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Guideline for Enhancing Intimacy in Marriage through Communication

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Abstract: *This study identified communication problems in marriage and ways of enhancing intimacy. Specifically the study determined the problems encounter by couples in their communication. Communication guideline needed by the couple to enhance intimacy in marriage. Data was collected using Structured questionnaire. Data was analyzed using mean Means was used to analyze the data,Findingsrevealed ten (10) communication problems encountered by couple in marriage and sixteen guidelinesneeded by couple to enhance intimacy in their marriages. Based on the finding recommendation were made, among other, mass media should be used to disseminate information on guidelines for enhancing intimacy in marriage through communication.*
Key points: *Communication, Intimacy, Marriage, Guidelines, Problems*

I. Introduction

Every human interaction calls for communication among the parties involved. Marital relationship requirescommunication also; Marriage is intimae lifelong union between couples, marriage is expected to be so binding that the couple should become one flesh (OBI 2012). Intimacy according to Stinnett Hilliard and Stinnett (2000) is knowing all about one's partner in every area of life, such as preference in food, clothes, recreation, dreams, work, goals for life, challenges, likes and dislikes, joy and sorrow. It means discovering the essence of oneself through emotional, social intellectual and physical union with one partner. All these need to be communicated from one partner to another,

The joy of marriage seems from a commitment that is communicated as the couple learns to talk with one another and express the deepest longing of their heart, soul and body (Hagee 2005). This involve sharing every thought, ideas, needs, problems, joy, expectations and plans learning. To deepening of bond between the couple, Ezeji (1998), is of the view that communication is one of the essential ingredients of life which when lacking, stop the flow of life in marriage, it is therefore, important that intimacy in marriage cannot be obtained in marriage without wholesome responsible communication which is the "road" to intimacy. (Chapman 2003) stated that communication is the vehicle through which information and ideas are exchange so that common ground could be reached between couple using mutually understanding symbols codes and languages (Eboh 2002). Communication is a verbal or non-verbal process of sharing information with another person. Couple talk much to each other also listens to one another on regular basis (Mcdonald and Mcdonald 1994). Communication involves sending and receiving messages information, communicating every feeling, desirer, thought, to another. Obi (2012) believed that unless talking and listening are accompanied by honest, loving feedback on the part of the listener, little communication could take place. Communication can therefore, be successful to make it accomplish its purpose in marriage, or unsuccessful hence the need for guidelines. Ketterman (1998) observed communication as a successfultransmission of information and feelings from one person to another involving the assurance that whatever, is stated by the communicator is reasonably similar to that which is head and understood by the listener. The nature of marital relationship is determined by the kind of messages the couple send to each other, Communication is a multi-stage process comprises of a source (sender - message -channel - receiver and feedback (Val &Kent 1992).

Every information is send from a sourcethrough a channel to the receiver before the feedback is received, Ebo (2002) State that the communication process is fraught with noise as message can be misunderstood or misinterpreted or wrongly send which might result in loss of information. There is need for information to flow among couples in marriage .Obi(2012) stated that communication breakdown which can gradually occur in any marriage is the second most advertised family problem. She also stated that 50% of all marriages have serious communication problems. Haggees (2005) observed that problems are bad in themselves butnot being able to communicate with each other about those problems is very dangerous. Chopman (2003) observed that divorce, separation and family violence have characterized many marriages today.This may be as

result of poor handling of conflicts, Stinnet (1998), stated that 86% of divorced couples gave deficient in communication as the main problem. It is easy to communicate in the internet today but very often a couple cannot well in their breakfast table. The world is growing more mechanical than natural and real, often neglecting to talk with one mother (living, caring and loving humanbeings) in preference to television and internet. Nelson(1997) observed that distance, poor listening, lack clarity of massage, reluctance to accept message, failure to act promptly and hurtful abusive words and emotional out bursts as barriers to communication. Some couples desire intimacy but unknown to them, their communication lead them apart. There is need therefore to source help for such by providing a guide. Nigeria is not devoid of the above mentioned problems.

Purpose of Study:

The main purpose of the study was to identify guideline for enhancing intimacy in marriage through communication, specifically the study determined

1. The problems encountered by couples in their marriage through communication.
2. Guidelines needed by couples to enhance intimacy in marriage through communication.

Scope of the Study:

The study focused on guide line for enhancing intimacy in marriage through communication, the area of the study was Makurdi local government Area.

II. Methodology

Research Design;

A survey research design was adopted for the study,

A survey research is one in which a group of people or items is studied bycollecting and analyzing data from a few people or items considered to be representative of the entire group. This design was adopted since the study sought to find out the opinion of couples in MakurdiLocal Government Area (LGA) of Benue State.

Area of the Study:

Area of the study is MakurdiL.G.A. it cover a land mass of sixteen kilometers radius and is located at both banks of river Benue. The present Makurdi Local Government Area comprised of (11) eleven wards situated at the savannah and can be found at latitude 44-300 and 8.22 of the equator occupy a very fertile land and its indigenous aremainly famers. They produce crops such as yam, rice, groundnuts, cassava. Weaving is their major craftwork. Makurdi LGA is bounded in the North by Guma LGA, Gwer LGA to the East and south, and Gboko L.GA. to the west. It has a considerable number of industrial and commercial establishments. Its inhabitant are mostly Tiv tribes, other tribes include Idoma, Igede, Hausa, Igbo, Etulo and Jakums.

Population for the Study:

The population comprised 300,377 couples according to 2006 census report of the federal republic of Nigeria official gazette. Theyare busy peoples, mixture of educated and illiterates. Many are engaged in farming business and petty trading while some are civil servants.

Sample and Sampling Technique, sample random sampling is used to select sample size using ukuji and Egewu (1989) formula;$n = \underline{N}1 + N\ (e)\ 1$(Ukuje and Ezewu, 1989)

Where:

n = sample size

N = total population

e = Error or level of precision $(0.05)^2$ (5%)

Total population of Makurdi L G A couple = 300377

$$n = \frac{300377}{1 + 300377\ (0.05)^2}$$

$$n = \frac{300377}{751}$$

$$N = 399$$

Instrument for data collection:

Instrument used was structured questionnaire guided by two research questions. This was based on four-point scale of highly important = four-points important = 3 points, minimally important = 2points and not important = 1point. The study was validated bythree expertsfrom home science and management department,

college of food technology, University of Agriculture, Makurdi. The reliability was established using Cronbach's Alpha production, A reliability co-efficient of 0.86 was obtained.

Data Collection Techniques:

The instrument was administered by hand with help of two assistants, to 399 subject, three hundred and sixty (360) were correctly filled and retrieved back.

Data Analysis Techniques:

Mean was used to analyses data, judgment point of 2.5 was used for decision making.

Findings of the Study:

The following findings were made.

1. Ten problems encountered by couples in their marriage through communication.
2. Sixteen guidelines needed by couples to enhance intimacy in marriage through communication.

Table 1: Mean response of problems encountered by couples in their communication

S/No	Problems Encountered by Couples throughCommunication	X	Remark
1.	There is often lack of openness, fruitfulness and honesty in talking to each other.	3.5	Imp
2.	words spoken are often nagging, full of complain and blame, critical, harsh, provocative and sarcastic.	3.75	
3.	There is like of warmth and encouragement.	3.50	
4.	At times, they ignore each other, resort to silence coldness, with draw and avoid each other.	3.25	
5.	There are traces of intimidation through physical abuse and threats.	3.5	
6.	Messages sent are often contradictory	2.85	
7.	They are often too busy and tired to have enough time to talk	3.75	
8.	Communication may often be through phone or children	3.50	
9.	There are often delays in sending and responding to messages	3.00	
10.	Inability to listen to information or messages	3.02	

Table 2: Mean responses of guideline needed by couples in their communication.

S\No	Guidelines needed by couples in their communication.	X	Remark
1.	Always try to communicate clearly and be polite	3.55	important
2.	Maintain a good tone, vice and language.	3.48	,,
3.	Be open, direct, frank honest, and sincere for easy understanding.	3.42	,,
4.	Be brief and convey only the required.	3.23	
5.	Information.Stick to the subject.	3.25	,,
6.	Make your conversation meaningful Interesting and pleasant	3.50	
7.	Be constructive and give positive, uplifting encouraging appreciate and supportive messages.	3. 58	
8.	Try to understand each other's and be sensitive to fillings	3. 18	,,
9.	Refrain from being judgmental, critical attack the subject, not the person	3, 00	,,
10.	Create a loving environment with expectancy do not use violence.	3.32	,,
11.	Create the habit of active listening and giving rapport attention.	3.50	,,
12.	Respond from pettily and act on message and give directive messages and give direct feedback.	3.50	
13.	12. Keep communication channel open by being available for discussion.	3.45	
14.	Create time to be together listening and share.	3.46	
15.	As much as possible does not permit noise or argument or rude interruptions.		
16.	Keep your words positive, loving and give soft answer.	3.53	
17.	Try to hear well before responding	3.51	

Table 2 indicates that 17 guidelines the couples needed to enhance intimacy in marriage through communication had means scores between 2.75 and 3.75. These are all above 2.5 which is the cutoff point.The items are therefore accepted as guideline needed to enhance intimacy in marriage through communication.

III. Discussion of the findings

The finding on the communication problems encountered by couple in Makurdi LGA show that, there are problems in all the components of communication that is in the source, message, receiver, channel and feedback. This is in agreement with Obi (2012) and Eboh (2002), that communication process fought with noise and massages could be misunderstood, misinterpreted or wrongly sent resulting in loss of information.

The finding showed lack of openness, truthfulness and honesty in the couples' communication. The words spoken are full of nagging complain criticism and blame as well as harsh and provocative. This indicates problem in the source and when the source is problematic, the process could be marred. Ifeduba (2011) is of the view that speakers are not often clear themselves about what they mean which equally cause problem to the receiver. Lack of personal skill is a problem in communication as people have many defense mechanisms. Elevated stress levels could be a cause of harshness, noting that farmers and traders in Makurdi Local Government Area are very busy people. The couples are too busy people is trying and to talk or listen carefully or attentively to information or massage. Even when massages were received, there are delays in ending and responding to them. These reveal problem that have capacity to distort communication. This is in line with Stinnett et al (2000), and Chopman, (2003), who observed that poor listening, failure to act properly, hurtful and abusive words, emotional out barest, silence citizens and endless chatter are barriers to communication. Poor listening skills is a problem in communication and many people are poor listeners even in everyday life as people listing and think about too many things at the same time. Poor listing is more pronounced in conflicting situations science no one is ready to listing to jargon, it could be noted that Makurdi town has a noisy physical environment. Unreceptive atmosphere is a hindrance in communication, poor communication hampers intimacy in marriage and creates conflict and rob marriage of joy, goodness and diminish self-confidence and esteem of others (Stinnetet al (2000).

The second finding indicated the sixteen guidelines needed to enhance intimacy in marriage through communication. These guidelines covered needs in sending, listing and responding to massages, there is a strong link between good communication and marital relationship, open and honest communication creates an atmosphere that allow freedom of expression as well as love and admiration of one another and people are able to resolve some unavoidable problems that arise in marriage (Ifeduba 2011). The guidelines are necessary to enhance communications in the couples in Makurdi L.G.A because one of the great needs of marriage today is good communication (Stinnett et al 2000 and Obi 2012). There is need for improvement in all the different components of communication process, Makurdi L.G.A is full of homes with video blaring, show casing couples fighting and shouting at each other. The need for guidelines has become obvious, science talking does not guarantee communication, listening is harder than talking, especially when there is no interest or motivation. Communication difficulties can develop at any times in marriage. Communications which involve self-revelation through talking and listening, sharing of feelings, experiences, values, priorities, and judgment intimacy needs to be leant, to create a loving feedback. It is hope that these guidelines will empower the couples adequately if embraced.

IV. Conclusion

Families and couples are experiencing many challenges due to fast changing in the society today. Couples interest, perspectives, and involvements are also changing too. These changes directly or indirectly affect communication in marriage. Makurdi Local Government Area couples encounter some communication problem with each other. These could build barriers leading to isolation, loneliness or emotional problems, couples who desire intimacy need to eliminate these problems or their communication could be hampered.Theyneed help in both sending, listening and responding to messages or information. Home science and management education can readily help through imparting couples with family life education; it is believe that as the couples embrace these guidelines their communication will be enhanced.

V. Recommendation

Based on the finding the following recommendation were made,

1) Mass media should be used to disseminate information on communication guidelines for marital intimacy
2) Home science and management extension workers should be sent to the villages to educate the villagers on communication guidelines in marriage.
3) Family living should be in cooperated in the school circulation at all level.

4) Home science and management bodies such as HECON, HERAN, HETAN, Women commission, social welfare, information commissioner, the church and non-Governmental organizations should team up to impart the necessary knowledge through conferences, workshops and seminars.
5) Marriage counseling centers should be open in the village
6) The communication guidelines should be printed and distributed as hard bills to the couples.
7) Couples should embrace training and be available for opportunities created and read bills and books on communications.
8) The government or other bodies should mount communication improvement campaign.
9) Village meetings could be use as forum to teach couples communication guidelines.

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