

# Coupling Sex and Emotional Expressiveness as Determinants Of Marital Intimacy Among Married Couples

Wellington Omosefe Jesuorobo, Martins Noyosase Igbineweka

*Counselling Psychologist and Lecturer, Department of Educational Evaluation*

*And Counselling Psychology, Faculty of Education, University of Benin,*

*Benin City, Nigeria.*

*Corresponding author : [martins.igbineweka@uniben.edu](mailto:martins.igbineweka@uniben.edu)*

## ARTICLE INFO

### *Article history:*

*Received 05 January 2023*

*Revised 12 January 2023*

*Accepted 31 January 2023*

### *Keywords:*

Keywords

Keywords

Keywords

Keywords

## ABSTRACT

The study examined coupling sex and emotional expressiveness and how they affect marital intimacy among married couples in Benin Metropolis of Edo state, Nigeria. Three hypotheses were raised to guide the study, while the descriptive correlational research design was adopted. Four hundred and fifty (450) spouses drawn from two churches (each from Pentecostal and Orthodox churches) in Benin metropolis were selected through simple sampling technique and convenience sampling method. The instrument used for the study was the researcher's structured questionnaire titled Coupling Sex, Emotional Expressiveness and Marital Intimacy Questionnaire (C S E M I Q). Data collected were analyzed using regression analysis. The findings of the study revealed that a combination of frequent coupling sex and emotional expressiveness had significant contribution to marital intimacy, while coupling sex and emotional expressiveness had some level of significant influence on marital intimacy. Based on the findings, it was recommended that Couples should sensitize regularly on the importance of regular and pleasurable sex and positive emotional expression to enhance healthy marital intimacy.

© IJAGC 2021, All right reserved

ISSN: 2722-2365 (Online) 2722-2357 (Print)

## Introduction

Marriage and family life will become boring, lonely, stale and suffocating without expressions of intimacy. Intimacy in marriage is vital to keep the relationship fresh and growing. When a partner desires to avoid his /her spouse, overtake the desire to be with him/her, such marriage is suffering from intimacy deficiency disorder and needs urgent attention. Studies have showed that 45% of the marriage institution today is struggling to survive (Mbwirire, 2018). As marital relationships experience intimacy challenges and conflicts that sometimes result in divorce, separation, broken homes, violence, child neglect and several other devastating effects (Sholfer & Shoben , 2004). When spouse energy is

directed towards concealing rather than revealing his or her mind to the spouse, then the two of them are growing apart. If the desire to share precious things with the spouse is replaced with the desire to grab and hug, the relationship needs urgent help because it is infected by acute intimacy deficiency (Akinsola, 2012). Series of studies have also showed dysfunctional and disharmonious marital relationship among spouses in Benin (Oleabhiele & Ighalo, 2015; Oimage, 2013).

Rakwena (2018) conceptualizes intimacy as a dynamic process occurring between couples because they are engaged in the reciprocal feeling of disclosing their inner self, being trusted, validated, and emotionally closed. Intimacy is at the core of loving relationships and a major bonding force in marriage. Intimacy is highly regarded in marriage because it solidifies a couple's commitment to sustaining the relationship and is positively associated with marital satisfaction (Rakwena, 2010). Intimacy is also a stressbuster (Narciso and Ribeiro, 2009) and plays a fundamental role in marital functioning, commitment, stability, and psychological and physical wellbeing (Langdridge., Gabb & Lawson, 2018; Patrick., Sells., Giordano & Tollerud 2007). A marriage with good intimacy and subsequent marital satisfaction may indicate that the individual in question has a strong marriage (Kirby, 2005).

High level of marital intimacy and spousal attachment are considered an important indicator of long-term relationships (DeMoss, 2004), and these are important variables that affect the general well-being of individuals (Larson & Holman, 1994). In addition, it can be said that marital intimacy is a crucial variable related to concepts such as empathy (Tutarel-Kışlak & Çabukça 2002), emotional intelligence (Cingisiz, 2010), the values of spouses (Hamarta., Deniz., Dilmaç & Arslan, 2015), couple burnout (Çapri and Gökçakan, 2013), retirement satisfaction (Bozoğlan, 2015), and psychological well-being (Yeşiltepe & Çelik, 2014). Kelvin (2016) opined those marriages devoid of intimacy are usually filled with negative intention, clash and devastating conflicts. If a marriage experiences an unshared decline in the level of intimacy, it will grow from being boring or lonely to becoming bleak and destructive. Given the crucial role of marital intimacy in marriage satisfaction, the absence of intimacy in marriage can be a major cause of divorce (Weinberger., Hofstein and Whitbourne, 2008) and erode mutual trust and romance (Patrick and Beckenbach, 2009) among couples, and thereby resulting in emotional impairment/distress, isolation, marital maladjustment, and dissatisfaction (Narciso & Ribeiro, 2009). Therefore, the knowledge of factors such as coupling sex and emotional expressiveness that could influence dyadic intimacy is fundamental to the development of successful pre-marital and marital intimacy.

According to Adjabenj (2011) sex, if it goes well can elevate a marriage to another level and bring the couple together more than anything else, keeping the relationship fresh and exciting. However, it can also be the cause of many arguments if things do not go precisely to plan. Often, these arguments come from differences in terms of how much sex a couple wants to have. As a rule, this will be because the man wants to have sex more and more frequently than the woman does. This then causes several arguments as the woman feels she is being cheapened and used for sex and the man feels that he is not fancied by the woman, not as loved, or that she is simply holding out on him when she would not have to do much in order to make him very happy (Thomas & Anderson, 2003). Both arguments are legitimate reasons to be unhappy. According to DcGenova and Rice, (2002), men should understand that women want to be an emotionally connected when they are having sex and that they want it to be special each time (as a rule). At the same time, they are simply less sexually aroused than men are and can often not be in the mood if they have headaches, or if it is a bad time of

the month. Men then need to be more sensitive to these issues and to try and make the experience as pleasant as possible. Try to recognize when a woman is not feeling in the right mood and back off before it becomes too much of a problem. At the same time, understand that there is not anything personal or malicious behind it– it simply means that the spouses are on a different wavelength.

Weiss (2009) emphasised that women also need to understand the situation from a man's point of view. Being sexually aroused for a man is very much a primal force that can feel akin to extreme hunger. He sees it as an important way for both to be closer and so it can be hurtful and highly frustrating when he is rejected, especially if it happens regularly. In our culture, men are not really allowed to talk freely about their sexual urges and are taught to keep quiet and this can only make it all worse. However, Thomas and Anderson, (2003) opined that the most important thing to remember is that couples need to talk about it (sex). Sex is usually a reflection of whatever state the relationship is in (Akinade, 2015). For instance, if communications have become hostile and withholding (for punishment or defence purposes) that hostility manifests itself sexually as well, while chronic disappointment and dashed expectations can manifest in a serious loss of intimacy in a relationship. There is a lack of intimacy regarding the basic friendship in the relationship; it is also expressed in some manner in bedroom. If there had been communication problems, it might be hard to achieve sexual intimacy. This situation could necessitate counselling interventions with the use of marital therapy.

Regular sex can bring spouses closer together, make them more compatible and will help a spouse release tension (Goldsmith, 2014). Regular sex is a little exercise that is good for couples even up to old age, make couples who do this look ten years younger than their peers do, sex releases hormones that help our bodies both physically and mentally, and keeps the body chemistry healthy. Regular sex exercise enhances sound sleep, diminishes pain, reduces stress, and improves mood, good sex can be fun, romantic, exciting and something that make most consenting adult feel warm all over. Couples who take time to cultivate and maintain healthy and satisfying sexual relations tend to be more connected; spouses are more confident and alive when their sex life is working. Sex is a release of day to day pressures and seems to make everything else better, creating vibrancy, passion, and romance between the spouses. Issues of poor sex life in marriage may lead to heart problems and other health maladies; sex also creates passion and a unique connection.

Lack of intimate sex in a marriage could cause deep resentment and hurt within the partners. This in turn may foster anger and feelings of alienation, which could result to marital discord. Previous research has found that sexual satisfaction is associated with marital intimacy and stability (Yucel, 2016). Investigating sexual frequency and the stability of marital cohabiting unions, its finding revealed that low sexual frequency was associated with significantly higher rates of union dissolution in cohabitation and in marriage (Scott et al. 2010). Specifically, a longitudinal study conducted by Yeh., Lorenz., Wickrama., Conger and Elder, (2006) established sexual satisfaction as one of the key predictors of marital stability and suggested that this relationship is mediated by marital intimacy. A plethora of research has found that sexual satisfaction is predictive of marital intimacy and satisfaction (Gadassi., Bar-Nahum., Newhouse., Anderson., Heiman., Rafaeli, & Janssen, 2016; McNulty., Wenner & Fisher 2016; Nezhad & Goodarzi, 2011). In a recent mixed methods longitudinal study, Schoenfeld., Loving., Pope., Huston & Štulhofer (2016) found that positive nonsexual behaviours toward spouse and sexual satisfaction but not sexual frequency predicted marital

satisfaction. Higher sexual satisfaction is not only associated with but leads to higher marital intimacy and less marital instability.

Coupling sexual communication has been found to predict marital intimacy (Rehman., Janssen., Newhouse., Heiman., Holtzworth-Munroe., Fallis & Rafaeli, 2011; Timm & Keiley, 2011) and sexual satisfaction (Timm & Keiley, 2011). In fact, Rehman., Janssen., Newhouse., Heiman., Holtzworth-Munroe., Fallis & Rafaeli, (2011) found that a couple's sexual communication was associated with their marital satisfaction when nonsexual communication was not. A study conducted by Hess and Coffelt, (2012) revealed that couples who used more sexual terms in their couple communication reported being more satisfied with both their sexual communication and their intimate relationship. Litzinger and Gordon, (2005) found that not only did communication and sexual satisfaction both independently predict marital satisfaction, strength in either communication or sexual satisfaction can compensate for weakness in the other. Clarifying the relationship between marital characteristics and marital processes with marital satisfaction in a sample of 201 respondents in a study conducted by Rosen-Grandon., Myers and Hattie, (2004), it was found that sex and length of marriage contributed significantly to marital satisfaction. However, a study carried out by Ebenuwa-Okoh (2010), to examine the moderating impact of sex and age at marriage on the relationship between communication flow and marital adjustment, showed no significant relationship.

Another factor that seems to relate to marital intimacy is emotional expressiveness. Emotional expressiveness is the tendency to show one's emotional reactions or responses in observable behavior. Expressions of emotions are the relationships between internal and external experiences. Emotional expressiveness has a great influence on people's marital relationship, as most couples have never learnt how to express their emotions. Without being able to express themselves and listen to each other, spouses cannot achieve intimacy, but by developing emotional expressiveness attitude, married partners will be able to establish and preserve a loving respectful relationship between each other. Spouses that express their emotions to each other may affect their behaviour toward each other Miller., Caughlin and Huston, (2003). When a spouse thanks and shows appreciation to the partner for something done in relation to their marriage, it will consolidate the behaviour that is displayed and will cause the spouse to display more positive behaviour in the future, thereby increases their marital intimacy and satisfaction. This will likewise positively develop spouses' thoughts and perceptions regarding their marriage, and the value that the spouses attribute to each other and the extent to which they share their feelings with each other will increase (Gur-Aryeh, 2010). Thus, when couples express their personal emotion, many of the trivial issues vanishes; consequently, the degree of tension in a well intimate marriage is usually minimal and when tension arrives it is always resolved amicably, probably in discussion and the level of tension and anxiety becomes very low.

Emotional expression is view as a primary signalling system that organizes key interactions in couple and family systems. Emotions are seen as powerful, healthy, informative, and organizational (Johnson, 1996 in Jesuorobo, 2019). Halberstadt (1991) assessed three components of expressiveness in her research: frequency, intensity, and acceptability. Frequency refers to how often the emotional expression occurs in the family. Intensity refers to the degree of intensity of the emotional expression. Acceptability refers to the acceptability of the emotional sex expression by the family. According to Johnson (2008), underneath almost every concern that spouses bring to therapy are questions about their

partner's accessibility, which is the couples need to know that they can reach their spouses and feel connected and open to them. Responsiveness: meaning every spouse longs to be able to count on his/her partner to attune to his/her emotional cues, especially when they are upset. Engagement means spouses want to feel special and cherished by their significant other. Thus, when spouses lack emotional expressiveness, there is the likelihood that accessibility, responsiveness as well as engagement will be scarce in such marital relationship. In dyadic relationship, emotional expressions are the music of the relational dance. They form a basis of social connectedness, constantly giving us signals about the nature of our social bonds (Soltani., Mamoodi and Hosseini, 2013; Johnson, 2004).

Emotional expression orients partners to their own needs, organizes responses and attachment behaviors, and activates core cognitions concerning self, other, and the very nature of relationships (Johnson, 2009). It is also the primary signaling system in relationship-defining interactions (Coan, 2010). Emotions need to be recognized and translated to understandable messages and constructive actions through expressions (Soltani., Mamoodi and Hosseini, 2013). In fact, researchers have found that spouses' emotional expressiveness to be highly related to their reports of marital intimacy and satisfaction (Rauer 2005). Rauer (2005) examined the role of positive and negative emotional expressivity in the marital relationship. Data from 58 married couples were used to assess spouses' levels of emotional expressivity and how these levels predicted reports of marital functioning. Regression analyses indicated that positive emotional expressivity had limited influence on marital functioning. Yedirir and Hamarta, (2015) studied Emotional Expression and Spousal Support as Prediction of Marital Satisfaction. The study group comprised 195 married couples (N = 390) residing in one of the biggest cities in central Anatolia. The data analysis used the Pearson moment correlation coefficient, multiple regression analysis, and the Kendall correlation coefficient. The results indicated that significant correlation was found between marital satisfaction and the expression of proximity emotion. Lamke (1989) in De Witt (2014) also studied expressiveness and its association with marital satisfaction. His results indicated that husbands' expressiveness was related to marital adjustment for both husbands and wives. However, wives' expressiveness was not predictive of either husbands' or wives' marital satisfaction.

Emotional expressiveness and coupling sex are important component of communication in romantic relationships. They promote intimacy between romantic partners and encourage relational development. Although, literature showed that series of research have been carried out on variables like coupling sex and emotional expressiveness, it seems that no study have look at a combination of coupling sex, emotional expressiveness, and how they affect dyadic intimacy especially among Christian spouses in Benin City. It is based on the that this study investigated the influence of coupling sex and emotional expressiveness on marital intimacy among Christian married partners in Benin metropolis in Edo state, Nigeria.

The objective of the study was to investigate the influence of coupling sex and emotional expressiveness on marital intimacy among Christian married partners in Benin metropolis in Edo state, Nigeria. Specifically, this study was designed to find out whether: a.) significant combined influence of coupling sex and emotional expressiveness exists on marital intimacy among married persons in Benin Metropolis of Edo state, b.) coupling sex will have any significant influence on marital intimacy among married persons in Benin Metropolis of Edo state, and c.) emotional expressiveness will significantly influence marital intimacy



among married persons in Benin metropolis of Edo state. Research questions to the study as follows:

a.) Is there any significant combined influence of coupling sex and emotional expressiveness on marital intimacy of married couples in Benin Metropolis of Edo state, Nigeria? b.) Will coupling sex have any significant influence on marital intimacy among married couples in Benin metropolis of Edo state, Nigeria? c.) Will emotional expressiveness have any significant influence on marital intimacy among married couples in Benin Metropolis of Edo state, Nigeria? Related to the research questions, hypothesis for the research is a.) there will be no significant combined influence of coupling sex and emotional expressiveness on marital intimacy among married couples in Benin Metropolis of Edo state, Nigeria, b.) Coupling sex will not have any significant influence on marital intimacy among married couples in Benin Metropolis of Edo state, Nigeria, and c.) Emotional expressiveness will not significantly influence marital intimacy among married couples in Benin metropolis of Edo state, Nigeria.

## **Method**

The Correlational Research Design was adopted for this study. The population of the study included all the spouses in Churches in Benin City. The sample size of 450 spouses was drawn and used for the study. Participants consisted of volunteer married spouses from a Pentecostal church and one Orthodox Church who were selected by means of the convenience sampling method. The instrument used for data collection is the researcher's constructed questionnaire tagged, Coupling Sex, Emotional Expressiveness and Marital Intimacy Questionnaire (C S E M I Q). The instruments is comprised of sections A, B and C. Section A measured marital intimacy with 16 items; section B measured coupling sex with 17 items, while section C measure emotional expressiveness with 10 items. The validation of the instruments was done by experts in the fields of Counselling Psychology and Measurement and Evaluation. Pearson product moment statistic was used to establish the correlation coefficients of the instruments, which were found to be 0.80 for marital intimacy, 0.74 for coupling sex and 0.77 for emotional expressiveness.

## **Findings and Discussion**

### *Findings*

Hypothesis 1: There will be no significant combined influence of coupling sex and emotional expressiveness on marital intimacy among married couples in Benin Metropolis of Edo state, Nigeria.

**Table 1:Regression model Summary and Coefficients of the Multiple Regression, Analysis on the Combined Influence of Coupling Sex and Emotional Expressiveness on Marital Intimacy among married persons in Benin Metropolis Edo state, Nigeria.**

<i>Model</i>	<i>Sum of squares</i>	<i>d.f</i>	<i>Mean square</i>	<i>f.</i>	<i>Sig.</i>
Regression	4500.953	2	2250.476		
Residual	1093.135	407	.2.686	837.905	.000
Total	5594.088	409			

Model summary:  $R = .897$ ,  $R^2 = .805$ ,  $R^2 (\text{Adj}) = .804$ , std. error = 1.63889,  $F(2,407) = 837.905$ ,  $P < .05$

Table 1 revealed the combined influence of coupling sex and emotional expressiveness on marital intimacy. A critical look at the table shows that coupling sex with emotional expressiveness have significant contribution to marital intimacy ( $F(2,407) = 837.905$ ,  $P < .05$ ). Hence, the null hypothesis is rejected. The intimacy is explained by coupling sex and emotional expressiveness, keeping all the variables constant.

Hypothesis 2: Coupling sex will not have any significant influence on marital intimacy among married couples in Benin Metropolis of Edo state, Nigeria.

**Table: 11 Regression summary on the influence of coupling sex on marital intimacy**

Model	Unstandardized coefficient		Standardized coefficient	T	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
Constant	-3.741	1.212		-3.088	.002
Coupling sex	.828	.029	.814	28.345	.000

Model summary:  $R = .814$ ,  $R^2 = .663$ ,  $R^2 (\text{Adj}) = .662$ , std error = 2.14889,  $F(1,408) = 803.442$ ,  $P < .05$

Table 2 showed that coupling sex has a significant influence on marital intimacy ( $\text{Beta} = .814$ ,  $t = 28.345$ ,  $P < 0.05$ ). Based on this, the null hypothesis is rejected. By implication, coupling sex has a significant positive influence on marital intimacy. Thus, with a relative increase on coupling sex, a corresponding relative increase in marital intimacy can be significantly predicted, all things being equal. The adj.  $R^2$  value of .663 showed that 66% variation on marital intimacy could be explained by coupling sex among couples in Benin metropolis of Edo state, Nigeria.

Hypothesis 3: Emotional expressiveness will not significantly influence marital intimacy among married couples in Benin metropolis of Edo state, Nigeria.

**Table: 111 Regression Summary on the Influence of Emotional Expressiveness on Marital intimacy**

Model	Unstandardized coefficient		Standardized coefficient	T	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
Constant	11.918	.675	.810	17.669	.000
Emotional expressiveness	1.049	.038		27.857	.000

Model summary:  $R = .810$ ,  $R^2 = .655$ ,  $R^2 (\text{Adj}) = .655$ , Std Error = 2.17365,  $F(1,408) = 775.991$ ,  $P < .05$

Table 3 showed that emotional expressiveness has a significant influence on marital intimacy (Beta= .810,  $t= 27.857$ ,  $P < 0.05$ ). Based on this, the null hypothesis is rejected. By implication, emotional expressiveness has a significant positive influence on marital intimacy. Thus, with a relative increase on emotional expressiveness, corresponding relative increase in marital intimacy can be significantly predicted, all things being equal. The adj. R<sup>2</sup> value of .655 showed that 65.5% variation on marital intimacy could be explained by emotional expressiveness among couples in Benin metropolis of Edo state, Nigeria.

### *Discussion*

Hypothesis 1, which predicted that there is no combined influence of coupling sex and emotional expressiveness on marital intimacy, was rejected. This lends credence to the findings of Yedirir and Hamarta, (2015), Litzinger and Gordon, (2005) and Rosen-Grandon., Myers and Hattie, (2004) whose studies revealed that marital intimacy is a function of various factors such as pleasurable sex, money, communication, love, respect, and emotional expression, among others. The result showed that when taken together, the predictor variables (coupling sex and emotional expressiveness), had significant impact on marital intimacy. This implies that enhancement of marital intimacy could be guaranteed when various variables other than one such as coupling sex and emotional expressiveness are combined together by married couples. Thus, by developing emotional expressiveness attitude, spouses will be able to establish bonding and preserve a loving relationship between each other, which could eventually lead to pleasurable sex that promotes a high level of marital intimacy, and spousal attachment. In addition, a high level of positive emotional expression and coupling sex are considered as important determinants of satisfactory dyadic relationships and these are important variables that affect the general well-being of individuals.

Hypothesis 2, predicted that coupling sex would not have any significant influence on marital intimacy was rejected. Meaning coupling sex could significantly predict difference on marital intimacy among married spouses. However, the level of difference is less than when variables were combined. The respondents felt that sex alone without positive emotional expression would not yield enormous satisfactory intimacy in marriage. The findings agreed with earlier studies by Yucel ( 2016), Scott and Constance, (2010), Gadassi., Bar-Nahum., Newhouse., Anderson., Heiman., Rafaeli., and Janssen, (2016), McNulty., Wenner and Fisher, ( 2016), Nezhad and Goodarzi, (2011) who all agreed that frequent sex in marital relationship tends towards enhancing intimacy. However, the findings contradicts study by Ekenuwa-Okoh (2010),who examine the moderating impact of sex and age at marriage on the relationship between communication flow and marital adjustment and found no significant relationship. This could be because only sex will not be able to establish marital adjustment and intimacy, as it needs to be complimented with positive emotional cues, tender care, mutual understanding, and responsiveness among others.

Hypothesis 3 which stated that emotional expressiveness would not significantly influence marital intimacy was rejected. The result showed that emotional expressiveness has significant positive influence on marital intimacy among married spouses. This is corroborated by the findings of DeWitt (2014) and Rauer (2005) which found that emotional expressiveness significantly influence marital intimacy and healthy harmonious dyadic relationship. This could be because spouses that express their emotions to each other may



affect their behaviour toward each other. When a spouse show positive emotional expression such as caring and appreciation to the partner for something done in relation to their marriage, it will consolidate the behaviour that is displayed and will cause the spouse to display more positive behaviour in the future, thereby increases their marital intimacy and satisfaction. This will likewise positively develop her spouse's thoughts and perceptions regarding their marriage, and the value that the spouses attribute to each other and the extent to which they share their feelings with each other will increase for healthy dyadic relationship.

## **Conclusion**

The findings of the study have established the fact that a combination of the independent variables (coupling sex and emotional expressiveness) had significant contribution and influence on relational intimacy among married spouses in Benin City, Edo State, Nigeria. It also showed that each of the independent variables influence marital intimacy but with less significance, when compared to when the variables were combined. The study also proved that dyadic relationship required frequent pleasurable sex as well as emotional expressiveness for spouses to persistently enjoy intimate satisfactory marriage.

## **Acknowledgment**

## **References**

- Adjabenj, J. (2011). Enjoying a fruitful marriage. Olive Publications, Accra, Ghana.
- Akinade, E. A. (2015). Comprehensive marriage guidance for all. Lagos: A psychological and down-to-earth approach. Brightways Publishers, Ibadan, Nigeria.
- Akinsola, J. (2012). Roadmap to an intimate marriage. Baptist Press (Nig) Limited, P.M.B 5071, Ibadan.
- Bozoğlu, B. (2015). Emeklilik dönemi doyumunun yordayıcısı olarak yaşam doyumunu, evlilik doyumunu ve sosyal destek. Çukurova Üniversitesi Sosyal Bilimler Enstitüsü Dergisi, 24(1), 229-238.
- Çapri, B., & Gökçakan, Z. (2013). Eş tükenmişliğini yordayan değişkenler. İlköğretim Online, 12(2). Retrieved from <http://ilkogretim-online.org.tr/vol12say2/v12s2m19.pdf>
- Coan, J. A., (2010). Adult attachment and the Brain. Journal of Social and Personal Relationships, 27 (2) 210-217.
- Cingisiz, N. (2010). Ortaöğretim okullarında görev yapan öğretmenlerin duygusal zekâları ile evlilik doyumları arasındaki ilişki (Master's thesis, Gaziantep University, Gaziantep, Turkey). Retrieved from <https://tez.yok.gov.tr/UlusalTezMerkezi/>
- DcGenova, M. K & Rice, F.P. (2002). Intimate relationships, marriages, and families (5th Edition). New York: McGraw Hill Companies.
- DeMoss, Y. (2004). Brief interventions and resiliency in couples (Doctoral dissertation, Northcentral University, Prescott, Arizona). Available from ProQuest Dissertations and Thesis database.
- DeWitt, S. M. (2014). Emotional expressiveness in romantic relationships: Avantages and disadvantages of similarities and differences I Expressiveness. California

Polytechnic State University. Published by ProQuest LLC. 789 East Eisenhower Parkway.

- Ebenuwa-Okoh, E. E. (2010). Sex and age as moderators of the relationship between environmental variables and marital adjustment among married persons. *International Research Journals* 2(1745-751).
- Gadassi, R., Bar-Nahum, L. E., Newhouse, S., Anderson, R., Heiman, J. R., Rafaeli, E., & Janssen, E. (2016). Perceived partner responsiveness mediates the association between sexual and marital satisfaction: A daily diary study in newlywed couples. *Archives of Sexual Behavior*, 45(1), 109-120.
- Goldsmith, B. (2014). The happy couple; how to make happiness a habit. One little loving thing at a time
- Gur-Aryeh, S.M. (2010). Emotional expression, gender, and match in personality as predictors of marital satisfaction (Doctoral dissertation, New York, Forham University). ProQuest Dissertations and Thesis database.
- Hamarta, E., Deniz, M., Dilmaç, B., & Arslan, C. (2015). Evlilik içi ilişki ile evlilikteki yaşam doyumunun evli çiftlerin değerleri açısından incelenmesi. *International Journal of Human Sciences*, 12(1). Retrieved from <http://www.j-humansciences.com/ojs/index.php/IJHS/article/download/3107/1404>
- Halberstadt, A. G. (1991). Toward an ecology of expressiveness: Family socialization in particular and a model in general. In R. S. Feldman and B. Rime (Eds.), *Fundamentals of nonverbal behavior*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Hess, J. A., & Coffelt, T. A. (2012). Verbal communication about sex in marriage: Patterns of language use and its connection with relational outcomes. *Journal of Sex Research*, 49(6), 603-612.
- Jesuorobo, O.W. (2019). Efficacy of behavioural couple therapy and Emotionally Focussed Couple Therapy in the enhancement of marital adjustment among couples in Baptist Churches in Benin Metropolis of Edo state, Nigeria. (Unpublished Ph.D Dissertation), Department of Educational Evaluation and Counselling Psychology, Faculty of Education, University of Benin, Benin City
- Johnson, S. M. (2008). Attachment and emotionally focused therapy: Perfect Partners. in Obegi J. & Berant E. (Eds.), *Clinical applications of adult attachment*. New York: Guilford Press
- Johnson, S. M. (2004). *The practice of emotionally focused couple therapy: Creating connection* (2nd ed.). New York, NY: Brunner-Routledge.
- Kelvin, N. (2016). Two keys to happy Marriage. [www.thought-about-god.com/marriage](http://www.thought-about-god.com/marriage).
- Kirby, J. S. (2005). A study of the marital satisfaction levels of participants in a marriage education course (Doctoral dissertation, Department of Educational Leadership and Counseling Department, University of Louisiana, Monroe). Available from ProQuest Dissertations and Thesis database.
- Langdrige, D., Gabb, J., & Lawson, J. (2018). Working with group-level data in phenomenological research: A modified visual matrix method. *Qualitative Research in Psychology*, 1(1), 1-23.
- Larson, J. H., & Holman, T. B. (1994). Premarital predictors of marital quality and stability. *Family Relations*, 43, 228-237.

- Litzinger, S., & Gordon, K. C. (2005). Exploring relationships among communication, sexual satisfaction, and marital satisfaction. *Journal of Sex & Marital Therapy*, 31(5), 409–424.
- Mbwirire, J. (2018). Causes of marital conflicts in Christian marriages in Domboshava Area. *International Journal of Humanities, Arts and Social Studies*. 1 (2)59-73.
- McNulty, J. K., Wenner, C. A., & Fisher, T. D. (2016). Longitudinal associations among relationship satisfaction, sexual satisfaction, and frequency of sex in early marriage. *Archives of Sexual Behavior*, 45(1), 85-97.
- Miller, P. J. E., Caughlin, J. P., & Huston, T. L. (2003). Trait expressiveness and marital satisfaction: The role of idealization processes. *Journal of Marriage and Family*, 65, 978–995.
- Nezhad, M. Z., & Goodarzi, A. M. (2011). Sexuality, intimacy, and marital satisfaction in Iranian first-time parents. *Journal of Sex & Marital Therapy*, 37(2), 77-88.
- Narciso, I., & Ribeiro, M. (2009). *Olhares sobre a conjugalidade*. Lisboa: Coisas de ler.
- Nassehi-Behnam, V (1985). Change and the Iranian family. *Current Anthropology*, 26(5), 557–562.
- Oleabhiye, E. & Ighalo, P. (2015). Perceived consequences of marital instability on the academic performance of undergraduates in Benin City, Edo State. <https://www.researchgate.net>3506>.
- Omage, M. I. (2013). Critical issues in marriage failure in Benin City, Nigeria: Signalling the way forward. *European Scientific Journal*. 9(5) 324-337.
- Patrick, S., & Beckenbach, J. (2009). Male perceptions of intimacy: A qualitative study. *Journal of Men's Studies*, 17(1), 47–56.
- Patrick, S., Sells, J. N., Giordano, F. G., & Tollerud, T. R. (2007). Intimacy, differentiation, and personality variables as predictors of marital satisfaction. *The Family Journal: Counselling and Therapy for Couples and Families*, 15(4), 359–367.
- Rakwena, K. H., (2010). Marital Satisfaction and Intimacy: Gender role attitudes and spousal support in Botswana. Loma Linda University Electronic Thesis, Dissertations and Projects. <http://scholarsrepository.un.edu/exd/9>
- Rauer, A. J. & Volling, B. I. (2005). The role of husbands and wives emotional expressivity in the marital relationship. *Sex Roles* 52(9-10) 577-587.
- Rehman, U. S., Janssen, E., Newhouse, S., Heiman, J., Holtzworth-Munroe, A., Fallis, E., & Rafaeli, E. (2011). Marital satisfaction and communication behaviors during sexual and nonsexual conflict discussions in newlywed couples: A pilot study. *Journal of Sex & Marital Therapy*, 37(2), 94-103.
- Rosen-Grandon, J. R., Myers, J. E., & Hattie, J. A. (2004). The relationship between marital characteristics, marital interaction processes, and marital satisfaction. *Journal of Counselling & Development*, 82, 58-68.
- Schoenfeld, E. A., Loving, T. J., Pope, M. T., Huston, T. L., & Štulhofer, A. (2016). Does sex really matter? Examining the connections between spouses' nonsexual behaviours, sexual frequency, sexual satisfaction, and marital satisfaction. *Archives of Sexual Behavior*, doi: 10.1007/s10508-015-0672-4
- Scott, T. Y. & Constance, T. G. (2010). Sexual frequency and the stability of marital and cohabiting unions. School of Social Dynamics and Centre for Population Dynamics. Arizona State University.
- Sholfer, L. T. & Shoben, E. J. (2004). *Psychology of Adjustment*. Cambridge: River Side Press.

- Soltani, A Molazadeh, J., Mamoodi, M. and Hosseini, S. (2013). A Study in the Effectiveness of Emotional Focused Couple Therapy on Intimacy of Couples. *Procedia Social and Behavioural Sciences*. 82(2013)461-465.
- Thomas, A. & Anderson M. C. (2003). *Making marriage a love story*. Winword Publishing, Phoenix, Arizona.
- Timm, T. M., & Keiley, M. K. (2011). The effects of differentiation of self, adult attachment, and sexual communication on sexual and marital satisfaction: A path analysis. *Journal of Sex & Marital Therapy*, 37(3), 206-223.
- Tutarel-Kışlak, Ş., & Çabukça, F. (2002). Empati ve demografik değişkenlerin evlilik uyumu ile ilişkisi. *Aile ve Toplum Eğitim Kültür ve Araştırma Dergisi*, 2(5). Retrieved from <http://dergipark.ulakbim.gov.tr/spcd/article/download/5000107936/5000100646>
- Weinberger, M. I., Hofstein, Y., & Whitbourne, S. K. (2008). Intimacy in young adulthood as a predictor of divorce in midlife. *Personal Relationships*, 15(4), 551-557
- Weiss, D. (2009). *Sex, men and god*. Siloam Press, Lake Mary, Florida.
- Yedirir, S. & Hamarta, (2015). Emotional Expression and Spousal Support as Predictors of Marital Satisfaction: The case of Turkey. *Educational Sciences: Theory and Practice*. 15(6) 1549-1558.
- Yeh, H., Lorenz, F. O., Wickrama, K. S., Conger, R. D., & Elder, G. J. (2006). Relationships among sexual satisfaction, marital quality, and marital instability at midlife. *Journal of Family Psychology*, 20(2), 339-343.
- Yeşiltepe, S. S., & Çelik, M. (2014). Evaluation of marital adjustment of teachers in terms of psychological well-being and some variables. *Elementary Education Online*, 13(3), 992-1013.
- Yucel, D. (2016). Together, forever? Correlates of marital well-being. *Social Indicators Research*, 125(1), 257-269.