

1 Effects of Assertiveness Training and Marital Communication
2 Skills In Enhancing Marital Satisfaction among Baptist Couples
3 in Lagos State, Nigeria

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7

8 **Abstract**

9 This study examined the effectiveness of assertiveness training and marital communication
10 skills. The moderating effect of length of marriage and number of children were also
11 investigated. The study adopted pre-test, post-test control quasi-experimental design with 3 x
12 2 x 2 factorial matrix. Multistage sampling technique was used to select 84 participants;
13 representing 42 married couples who were selected from the three local Baptist Churches of
14 the three Baptist conferences in Lagos. The comprehensive marital satisfaction scale $r = 0.98$
15 was the research instrument used. One (1) hypothesis was tested at 0.05 level of significance
16 using Analysis of covariance (ANCOVA) and Duncan post hoc test. The study revealed that
17 there was a significant main effect of treatment on marital satisfaction ($F_2, 31 = 19.96$,
18 $p > 0.05$) Marital communication skills group obtained the highest adjusted post-test mean score
19 on marital satisfaction ($X = 396.29$), while the least score was obtained by the control group
20 ($X = 342.91$). Based on these findings therefore, counselling psychologists, marriage
21 counsellors and other professionals working on marriage should make conscious efforts to
22 adopt marital communication skills and assertiveness when managing marital problems and
23 associated challenges. Would be couples should also be exposed to the two therapist.

24

25 **Index terms**— assertiveness training, marital communication skills, marital satisfaction; married couples.

26 **1 Background to The Study**

27 Marriage is perceived by Waite and Gallagher (2001) as a social institution under which a man and a woman
28 establish their decision to live as husband and wife by legal commitment and or religious ceremonies. One ultimate
29 thing that must be born in mind is that marriage institution is not accidental, but meant to achieve certain
30 purposes. Marriage is also a socially acknowledged and approved sexual union between two adult individuals
31 (Amato & Deboer, 2001). It is a unique institution that affirms and supports a distinct sociology in human
32 culture; bridging of the gender gap, facilitates the generation of life through the fusion of sexes; and promotes
33 the birthright of children E-mail : animarotimi@yahoo.com to know, to be connected to, and to be in stable
34 relationship with their natural parents ??Papeboes & Whitehead, 2001). Marriage is a legal union between a
35 man and a woman as husband and wife, which further connotes matrimony, wedlock, alliance, association and
36 union (Ariyo, 2005). Deducing from the definitions given above, certain purposes that constitute marriage are
37 unveiled as follows: companionship; social integration of persons, approved sexual union; mutual commitment;
38 mutual growth, bridging of the gender gap; and promoting the birthright of children. National polls showed that
39 what people consider being very important in marriage (that is, love, sexual fidelity and ability to talk about
40 feelings) have been fairly similar over the past two decades ??Roper Organization, 1990). It was also found
41 that a person's beliefs about marriage and how marital satisfaction was achieved might significantly affect one's

1 BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY

42 expectations and readiness for marriage ??Larson, 1988a ??Larson, , 1992; ??arson & Holman, 1994). Marriage
43 as a matter of fact can be defined as a legal term describing certain relationship concerning individuals in order
44 to fulfill three different types of needs: material, sexual and psychological ??Saxton, 1992).

45 According to ??homas (2002), marriage is more than physical attraction, biological union and social
46 integration. It involves total commitment, self-donation to one another, and taking responsibilities that lead to
47 mutual well-being. Marriage celebration may differ from culture to culture and from religion to religion. However,
48 most people enter into it with the right expectations, joy and happiness with the full sense of accomplishing
49 the purpose for which marriage is established. This is corroborated by ??sere (2002) that marriage is usually
50 contracted amidst joy, happiness and merry-making for the couple, family members and friends. Findings suggest
51 that a happy marriage is conducive to a long, healthy life ??Waite & Gallagher 2000). The researcher wonders
52 why the joy of marriage could turn soar suddenly. This experience by couple may be because they lack the ability
53 to face the challenge and problems that arise and, or they are yet to understand factors that favour marital joy.
54 The reality of it is that each marriage has its own unique challenges and problems. The question is not whether
55 they will arise but how to face them when they do ??Powell, 2005). The unfortunate thing, according to ??riyo
56 (2004) is that when these challenges occur, many marriages become disestablished. Many marriages become
57 disestablished when the couples are not able to manage challenges such as challenges of resolving their conflict,
58 sexual fulfillment, good communication, mutual commitment, child bearing and rearing. The phenomenon of
59 marital problem is world wide, not limited to Nigeria alone. The statistics released by National Centre for
60 Health, Marriage and Divorce ??2003), revealed that divorce rate in Canada, England and Wales Greece, the
61 Netherlands and United States have more than double since 1970.

62 The source also showed that divorce around the world has nearly quadruped since early 1960 in Britain.
63 Divorce affects about a third of marriage in Canada and Japan, couples getting married have not more than 50-
64 50 chance of staying together in United States. Divorce ends about two out of every five marriages in Zimbabwe.
65 The situation could be worse in Nigeria particularly Lagos where marital relationships are being broken on a
66 daily basis. Some divorce cases in 2005 at Grade "A" customary court, Somolu Local Government Area, Lagos
67 also showed that Five (5) of the eight (8) cases i.e. 62.5% ended up in divorce. One (1) of the eight (8) cases i.e.
68 12.5% did not end up in divorce while two (2) of the eight (8) cases i.e. 25% were yet to be decided. This shows
69 that marital relationship is in a serious mess.

70 Spouses are expected to know and practice good interpersonal relationships (Akinade, 1997). The principles
71 that can help marriages grow include increasing marital happiness, understanding, love for each other and a sense
72 of fulfillment; to become respectable models to other couples; to keep unwanted people out of the marital life
73 and enjoying more interpersonal quality time together (Akinade, 1997). This may not be so these days when
74 everybody, especially marriage partners, are struggling to get money to the detriment of their relationships. The
75 absent -father syndrome has now been extended to include the absent -mother as both parents struggle to keep
76 jobs as well as maintain marriage and families. They wake up at around 4.00am leave their homes at around
77 4.30am to return home at around 10.30pm or more when the children with either one or non of the spouses must
78 have slept. No time for the family members. The more they have no time for one another the more the gap in
79 their relationships is widening, creating problems the money they are struggling to get may not solve. Money is
80 good and it is needed in the home but should not be sought for at the expenses of marital relationship.

81 According to Lee (2008), being assertive is not only about being confident, it is also about understanding
82 your spouse and other members of the family and the empathy that you give them. Assertiveness Training is
83 a behavioural therapy technique which prepares an individual to stand up for himself or herself, to know and
84 achieve his or her rights, and also take cognizance of the need to strike a balance between assertiveness and
85 aggressiveness ??Morse & Watson, 1979). Marital Communication Skills focus on the abilities of the spouses to
86 pass across information or message from one to the other person in such a way that what is meant by the speaker
87 (husband or wife) is also interpreted by the listener (wife or husband).

88 To the best of the researcher's knowledge, assertiveness training and communication skills have not been
89 frequent application used as packages to enhance marital satisfaction among Nigeria couples. Marital satisfaction
90 referred to an individual's subjective evaluation of the marital relationship (Taylor, Peplau and Sears, 1997).
91 Satisfaction may be used interchangeably with happiness, lack of distress, quality. Perhaps, assertiveness training
92 technique has not been applied as a treatment package either to enhance or to improve marital satisfaction.
93 ??kinade, (1987) On communication and marital satisfaction, it has been found that happy couples with marital
94 stability and satisfaction were more likely to use active listening skills, agree, approve, assent, use laughter and
95 humor ??Fisher, Giblin, and Hoops, 1982;Noller and Fitzpatrick, 1991) and possess character virtues of self-
96 restraint, courage and friendship ??Fowler & Olson, 1985). Regarding the issue of disagreement, it is not that
97 couples would not disagree but some couples are fond of disagreeing for a very long time which has negative
98 impact on their relationship. Disagreement in marriage should lead to agreement in order to enhance good
99 marital communication.

100 Furthermore, recent research by Baucom, Espstein, Rankin, and Burnett (1996) also reports that relationship
101 focused standards, that is, standards for marriage that place a major emphasis or priority on the marriage, are
102 related to both marital adjustment and communication patterns. A longitudinal study that

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105 Year follows the pattern of development of communication and standards in a relationship establishes that
106 having relationship -focused standards early in the relationship may help the couple develop constructive com-
107 munication skills; however, it is equally possible that good communication may aid partners in creating a positive
108 relationship, which in turn may foster the developments of relationship-focused standards (Gordon;Epstein;
109 ??urnett, & Rankin, 1999).

110 A 1999 meta-analysis of 16 studies of the oldest marriage enhanced programmes, couple communication,
111 observed meaningful programme effects with regard to all types of measures. Couples who took the training
112 experienced moderate to large gains in communication skills, marital satisfaction, and other relationship qualities.
113 For example the average couples, after taking couple communication training, were able to out perform 83 percent
114 of couples who had not participated in the programme in the critical area of marital communication ??Butter
115 & Wampter, 1999). In their own investigation of marital communication after interviewing 51 recently married
116 couples analyzed various cues, verbal and non-verbal, that transpired between couples during the interview,
117 Beier and Sternberg (1977) found close communication including body communications as an important factor
118 in marital communications. The use of verbal and non-verbal ways of communication still retains their value in
119 marriage up till now. Markman's (1981) study to predict the effect of communication deficit on marital happiness
120 used 26 couples planning marriage in an initial stage of the study and later used 9 of 21 couples who remained
121 intact during the study; found out that the more positively premarital couples related in their communication,
122 the more satisfied they were with their relationship. This calls attention to the fact that the more negatively
123 premarital couples related in their communication the more dissatisfied they were with their relationship. Of
124 recent, it has been observed that couples who had negative premarital relationship in their communication end up
125 in constant fight or divorce ??arkman (1993) in preventing marital distress through communication and conflict
126 management training examined a four and five year follow-up data from evaluation of effects of prevention
127 and relationship enhancement programme marital distress prevention programme which teaches couple effective
128 communication and conflict management skills. At five year follow-up, intervention as compared with control,
129 couple had higher levels of positive and lower levels of negative communication skill and lower levels of marital
130 violence.

131 The study conducted by Amao-Kehinde (1998) on effectiveness of communication skills training and conflict
132 resolution strategies in the improvement of marital adjustment of married couples in Lagos State shows that
133 subjects in the treatment group, that is communication skill training and conflict resolution strategies scored
134 significantly higher than the subjects in the control group indicating that the two treatment strategies did improve
135 that marital adjustment of subjects. In the same study, it was revealed that there are significantly statistical
136 differences in the improvement of marital adjustment of subjects exposed to communication skills training and
137 those in control group. This implies that communication skills' training was effective.

138 Amao-Kehinde (1998) found that the younger married subjects exposed to communication skills training and
139 their counterpart in the control group was found to be significantly different. Furthermore, the study also exposes
140 that there are significant difference between subjects exposed to communication and conflict resolution strategies
141 programmes respectively. Subjects exposed to communication skills training scored significantly higher than
142 subjects exposed to conflict resolution skills training. This in effect means that subjects in communication skills
143 training demonstrated superiority over those in the conflict resolution skills training. However, the two strategies
144 were effective, but communication skills training proved better in ameliorating the subjects' problems associate
145 with marital adjustment. According to Awe, (1986) couples usually spend the first few years of their marriage
146 adjusting to their individual differences and other external factors affecting their marriage. The first two to five
147 years are the most critical for couples in marriage since after the first five years of marriage couples begin to
148 tolerate each other and to understand each other better, especially when children start coming.

149 Karney, Bradbury, Fincham and Sullivan, (1994) found that negative spousal affectivity contributed to the
150 negative attributions one makes about self, spouse and marital relationship. Gottman (1995) and Holman and
151 Li (1997) have found that romance was the most important ingredient in the newlywed relationship and was
152 kept alive by frequent interactions, spending time together, and openly disclosing one's thoughts and feelings.
153 Individuals who admire, support and are proud of each other in their respective endeavours and achievements
154 openly express appreciation and build one another's self-esteem and fulfill emotional needs build a satisfying and
155 enduring relationship. Similarly, a successful marriage, according to (Mace, 1982) requires three things: (a) a
156 high degree of motivation (b) a desire to make the marriage work, and (c) a willingness to expend personal time
157 and effort to make sure it does. Sabatelli and Cecil-Pigo (1985) found that when both partners were participating
158 equally in the relationship and when there was maximum interdependence, the couple was the most committed.
159 Wise (1991) assertiveness training is effectively adopted in educating the adolescent on personal transaction and
160 social responsibility. Oladele (1986) stated that assertive training had been applied successfully in the treatment
161 of conditions such as obsessive compulsive disorder, sexual communication, smoking, chronic urinary retention
162 and labour management disputes. Assertiveness training is a cognitive behavioural therapy that concerns the
163 skills of relating to people. (Asuzu, 1998). Asuzu (1998) applied covert self-control and assertiveness technique
164 in the treatment of promiscuity among adolescent in Ibadan successfully. In her study she found that subject in
165 covert self-control group and assertiveness training group had reductions in promiscuous behaviour more than

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166 the control group. It was also revealed that there significant difference in the reduction of promiscuous behaviour
167 of adolescents exposed to assertiveness training and the control group.

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169 Hammed (1999) conducted a research among selected Bank Workers using Assertiveness Training and Transactional
170 Analysis to foster interpersonal skills among the subjects. He reported that both assertiveness training and
171 transactional analysis proved to be effective in the improvement interpersonal skills of subjects considerably when
172 compared with the control group. Assertiveness training seems to be an effective behavioural therapy which can
173 be used to modify behaviour. Studies have also justified that the use of Assertiveness Training as an effective
174 behavioural management techniques (Lazarus (1971), Philips (1977), Alberti & Emmons (1977), Kazdin (1925),
175 Lorr (1980), Kutara (1995), Agali & Idowu, 2007).

176 So assertiveness training will be used in this study as part of intervention to enhance marital satisfaction.

177 4 II.

178 5 Statement of The Problem

179 In Nigeria where marital stability is generally, culturally and religiously supported, research cannot be overtly flogged
180 on marital satisfaction. This is because a little few of research shows a high prevalence of marital dissatisfaction
181 among couples. The issue of marital happiness and joy which suddenly turn soar often constitute the subject of
182 discussion all over the world. This is due to the fact that more than ever before marriage institution is being
183 confronted with all kind of problems such as infidelity, poverty, spousal battering, and unwillingness to take
184 responsibilities.

185 Evidences have shown some cases of infidelity, separation, unresolved conflicts, threat of divorce and eventual
186 divorce among Baptist pastors (Book of ??reports 2008 ??reports , 2009 ??reports , 2010 ??reports , 2011)). If
187 these are happening among the Baptist pastors who are leaders then that of their members, the followers could
188 be worse. This dangerous trend is noticed as marital relationships continue to break down at an alarming rate
189 among married Baptist couples. Veroff, Kukla, and Douvan (1981) buttressed that married couples experience an
190 erosion of positive qualities such as life long companionship, romance, sexual fulfillment and commitment, over
191 time and, for some, marital relationship satisfaction erodes to the point where relationship is terminated. For
192 others, the barriers to separation, or perceived absence of alternative, may result in remaining married despite
193 being unhappy with the relationship.

194 Due to the researcher's experience and observation among Baptist couples in Lagos on how some newly wedded
195 couples and those who have married long ago lack enough reasons why they should remain in the union, engaging
196 in unresolved conflicts,

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199 Year is abandoning their matrimonial homes, threat of divorce and eventual divorce, the resultant effects on
200 the children rear in such home atmosphere and the negative impacts on the society and the entire world. The
201 researcher therefore examined Assertiveness Training and Communication Skills in Enhancing Marital Satisfaction
202 among Baptist Couples in Lagos.

203 7 III.

204 8 Purpose of the Study

205 The main purpose of this study was to experimentally investigate the relative effectiveness of two psychological
206 strategies (Assertiveness training and marital communication skills) in enhancing marital satisfaction among
207 Baptist couples in Lagos Nigeria. The study however specifically examined the moderating effects of number of
208 children and length of marriage in enhancing marital satisfaction using the two therapies.

209 IV.

210 9 Significance of the Study

211 The outcome of the findings of this study would be of immense significant to marriage partners, male and female,
212 old and young, as it would sensitize them to see themselves as responsible individuals who could live together
213 amicably and satisfactorily in their marriages.

214 The expected findings of this study would also increase the volume of therapies that can be used by counselling
215 psychologists in enhancing marital satisfaction. This will therefore further establish the veracity of MACOS in the
216 treatment of marital dissatisfaction or instability. It would also add to the empirical supports already available
217 in favour of MACOS. The same thing is applicable to AST. It would also prove a basis for the development of a
218 more effective theory and technique which will be useful for guiding and counselling married couples in Nigeria
219 and other parts of the World with a view to enhancing marital satisfaction.

220 The anticipated findings would at the same time be of great benefit to Marriage Counselors, Ministry of
221 Social Welfares, Community Development and Women Affairs, who are frequently confronted with marital
222 issues such as divorce, separation, unresolved conflicts among couples. It is believed that an enhancement of
223 marital satisfaction of the target population may increase readiness of married couples thereby making counselling
224 enterprise uncomplicated and establish the success of counsellor at work.

225 **10 V.**

226 **11 Methodology a) Research Design**

227 The study employed a pre-test, post-test, control quasi experimental design using a $3 \times 2 \times 2$ factorial design.
228 The participants of the study were divided into three groups A 1 , A 2 , and A 3 . Two of the groups (A 1 and
229 A 2) were treated while the third group (A 3) served as control. While the young and old participants were
230 constituted into columns -B 1 and B 2 . Number of children (0-3) and (4 and above) were superimposed under
231 young and old participants in the column C 1 and C 2 . The first and second experimental groups were pre-tested
232 and subjected to the behavioural treatments (Assertiveness Training and Marital Communication Skills). The
233 control group was equally pre-tested before they were exposed to a counseling talk on 'parenting Styles'. This
234 served as placebo for the members of the group so as not to feel redundant in the programme.

235 **12 b) Population**

236 The target population of the study consisted of all married Baptist couples in Lagos State, Nigeria.

237 **13 c) Sample and Sampling Technique**

238 The sample of the study comprised forty two (42) married couples randomly chosen from three Baptist Churches
239 in Lagos State. Multistage random sampling technique was used to choose the sample.

240 At stage I, simple random sampling was used to select 1 Association each from the three Baptist Conferences
241 in Lagos State.

242 At stage II, simple random sampling technique was used to select 1 church each from each of the three
243 Associations.

244 At stage III, purposive sampling technique was used to select young and old married couples. 13 couples were
245 selected from First Baptist Church, Ipaja; 15 couples were selected from Winners Baptist Church, Bariga while
246 14 couples were selected from First Baptist Church, Afrormedia-Ajangbadi. This was done in order to ensure that
247 couples who are qualified give their consent to suit the purpose of the study were selected. The use of intact
248 participants is suggestive of one man, one wife relationships who are and still remained within the institution of
249 marriage.

250 **14 d) Inclusion and Exclusion Criteria**

251 The participants in the programme satisfied the following qualifications.

252 1. They were couples selected from Baptist churches 2. They were still intact in their marital relationships 3.
253 They had never experienced divorce 4. They had both agreed to attend the programme throughout. 5. Those
254 who have divorce cases in court were excluded 6. Couples who lived separately were excluded 7. Polygamists
255 were also excluded.

256 **15 e) Research Instrument**

257 The researcher used Comprehensive Marital Satisfaction Scale for the study. The Comprehensive Marital
258 Satisfaction Scale developed by Blum and Mehrabian (1999) was adapted for this study. Blum and Mehrabian
259 (1999) reported a large scale study bearing on the comprehensive marital satisfaction scale (CMSS) and its
260 reliability and validity. The comprehensive marital satisfaction scale (CMSS) has a highly satisfaction internal
261 consistency (reliability) coefficient of .94 and a satisfactory test-retest reliability coefficient of .83 over a six week
262 interval (Blum & Mehrabian, 1999).

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264 However, re-validation of Comprehensive Marital Satisfaction Scale on twenty (20) couples from intact homes in
265 Ibadan (not part of the proposed population) yielded a reliability co-efficient of $r=0.982$, and a Cronbach alpha
266 of reliability, indicating that the instrument is reliable and can be used on Nigerian populace. Therefore, the
267 instrument (CMSS) is good for use in this study.

268 **17 VI.**

269 **18 Results a) Hypothesis One**

270 There is no significant main effect of treatments on marital satisfaction of the participants.

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273 Year Table 4. 2 above reveals that the marital communication skill group obtained the highest adjusted post
274 -test mean score in marital satisfaction ($X = 396.28$, $SD = 8.56$). This is followed by the assertiveness training
275 ($X = 382.39$; $SD = 8.24$) while the lowest score was obtained by the control group ($X = 342.91$, $SD = 9.44$). To
276 this end, marital communication skill was more effective in enhancing marital satisfaction among couples than
277 the assertiveness training skill and the control group respectively.

278 **20 VII.**

279 **21 Discussion**

280 The effectiveness of two therapeutic techniques (Assertiveness Training and Marital Communication Skills) in
281 enhancing marital satisfaction among married couples in Lagos State, Nigeria was examined in this study. The
282 results of the study were discussed hypothesis by hypothesis, based on the scores of the participants on the
283 measure of marital satisfaction as stated here under.

284 The first hypothesis which states that there is no significant main effect of treatment on marital satisfaction of
285 participants was rejected. Going by the outcome of results resented in Tables 4.1 and 4.2, it could be deduced that
286 there was a significant scores of participants exposed to treatment and the control group. The participants in the
287 marital communication skills group obtained the highest adjusted post-test mean score in marital satisfaction.
288 This is followed by the assertiveness training while the lowest score was obtained by the control group. To this end
289 MACOS was more effective in enhancing MS among couples than the AST and the Control group respectively.

290 The outcome of this finding should not be surprising as marital satisfaction is one of the spousal relationship
291 energizer MACOS is primarily designed for. The finding is therefore in consonance with the earlier empirical
292 supports for MACOS which indicates that the therapy is an effective treatment. For example, Fisher et al (1982),
293 Noller et al (1991) and Fowler et al ??1985) found that happy couples with marital stability and satisfaction were
294 more likely to use active listening skills, agree, approve, assent, use laughter and humor, and possess character
295 virtues of self-restraints, courage and friendship. Also, Baucon et al ??1996) found that relationship focused
296 standards, that is, standards for marriage that place a major emphasis or priority on the marriage, are related
297 to communication patterns in a similar study, Gordon et al (1999) who compared the pattern of development
298 of communication and standards in a relationship focused standards early in the relationship may help the
299 couple develop constructive communication skills, and that good communication may aid partners in creating a
300 positive relationship, which in turn may foster the development of relationship-focused standards. In a related
301 finding Butter et al (1999) in a meta-analysis of 16 studies of the oldest marriage enhanced programmes, couple
302 communication, observed meaningful programme effects with regard to all types measures, found out that couples
303 who participated in couple communication training experienced moderate to large gains in communication skills,
304 marital satisfaction and other relationship qualities. The average couples, after taking communication training
305 were able to out perform 83 percent of couples who had not participated in the programme in the critical area
306 of marital communication.

307 The possible explanation for the effectiveness of MACOS in enhancing marital satisfaction could be in that it
308 lays much emphasis on various cues, verbal and non-verbal. Going by Beier et al (1977) in their own investigation
309 of marital communication after interviewing 51 recently married couples analyzed various cues, verbal and non-
310 verbal that transpired between couple during the interviews, found that close communication including body
311 communication as an important factor in marital communication. In the same vein, Markman (1981) who
312 predicated the effect of communication deficit on marital happiness used 26 couples planning for marriage in an
313 initial stage of the study and later 9 of 21 couples remained intact during the study, found out that the more
314 positively premarital couples related in their communication, the more satisfied they were with their relationship.
315 Furthermore, ??arkman (1993) who examined prevention of marital distress through communication and conflict
316 management training investigated a four and five year follow-up data from evaluation of effect of prevention
317 and relationship enhancement programme marital distress prevention programme which teaches couple effective
318 communication and conflict management skills at five year follow-up intervention as compared with control
319 found that couple had higher levels of positive and lower levels of negative communication skills and lower levels
320 of marital violence. The effectiveness of MACOS has equally been established by other finding. The study
321 conducted by Amao-Kehinde (1998) on effectiveness of communication skills training in the improvement of
322 marital adjustment of married couple found that there was significantly statistical difference in the improvement
323 of marital adjustment of subjects exposed to communication skills training and those in control group indicating
324 that communication skill training was effective.

325 Similarly, the effectiveness of assertiveness training over the control group in the enhancement of marital
326 satisfaction among the participants in this study is not strange as it has proven its suitability for use in behaviour
327 modification. ??ing (1990) opined that it is effective in changing anti-social behaviour among adolescent. The
328 study therefore concurred with the Global Journal of Human Social Science Volume XII Issue X" IV Version I
329 Wise (1991) who found that assertiveness training is effective in educating the adolescent on personal transaction
330 and social responsibility. Also with Asuzu (1998) who found out that assertiveness is effective in reduction of
331 promiscuous behaviour of adolescents. These confirms the outcome of Hammed (1999) who investigated the

332 effectiveness training and transactional analysis in fostering interpersonal skills among bank workers, found that
333 assertiveness training proved to be effective in the improvement of participants interpersonal skills considerably
334 when compared with the control group. The finding therefore take side with Lazarus (1971), ??hilips (1977),
335 ??lberti etal (1977), Kazdin (1925), Lorr (1980), Kutara (1995), Agali and Idowu (2007) who found and justified
336 the use of assertiveness training as an effective behavioural management technique.(D D D D) A Year findings
337 of

338 Comparing the effectiveness of the two therapies, one over the other, it could be deduced from table 4.2 above
339 that the mean score of participants in MACOS ($X = 396.286$, $SD = 8.568$) is higher than the mean score of
340 participants in AST ($X = 382.394$; $SD = 8.243$) indicating a significant difference in the marital satisfaction
341 scores of the participants in the two therapies. MACOS is therefore found to be more effective than assertiveness
342 training (AST) in enhancing marital satisfaction. The finding seems to be in conformity with similar studies of
343 Pernen et al ??2005) who found that decrease in communication and sensitivity was a major source of declaring
344 satisfaction in marriage. In the same vain, Imhode et al ??2008) found that effective communication as a main
345 effect on marital satisfaction of newly wedded couples. However, the reason for the effectiveness of MACOS over
346 AST is not hidden. This is because communication is an integral part of human life. Good communication is a
347 vital tool for couple to maintain satisfying relationship. Hess (2008) corroborated that communication is a vital
348 tool in couples interaction and conflict resolution and that integral factor involve in marital satisfaction include
349 communication.

350 **22 a) Implications of the Study**

351 This study has grim implication for married couples, potential married couples, marriage counsellors, counselling
352 psychologists, social welfares, government and the society in general. From all indications it is glaring that
353 marriage counselors in Nigeria and other African countries have been so hidden in their operations dissimilar
354 to what obtains in other countries of the world where marriage counseling is valued and recognized by the
355 government and the masses. There is a provision of online and marriage counseling clinics services. The issue of
356 attending to marriage matters is not absolutely reticent for religious

357 The results achieved in this work have established the uniqueness and certainty of factors affecting marital
358 satisfaction and how a good number of couples' incongruence to these factors help termination of marital
359 relationship. As mentioned above, the findings have huge multi-dimensional implications for marriage counselors,
360 married couples, and singles, counselling psychologists, social welfare, government and all the stake holders. This
361 is due to the fact that the predicament facing marriages are direct worry of the entire society. It has been
362 established by literatures that the arrival of first child leads to decline in marital satisfaction, as disruption
363 is caused in couples' interaction, conflict and negativity within the family relationship are elevated. As the
364 family members increase in number, the larger family is prone to violence because they experience greater
365 stress associated with the necessity to provide for several children. Hence, less satisfaction is expressed. It is
366 consequently mean that to ensure marital satisfaction, proper parenting, morally sound children and a peaceful
367 society, married couples should be encouraged to make a purposeful decision of meeting a marriage counsellor
368 for their marriage appraisal.

369 The key implication of this study for the whole world is that, if marital satisfaction is enhanced at all levels
370 and areas it would be easy for the government to accomplish her goal, control the numerous emergence of various
371 antisocial, moral decadence and successfully tame the whip of bribery and corruption without much sweat because
372 every child is a product of a marriage.

373 **23 VIII.**

374 **24 Recommendations**

375 The results from this study call for immediate attention by all stake holders, including marriage counselors,
376 religious leaders, counseling psychologists, married couples, would-be couples, government and entire society.
377 The reason for this is apparent as it has discovered and established the certainty of factors against marital
378 satisfaction. Hence, the findings of this work should be of significant concern to the Nigerian populace that
379 counselling therapy should be for both academic exercise and everyday experience of Nigerians, particularly
380 marriage counsellor.

381 It is evident from increasing rate of marital dissatisfaction leading to separation and divorce, issues of single
382 parents and consequent outcome on children and members of the society that the special needs of this category
383 of subjects have been unduly abandoned. Therefore, this unpalatable situation should be quickly corrected
384 through the provision of such programmes as Assertiveness Training (AST) and Marital Communication Skills
385 (MACOS). It is obvious from this study that the use of Assertiveness Training in most marriage and family
386 enrichment programmes has been lacking. It is therefore recommended that Assertiveness Training is taught to
387 married couples in particular, in order to reduce marital dissatisfaction which is unavoidable.

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388 The role of effective communication among married couples cannot be overemphasized. This is because Marital
389 Communication Skills enable couples perform proficiently when engaged the symbolic transfer of messages. What
390 is said, how it is said and the way it is interpreted are very important factors in effective communication. It is
391 therefore recommended that couples are taught in order to enhance self disclosure, identify feelings of the other
392 partner and to find out the actual sources of dissatisfaction through the application of the treatments.

393 It has been observed that most pastors are not skillful enough in handling some marital problems. What they
394 do is spiritualizing everything as if all marital issues should only be handled spiritually. The researcher is of
395 the opinion that religious leaders should be encouraged to make themselves available for training on counselling
396 psychology. The acquired skills would assist them to put in place the right interventions tackling such marital
397 crises upsurge.

398 Similarly, in order to attain marital satisfaction among married couples, it is therefore recommended that more
399 marriage therapists are trained in the use and application of psychological intervention techniques to help reduce
400 the evils confronting married couples. It high time for counseling psychologists to wake up in their slumbering to
401 make their impacts felt in the society by organizing marriage seminar, couples' retreat at all levels of educational
402 institutions, at churches and mosques so as to sensitise would-be couples and married couples before these factors
403 rear it ugly heads into their marriages. Finally, a manageable number of children, like 1-3 children is recommended
404 for married couples who have not given birth to more than three children and potential couples. This may reduce
405 stress associated with parenting and as a result enhance marital satisfaction. ^{1 2}

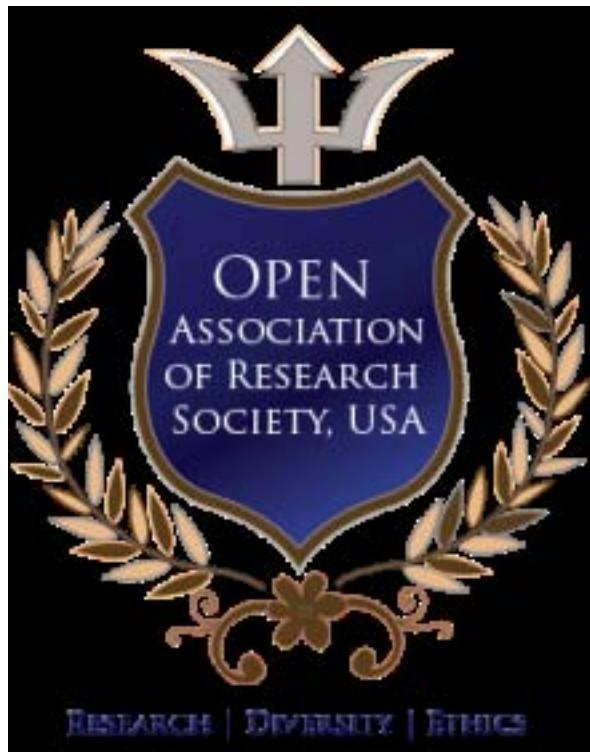


Figure 1: :

Source	Type III sum of squares	Df	Mean square	F	P	Remark
Prescore	9657.483	1	9657.483	12.814	0.001	S
Treatment	30087.124	2	15043.562	19.960	0.00	S
Marriage Length	3693.543	1	3693.543	4.901	0.034	S
Number of Children	4702.482	1	4702.482	6.239	0.018	S
Length of marriage X Treatment	1544.940	2	772.470	1.025	0.371	NS
Length of Marriage X Number of Children	2945.925	1	2945.925	3.909	0.057	NS
Treatment X Marriage Length	1086.352	2	543.176	0.721	0.494	NS
Treatment X Marriage Length X Number of Children	0.000	0	0.00	0.00	0.07	NS
Error	23364.208	31	753.684			
Total	104278.119	41				

R Square = 0.776 (adjusted R Square = 0.704)

Table 1 above shows a significant main effect of treatment on marital satisfaction ($F_{2,31} = 19.960$; $P < 0.05$). This means that there is difference in the mean of marital satisfaction score of participants in the assertiveness training; marital communication skills and the control. Hence hypothesis one was not confirmed statistically.

Variable + Category	N	Unadjusted Deviation	ETA	Adjusted Deviation	Beta
Assertiveness Training	15	11.623		10.523	
Marital Communication Skill	13	25.517		23.715	
Control	14	-27.856	0.60	-	0.51
				27.568	
Length of Marriage					
Young Couple	21	6.038		5.308	
Old Couple	21	-	0.01	-3.521	0.07
		4.025			
Number of Children					
0 -3 Children	33	+6.361		5.124	
4 and above	9	-	0.01	-4.216	0.02
		4.242			
Multiple R Square					0.704
Multiple R					0.839

Figure 2: Table 4 .

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