043.487	3	1347.829		
Residual	69645.626	1103	63.142	21.346	2.60
Total	73689.113	1106			

Table 3 shows that the values of the mean square for regression and residual are 1347.829 and 63.142 respectively. The calculated f-value is 21.346. The critical f-value obtained at 3 and 1103 degrees of freedom and alpha level of 0.05 is 2.60. The calculated f-value is greater than the critical f-value. Hence, the null hypothesis was rejected. The implication of this is that there is a significant joint relationship between parenting styles and marital adjustment of married teachers in secondary schools in Obio/Akpor Local Government Area of Rivers State.

DISCUSSION

For the consideration of separate relationships between parenting styles and marital adjustment of secondary school teachers in Obio/Akpor Local Government Area of Rivers State, it was found that, of the three types of parenting styles surveyed, authoritative parenting style had the greatest relationship with marital adjustment of secondary school teachers. Authoritarian parenting style had the second greatest relationship with marital adjustment of secondary school teachers while permissive parenting style had the least relationship with

marital adjustment of secondary school teachers. The relationship between authoritative parenting style and marital adjustment is significant. The relationship between each of authoritarian parenting style and permissive parenting style with marital adjustment is not significant. This finding that authoritative parenting style had the greatest relationship with marital adjustment of secondary school teachers, followed by authoritarian parenting style with permissive parenting style as the parenting style with least relationship with marital adjustment is similar to the findings of Slicker (1998) that revealed that parenting styles were related to adolescents' behavioural adjustment. The finding that authoritative parenting style had the greatest relationship with marital adjustment can be explained from the fact that parental involvement, encouragement of psychological autonomy, and demands for age appropriate behaviour combined with limit setting and monitoring (authoritative parenting) contribute greatest to good psychological, academic and behavioural adjustment among adolescents (Steinberg, Darling & Fletcher; 1995). Again, authoritative parenting style is most consistently associated with positive developmental outcomes in offspring, including school adjustment and

academic achievement, higher self-esteem, psychological competence, and less psychological and behavioural dysfunction (Steinberg, Darling & Fletcher; 1995). Authoritative parenting style most fosters optimal adjustment in children by offering emotional support by means of responsiveness and establishing guidelines, limits, expectations by means of demandingness (Martinez, Garcia & Yubero, 2007).

It was also found that there was a low positive joint relationship between the parenting styles and marital adjustment of married teachers in secondary schools. This joint relationship between the parenting styles and marital adjustment, though low, was significant at the appropriate degrees of freedom and probability level. The finding of low but significant joint relationship between the parenting styles and marital adjustment is similar to the findings of Chandola and Bhanot (2008) which revealed that there was a significant relationship between parenting styles (when treated as a whole) and adjustment of high school children. The finding of low but significant joint relationship between the parenting styles and marital adjustment can be explained from the fact that authoritative parenting style when treated singly correlated significantly with the marital adjustment. Hence, in combination with authoritarian and permissive parenting styles, the effect of authoritative parenting style was large enough to result in significant joint relationship between the parenting styles and marital adjustment.

CONCLUSION

Separately, authoritative parenting style had low positive and significant relationship with marital adjustment; authoritarian parenting style had very low positive relationship with marital adjustment and permissive parenting style also had very low positive relationship with marital adjustment. For the three types of parenting styles surveyed, authoritative parenting style had the greatest relationship with marital adjustment of secondary school teachers. Authoritarian parenting style had the second greatest relationship with marital adjustment while permissive parenting style had the least relationship with marital adjustment of secondary school teachers. There was a low positive and significant joint relationship between the parenting styles and marital adjustment of married teachers in secondary schools in

Obio/Akpor Local Government Area of Rivers State.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Following the findings of this work, it is recommended that;

- Parents in Obio/Akpor Local Government Area of Rivers State should strive to adopt authoritative parenting style as a method for rearing their children. This recommendation has become imperative because authoritative parenting style has been demonstrated to separately correlate significantly with marital adjustment of married teachers in secondary schools in Rivers State.
- However, when it is not possible to adopt authoritative parenting style as a method of rearing their children, parents in Obio/Akpor Local Government Area of Rivers State should consider adopting an integrated combination of authoritative and authoritarian parenting styles as an alternative method for rearing their children.
- Parents in Obio/Akpor Local Government Area of Rivers State should avoid as much as possible adopting permissive parenting style as a method of child rearing as it has extremely low insignificant relationship with marital adjustment of married teachers in secondary schools in Rivers State.

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