

## EFFECT AND MANAGEMENT OF MARITAL CONFLICTS AMONG CHRISTIAN COUPLES IN KOSOFE LOCAL GOVERNMENT AREA, LAGOS STATE, NIGERIA

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### ABSTRACT

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Marital conflict is one of the oldest forms of complex challenges that beset all human societies. This form of conflict has its own specific genre within a space and time. While various studies have explored the dynamism of marital conflict in many societies, such empirical studies have not been attempted in Kosofe area of Lagos State, particularly as it affects Christian religious sect. This study therefore examined the effects and management of marital conflicts among Christians in Kosofe Local Government, Lagos. Both primary and secondary sources of data were used. Primary data were collected through administration of 106 copies of questionnaire from Christian couples who are residents of Kosofe Local Government. Seven (7) in-depth interviews were also conducted with church leaders and counselors both from the orthodox and Pentecostal churches within Kosofe Local Government Area. Secondary data were sourced from books, journals, magazines, newspapers and internet materials. The results indicate that while conflicts were present in many marriages, their extent was generally considered low. However, these conflicts were triggered by various factors, including communication breakdown, cultural differences, financial issues, and household responsibilities. The study also revealed that resolving these conflicts posed significant challenges, leading to many conflicts remaining unresolved for extended periods. By understanding the triggers, challenges, and impact of marital conflicts among Christians in Lagos, Nigeria, this study contributes to the development of strategies to foster healthier and happier marital relationships within the context of this community. The study makes advocacy for financial literacy, counseling & support and communication workshop with a view to reducing the negative effect of marital conflict in Christian homes.

**Keywords:** *Marital conflict, Christian couples and conflict management.*

## INTRODUCTION

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The pervasiveness of social conflict has no limit in its objective sense; as it permeates every stratum of national life including organizations, corporate, environmental, institutional, communal and probably international settings. However, the crucible of their embryonic formation could largely be traced to the family units, which potentially define and underscore the extent of instability and extreme violence within the social strata and the larger society. Marital dispute is one of the oldest forms of social contraction, which is quite different from other forms of conflicts as the parties involved share deep and most intimate relationships (Gautam., Kulshrestha., & Goswami (2021). As deep as the social relationships associated with marital involvement, so deeper are the hurts and discontentment that often trail the events of marital conflicts, especially it reaches the advance stage of divorce. Splinter (1992) opined that ‘any one going through the experience of divorce will tell of it crazy time, as feelings run rampant, and stress is high’. For Goodhand (2001), the direct impacts of marital conflicts will usually manifest in domestic violence and could result in battlefield, injury, deaths, single parenthood, disablement, displacement and poverty increase which have both short and long-term effects on families and the larger society. In fact, unhealthy marital relationships often lead to maladjustment between husband and wife and marital disruptions with adverse effects on the couple, children and their in-laws Patham, (2015).

There exist robust literatures that focused primarily on the causes, pattern, intensity and management of marital conflicts. The authors often drew their empirical analyses and conclusions from various cultural climes globally. For instance, a study conducted in Pakistan revealed that husbands and wives usually have high and unmet expectations and at the same time, experience deviations from perceived norms as main causes of marital conflicts. In a similar study carried out by Robila & Krishnakumar (2005), the authors interrogated major variables that cause marital conflict in Romania; and was discovered that economic pressure and financial stress account for most of the marital discords being witnessed in the country. These submissions are largely true reflections of marital crises being witnessed in most developing countries, particularly Africa, where the socio-economic indices indicate that most families live below the poverty line and have become a serial trigger of marital disputes. In Nigeria, previous studies have equally shown that marital conflicts permeate various every stratum of the society and considered as an alarming trend Dada & Idowu, (2006). The authors specifically sampled the perception of educated elites on factors that created marital stability in Ilorin metropolis in Kwara State. In her own work titled ‘Causes of Marital Conflict among Couples in Nigeria: Implications for Counseling Psychologists’ Tolorunleke (2014) investigated the causes of marital conflicts in Ijumu land focusing on the level of education and length of marriage and established no significant relationships between the variables investigated. Kosofe Local Government of Lagos State is one of the areas that have shown the tendency for high marital conflicts as observed by the authors of this article, which previous researches have not covered. It is on that basis that this paper investigated the causes, prevalence and

management of marital conflicts among Christian couples in Kosofe Local Government Area of Lagos State, Nigeria. Researching couples with a particular religious sect is unique in the sense that religious values play significant roles in conflict generation and escalation. For instance, the Christian religion, which forms the focus of this paper admonishes adherents that divorce can only be entertained on the ground of infidelity (Matthew 19:3-9) and desertion (1 Cor. 7)

### Clarification of Key Terms

**Marital Conflict:** Marital conflict has wide areas of definition and coverage in terms of actors, frequency, intensity and consequences for the immediate family and the society at large. It also has different dimensions with respect to how married partners react and respond to conflict events in their relationships. Marital conflict is described in the context of this study as couple's disagreements on home-finance, child's care, handling issues relating to in-laws, sexual differences, extra-marital affairs among others. In extreme cases, when such situations experience delayed intervention or not handled constructively, it could lead to domestic violence and outright separation or divorce of the couples.

**Christian Couple:** This refers to married men and women who practice Christian religious belief. They are adult set of people who belong to different sect within the Christendom including both the orthodox and the unorthodox churches as we have them in Catholics, Methodist, Baptist, Redeemed Christian Church of God, Winner Chapel, Christ Embassy among several other.

**Conflict Management:** This is used to describe an intervention in an ongoing feud or conflict with the intention of limiting the influence of the causes of the problem. The term of conflict management can better be understood from the general belief that all conflicts cannot be resolved or prevented; but parties can deliberately deploy measures that could minimize tendencies for escalation of such conflicts. This is even more likely in a situation of marriage involving adults whose behavioural dispositions are already formed and maybe difficult to change.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

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### 2.1 Marital Conflict

According to Graff, Birmingham, Wadsworth & Hung (2024). marital conflict is a state of tension, struggle, clash, strife, disagreement or quarrel primarily between a husband and a wife, and sometimes with other members of the household, over opposing needs, ideas, belief, values or goals. Cummings (as cited in Olugbenga, 2018). Usually, marital conflict comes in different ways including spouse battering, spousal abuse, sexual abuse, marital irresponsibility, incest, rape, subtle struggle for control between the couples and other abusive behaviors. Marital conflict, which is a variant of family conflict, is recognized

worldwide as the most vital forms of conflict that affects every clime, culture, nation and the global community. Hence, existing literature shows that most researchers and authors that have previously carried out studies on the subject were drawn from various disciplines, background or fields of study including law, sociology, psychology, peace studies, gender studies and development studies. This is a demonstration of the multi-disciplinary nature and richness of analyses that are currently ongoing on the subject. Most of the analyses focus mainly on the causative factors, pattern, consequences and responses to marital conflicts. According to Tiruwork (2015), and Meaza and Wobedel (2014) several major sources of marital conflict include childlessness, forced marriage, incompatibility, communication gap, interference by in-laws, finance, infidelity, sex of child and ingratitude among others.

### Challenging Areas of Marital Conflicts among Christian couples:

1. **Character conflict-** Some of the reasons couples are faced with many conflicts can be attributed to character problem from one person or both of them in marriage. When one person is doing what is wrong and refused to make amend or take correction could trigger serious conflicts in the home. This action could be harming the marriage and if not corrected could lead to divorce.
2. **Individual issues** – This occurs when marital conflicts are attributed a person’s hurt and unresolved problem. Some people will usually start the marriage with a lot more baggage than the others. For some people who are abused sexually when growing up, such bitter experience may affect their sex life and indeed their marriage later in life. This is because the experience growing up and could take a bigger toll on the marriage if not properly managed. Hence healing from hurt of such abuse can often take a lot of time and efforts and could be quite emotionally affect marriage.
3. **Relationship Issues:** When marital conflicts are due to two people seeing the world and the relationship in different ways. Couples may have different emotional needs and because that, one person may not feel loved. This can cause disagreement in so many areas in the marriage and could lead to divorce.

### Signs of Marital Conflicts Gridlock in Christian homes

1. Rejection by your partner
2. When you keep talking about the problem but make no headway
3. When become rooted in your position and unwilling to budge
4. When you discuss the subject in contention, but rather end up feeling frustrated
5. When you become more even more unmovable overtime, which leads to angry comments in other conversations
6. You become more polarized, more extreme in your views, and all the less willing to compromise
7. When you disengage from each other emotionally.

## Causes of Marital Conflict in Christian Homes

**Some the causes of marital conflict in Christian marriages are:**

**Sex denial:** Odeleye (2019) lamented sex starvation was discovered to be one of the reasons why divorce has increased amongst couples. Some women are very spiritual and claim to be praying and fasting every day. This makes the man uncomfortable and he calls for a divorce. Some of the women also usually claim to be going to church for a night vigil, simply to deny their husband's sex. The man endures but gets to a point where he feels that he needs to get another wife and divorce his current wife. In a marriage, a man denying sex to his wife and vice versa could amount to cruelty and may be grounds for divorce.

**Falsehood:** A false statement is one that refers to an untrue statement or the absence of truth or accuracy Merriam-Webster (2022). They are false beliefs Baima (2017). Divorced couples reported lies by one of the partners as a supporting reason for their divorce. A partner who is impotent will not tell the wife, or he will tell lies about having a job with a company when he does not. The lady, on the other hand, may have removed her womb without telling the husband, or one of the partners may have hidden their health status, such as being HIV positive, from their partner. Mrs Tolu (2022: oral interview) mentioned that she knows someone who divorced her husband, having discovered he was impotent without his telling her. Alieke (2022:1) reveals, 'When the marriage was contracted under falsehood, half-truth or undeclared facts can as well be a ground for seeking a divorce'. Also, one of the couples may have made empty promises to each other, and when they are not fulfilled, divorce takes its course (Vanguard 2022).

**Choice of Wrong Marriage Partner:** Since it has become easy for young men to marry, many of them just choose their marriage partners without proper examination. It is however amazing that their refusal to consult neither church leaders nor traditional elders has paved way for continuous conflict in the family. Ademiluka. (2024).

**Technological Factor:** No one can deny the immense good of modern technology. At the same time, the evil it has brought into the family life cannot be over looked especially on television and internet which have greatly invaded on our Christian homes and the society as a whole. Appathurai (2012), asserted that, the twentieth century initiated the disintegration of the extended family. The faster modes of transportation and better tools of communication have made the world-smaller and smaller but the distance between the members of family grows wider and wider since communication can be done in any part of the world through telephones and laptops. These modern electronic instruments instead of facilitating the strengthening of relationships often times keep couples apart, thus contributing to the growth of divorce, a clear example is the use of internet Day by day more and more children, youth and adult are becoming addicted to internet. Priyamk (2002) who has a similar view with Appathurai (2012) describes the sad effects of technology says that, it is hard to believe that even on friendship day, people do not want to visit and greet their friends personally, but

prefer doing it through the net. Many who are addicted to net pornography are not able to maintain satisfactory sexual relationships in their married life thereby contributing greatly to the growth of divorce cases among Christians in the world.

**Lack of Mutual Respect:** Oyebanjo,( Ephesian 5:22)

Mutual respect for one's spouse is important for marital union sustenance and lack of it is a crisis factor capable of rocking even the strongest marital foundation of hitherto blissful homes. The Holy Bible admonishes couples thus: wives respect your husband who in turn should love their wives as they would their own body. One can quickly assume that each of the above condition is a *sin qua non* for family stability and sustenance; since a husband might find it difficult to continue to love a wife who does not respect him or his authority; neither would a wife respect the husband who does not love her. Respect and love are reciprocal in every marital union and as such, a spouse owes it an obligation to respect and love his or her marriage partner, failure to do so may fan the embers of marital discord and discontent. Adebowale (2018)

**Character Incompatibility:** Behavioural attitudes that make conflict persist and unresolved or irreconcilable between spouse that make impossible to living together as spouse. Almost all intimate relationships have areas of incompatibility that may come and go through duration and if not well manage could lead to conflict and in turn to divorce.

**Selfishness:** This is one the major enemies of married love and of love within the family. It affects how we talk to each other, how we divide responsibilities in the home, how we resolve conflicts and even how we spend our time. If not well manage can prevent couples from growing together in the marriage.

**Materialism:** A common belief about materialism in marriage has been that conflict erupts when spouse disagreed on the basics of money and spending. perhaps spouse go to bed angry after failing to agree on the amount of money they ought to have saved. Materialism is harmful in marriage for two primary reasons. Firstly, spending unwisely thereby creating financial stress in the marriage and secondly high premium on money can place less responsive to their partner and less focused on the relationship. Jason Carroll (2022)

## METHODOLOGY

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The study utilized both primary and secondary sources of data. The primary data involved questionnaires administered on 111 respondents, of which 106 copies were returned. Seven in-depth-interviews were also conducted with church leaders to get their perspectives on the key objectives of the paper. The study area was Kosefe LGA, where churches including 1 Pentecostal, 1 Apostolic and 1 celestial church were purposively selected for the interviews. Simple random sampling was used to select respondents for the questionnaires while

purposive sampling was also used to select the church leaders for in-depth interview. Data were analyzed using descriptive statistical tool, especially tables. Secondary data were obtained by consulting books, journals, daily newspapers, conference papers and internet materials.

## RESULTS, FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS

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### Bio-Data Frequency Table

**Table 1: Gender Distribution**

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Male	60	56.6	56.6	56.6
Female	46	43.4	43.4	100.0
Total	106	100.0	100.0	

**Source:** Survey (2023)

The results in table 1 revealed that 60 (56.6%) of respondents were male and 46 (43.4%) were female. This suggests that both genders were adequately represented in the sample with male respondents been more than female respondents.

**Table 2: Age Distribution**

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid 18 to 30 years	19	17.9	17.9	17.9
31 to 45 years	48	45.3	45.3	63.2
46 to 60 years	32	30.2	30.2	93.4
Above 60 years	7	6.6	6.6	100.0
Total	106	100.0	100.0	

**Source:** Survey (2023)

The results shows that 17.9% (19) respondents were age 18 to 30 years, 45.3% (48) respondents were between 31 to 45 years, 30.2% (32) respondents were between 46 and 60 years and 6.6% (7) respondents were above 60 years. These show that each age group is well represented. It further revealed that majority of respondents (82.1%) were above 30 years of age. The implication is that majority of respondents were matured therefore adding to the credibility of their views expressed.

**Table 3: Ethnicity Distribution of Respondents**

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Yoruba	22	20.8	21.0	21.0
Others	38	35.8	36.1	57.1
Igbo	45	42.5	42.9	100.0
Total	105	99.1	100.0	
System	1	.9		
Total	106	100.0		

Source: Survey (2023)

The results show that 21% of respondents were Yorubas, 42.9% were Igbos, none of them were Hausas and 36.1% were of other tribes. It shows that out of the three major tribes in Nigeria, only Hausas were not captured in this survey.

**Table 4: Respondents' Age in Marriage**

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid 0 to 5 years	20	18.9	18.9	18.9
6 to 10 years	13	12.3	12.3	31.1
11 to 15 years	16	15.1	15.1	46.2
16 to 20 years	28	26.4	26.4	72.6
Above 20 years	29	27.4	27.4	100.0
Total	106	100.0	100.0	

Source: Survey (2023)

Results of the age of respondents in their marriages revealed that 18.9% (20) had up to 5 years in Marriage, 12.3% (13) had between 6- and 10-years marriage experience, 15.1% (16) respondents had between 11- and 15-years marriage experience, 26.4% (28) respondents had between 16- and 20-years marriage experience and 27.4% had above 20 years' experience in marriage. In summary, over 81% of respondents had more than 5 years marital experience.

**Table 5: Income of Respondents**

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Less than N50,000	18	17.0	17.0	17.0
N50001 to N200,000	27	25.5	25.5	42.5
N200,001 TO N350,000	26	24.5	24.5	67.0
N350,001 to N500,000	23	21.7	21.7	88.7
Above N500,000	12	11.3	11.3	100.0
Total	106	100.0	100.0	

Source: Survey (2023)



The monthly income level of respondents had presented in table 5 shows that 17% (18) of respondents were receiving less than N50,000 per month, 25.5% were receiving between N50,001 to N200,000, 24.5% were receiving N200,001 to N350,000 monthly, 21.7% were on monthly income of N350,001 to N500,000 and 11.3% (12) were on monthly income above N500,000.

**Table 6: Education Level of Respondents**

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid O Levels/SSCE	8	7.5	7.5	7.5
OND/NCE	22	20.8	20.8	28.3
HND/B.SC	43	40.6	40.6	68.9
POST GRADUATE	33	31.1	31.1	100.0
Total	106	100.0	100.0	

Source: Survey (2023)

The educational distribution of respondents showed that 7.5% (8) respondents had O level certificates only, 20.8% (22) had up to Ordinary National Diploma or National Certificate of Education, 40.6% ha up to First degree or Higher National Diploma and 31.1% had up to Post graduate degrees. The implication is that respondents have adequate education to objectively express view to the questionnaire.

### Key Findings and Analysis

**Table 7: Understanding Frequency of Conflicts**

How frequently do you and your spouse experience conflict in your marriage?				
	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Not very often	51	48.1	48.1	48.1
Rarely	24	22.6	22.6	70.8
Occasionally	24	22.6	22.6	93.4
Frequently	4	3.8	3.8	97.2
Very Frequently	3	2.8	2.8	100.0
Total	106	100.0	100.0	

Source: Survey (2023)

Responses to frequency of conflict between spouses in table 7 show that 46.1% (51) respondents did not very often experience conflicts in their marriages, 22.6% (24) rarely experienced conflicts, 22.6% (24) occasionally experienced conflicts, 3.8% (4) frequently experienced conflicts and 2.8% (3) respondents very frequently experienced conflicts in their marriages. This suggests that many of them experienced conflicts in their marriages.

**Table 8: Major sources of conflict**

What are the major sources of conflicts?					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Finance	28	26.4	26.7	26.7
	Parenting	10	9.4	9.5	36.2
	Household Responsibility	33	31.1	31.4	67.6
	Intimacy	25	23.6	23.8	91.4
	Religion/Beliefs	9	8.5	8.6	100.0
	Total	105	99.1	100.0	
Missing	System	1	.9		
Total		106	100.0		

**Source:** Survey (2023)

Analysis of respondents’ views on areas commonly associated with conflicts shows that 26.7% saw finance as the most commonly associated area, 9.5% is attributed to parenting as the most commonly associated area, 31.4% identified household responsibilities as the most commonly associated area, 23.8% cited intimacy as the most commonly associated area, and 8.6% saw religion/beliefs as the most commonly associated area. These imply that distribution of household’s responsibility between partners is considered the most commonly associated area with conflicts. Next on the line is finance, and intimacy was considered the third in ranking of areas most commonly associated with conflicts in marriages among Christians in Lagos. The list of the factors considered was religious beliefs.

**Table 9: Intensity of marital conflicts among Christian couples**

How would you rate the intensity of conflicts in your marriage?					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Very Low	41	38.7	38.7	38.7
	Low	35	33.0	33.0	71.7
	Moderate	18	17.0	17.0	88.7
	High	10	9.4	9.4	98.1
	Very High	2	1.9	1.9	100.0
Total		106	100.0	100.0	

**Source:** Survey (2023)

The analysis of respondents’ views on the intensity of conflicts among Christian marriages revealed that 38.7% (41) respondents were of the view that conflicts in marriages among Christians in Lagos was very low, 33% (35) considers it as low, 17% (18) view it as moderate, 9.4% expressed that conflict among Christians in Lagos was high and 1.9% (2) respondents

said it was very high. Generally, it was expressed that many respondents were of the view that marital conflicts among Christians in Lagos was low.

**Table 10: What Triggers Conflicts in Marriage**

What are the most common triggers for conflicts in your marriage?					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Money	25	23.6	24.5	24.5
	Jealousy	28	26.4	27.5	52.0
	Trust Issues	14	13.2	13.7	65.7
	Beliefs/Values	15	14.2	14.7	80.4
	Communication	20	18.8	19.6	100.0
	Total	102	96.2	100.0	
	Total	106	100.0		

Source: Survey (2023)

Results in table 10 contain the expressed views on the factors that triggers conflicts in marriage among Christians. Money is considered to be 24.5% most common trigger of marriage, jealousy to be 27.5% common trigger, trust issues as 13.7% common trigger, beliefs/values as 14.7% common trigger, communication to be 19.6% common trigger of conflicts among Christians in Lagos state, Nigeria. These suggest that jealous and money were the most common factors that triggers conflicts among Christian in Lagos state, Nigeria. The least factor considered as trigger of conflict among Christian in the state, was trust issues followed by beliefs/values.

**Table 11: Conflict resolution strategies being used among Christians Couples**

How would you rate the overall quality of your marital relationship?					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Mediation	1	.9	1.0	1.0
	Counseling	3	2.8	2.9	3.8
	Arbitration	14	13.2	13.3	17.1
	Court System	17	16.0	16.2	33.3
		14	13.2	13.3	46.7
		26	24.5	24.8	71.4
		30	28.3	28.6	100.0
	Total	105	99.1	100.0	
	Total	106	100.0		

Source: Survey (2023)

Table 11 presents the respondents’ rating of the overall quality of marital relationship among Christians in Lagos Nigeria. The overall quality of marital relationship among Christians in Lagos Nigeria was rated excellent by 28.6% of respondents, rated good by 24.8% of respondents, rated as fair by 13.3% of respondents, 16.2% were indifferent, 13.3% rated it as moderately poor, 2.9% as poor and 1% as very poor. In summary, 66.7% of respondents rated the overall quality of marital relationship among Christians in Lagos Nigeria as positive and only 17.1% rated it as negative.

**Table 12: Challenges in Conflict Resolution**

How challenging do you find it to resolve conflicts with your spouse?					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Very Easy	19	17.9	18.1	18.1
	Not Challenging	16	15.1	15.2	33.3
	Neutral	19	17.9	18.1	51.4
	Challenging	23	21.7	21.9	73.3
	Very Challenging	28	26.4	26.7	100.0
	Total	105	99.1	100.0	
Missing	System	1	.9		
Total		106	100.0		

**Source:** Survey (2023)

Statistics in table 12 presents the challenges respondents face to resolve marital conflicts with their spouses. Of these respondents, 18.1% considered it very easy to resolve conflicts with their spouses, 15.2% considered it to Not been challenging, 16.1% expressed that they were neutral in their view on whether it is challenging or not, 21.9% expressed that it was challenging and 26.7% sees it has been very challenging. In all, 48.5% were of the view that it was challenging, only 33.3% were of the view that it was not challenging and 18.1% were neutral to the view. This implies that higher number of Christians in Lagos Nigeria found it challenging resolving marital conflict with their spouses.

**Table 13: Factors that makes Conflicts Resolution Difficult**

<b>Which of the following factors make conflict resolution difficult for you?</b>				
	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Lack Of Communication Skills	23	21.7	21.7	21.7
Inability To Compromise	22	20.8	20.8	42.5
Belief/Values' differences	14	13.2	13.2	55.7
Lack Of Time	26	24.5	24.5	80.2
Emotional Issues	21	19.8	19.8	100.0
Total	106	100.0	100.0	

Source: Survey (2023)

Responses to the factors that makes conflicts resolution difficult presented in table 13 show that lack of communication skills made 21.7% contribution to factors that make conflict resolution difficult to Christians in Lagos Nigeria, inability to compromise had 20.8 % contribution to the difficulty, belief/values' differences had 13.2% contribution to the difficulty in conflict resolution, lack of time gave 24.5% and emotional issues had 19.8% contribution to difficulty in conflict resolution among Christians in Lagos, Nigeria. the implication is that inability to give sufficient time was found to be the highest factor that makes conflicts resolution difficult among Christians in Lagos state, followed by communication failure and closely followed is the inability to compromise. Interestingly belief/values' differences were the considered the least factor that makes conflicts resolution difficult among Christians in Lagos state and the second least factor was emotional issues.

**Table 14: Length of Time Conflicts Remained Unresolved**

<b>How often do conflicts in your marriage remain unresolved?</b>					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Never	15	14.2	14.2	14.2
	Rarely	16	15.1	15.1	29.2
	Sometimes	26	24.5	24.5	53.8
	Frequently	31	29.2	29.2	83.0
	Almost Always	18	17.0	17.0	100.0
	Total	106	100.0	100.0	

Source: Survey (2023)

Table 14 shows the responses to question about length of time conflicts issues remains unresolved among Christians in Lagos Nigeria. Respondents that expressed that conflicts were never left for long before resolution were 14.2%, 15.1% claimed conflicts were rarely left unresolved for long before been resolved, 24.5% expressed that conflicts were sometimes left unresolved for long time, 29.2% were of the view that conflicts were been frequently left unresolved and 17% were of the opinion that conflict were almost always been left unresolved among Christians in Lagos Nigeria. In summary, the study found that marital conflicts were left unresolved for long time among Christians in Lagos Nigeria.

**Table 15: Effect of Christian Beliefs and Values on Conflict Resolution**

**Do you believe that your Christian beliefs and practices pose any specific challenges to conflict resolution?**

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid				
Totally False	49	46.2	46.2	46.2
Somewhat False	17	16.0	16.0	62.3
Indifferent	12	11.3	11.3	73.6
Somewhat True	13	12.3	12.3	85.8
True	10	9.4	9.4	95.3
Totally True	5	4.7	4.7	100.0
Total	106	100.0	100.0	

Source: Survey (2023)

Responses to the effects of Christians beliefs and values on conflict resolution as presented in table 15 shows that 4.7% of respondents were of the view that it is totally true and 9.4% perceived that Christian beliefs and practices pose any specific challenges to conflict resolution among Christians in Lagos, Nigeria, 46.2% claimed that it was totally false and 16% held that it was somewhat true that that Christian beliefs and practices pose any specific challenges to marital conflict resolution in Lagos Nigeria. Those respondents that were indifferent to this view were 11.6%. In summary, majority (62.2%) of response were of the opinion that it was not true that Christian beliefs and practices pose any specific challenges to conflict resolution among Christians in Lagos state, Nigeria. therefore, it is inferred that Christian beliefs and practices does not pose any specific challenges to conflict resolution among Christians in Lagos state, Nigeria.

**Table 16: Overall Well-being and Satisfaction**

On a scale of 1 to 10, how satisfied are you with your overall well-being within your marriage?				
	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Extremely Dissatisfied	1	.9	.9	.9
Dissatisfied	2	1.9	1.9	2.8
Moderately Dissatisfied	7	6.6	6.6	9.4
Indifferent	13	12.3	12.3	21.7
Moderately Satisfied	21	19.8	19.8	41.5
Satisfied	24	22.6	22.6	64.2
Extremely Satisfied	38	35.8	35.8	100.0
Total	106	100.0	100.0	

**Source:** Survey (2023)

Statistics in table 16 shows that 35.8% of respondents were extremely satisfied with their overall well-being within their marriage, 22.6% were satisfied, 19.8% were moderately satisfied, 12.3% were indifferent, 6.6% were moderately dissatisfied, and 0.9% were extremely dissatisfied with their overall well-being within your marriage. In all, 78.2% of respondents were satisfied with overall well-being within their marriage, only 3.7% were dissatisfied with overall well-being within their marriage. These implies that majority of married Christians in Lagos Nigeria were satisfied with overall well-being within their marriage.

## SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

### Level of marital conflicts among Christian couples

*Extent of Marital Conflicts:* Findings indicate that many (51.9%) of them experienced conflicts in their marriages.

*Areas Where Conflicts arise from:* Analysis of respondents’ views on areas commonly associated with conflicts shows that finance, parenting, household responsibilities, intimacy and religion/beliefs as the most commonly associated areas of conflict. These imply that distribution of household’s responsibility between partners is considered the most commonly associated area with conflicts followed by finance, and then intimacy. The least of the factors considered was religion/beliefs.

*Intensity of Conflicts:* The analyses of respondents' view on the intensity of conflicts among Christian marriages revealed that majority (76%) of respondents were of the view that marital conflicts among couples were on the low side.

*What Triggers Conflicts in Marriage:* Money, jealousy, beliefs/values, communication were found to be common triggers of marital conflicts among Christians in Lagos State, Nigeria. The findings further established that jealousy and money were the most common factors that triggers conflicts among Christian in Lagos state, Nigeria. Factors showed that trust issues, followed by beliefs/values are the least triggers of marital conflict.

### Challenges in Conflict Resolution

*How challenging Is resolution of conflicts:* It was found that in all, many of the respondents were of the view that it was challenging resolving marital conflict with their spouses.

*Factors that make Conflicts Resolution Difficult:* It was found that lack of communication skills, inability to compromise, belief/values' differences lack of time and emotional issues were major contributors to difficulty in conflict resolution among Christians in Lagos, Nigeria. The findings indicate that inability to give sufficient time was found to be the highest factor that makes conflicts resolution difficult among Christians in Lagos state, followed by communication failure and closely followed is the inability to compromise. Notable in the findings is that belief/values' differences was the considered the least factor that makes conflicts resolution difficult among Christians in Lagos state and the second least factor was emotional issues.

*Length of Time Conflicts Remained Unresolved:* Findings established that marital conflicts among Christians in Lagos Nigeria were been left unresolved for long time.

*Effects of Christians Beliefs and Values on Conflict Resolution:* It was found that Christian beliefs and practices did not pose any specific challenges to conflict resolution among Christians in Lagos state, Nigeria.

**Overall Well-being and Satisfaction:** In all, majority (78.2%) of respondents were satisfied with overall well-being within their marriage.

**Overall Quality of Marital Relationship among Christians:** In summary, majority (66.7%) of respondents rated the overall quality of marital relationship among Christians in Lagos Nigeria as highly positive.

**Effect of Conflicts on Overall Happiness of Partners:** It was found that Overall Happiness of Partners of majority of marriages among Christians in Lagos state Nigeria is affected by conflicts.



**Usage of Professional Help to Resolve Conflicts among Christian Marriage:** The study findings showed that the use of professional help to resolve conflicts among Christian marriages is not common among Christians in Lagos state, Nigeria.

## CONCLUSIONS

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The paper concluded that many (51.9%) couples experienced conflicts in their marriages but the extent was considered low. These conflicts were triggered by several factors including issues with finance, parent responsibility, children care among others. The resolution strategies also included mediation, arbitration, counseling and the court system. Some of the challenges identified include lack of communication skills, inability to compromise, beliefs/values' differences, time constraints and emotional issues

## RECOMMENDATIONS

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Based on the above conclusions, the following recommendations are being suggested to enhance conflict resolution practices in the study area:

- 1) Counseling and Support: The Christian community and local institutions should provide counseling and support programs to help couples improve their dispute resolution skills.
- 2) Communication Workshops: Couples should attend communication workshops to assist them resolve communication failures that contribute to disputes.
- 3) Cultural Sensitivity: To reduce disputes caused by cultural differences, encourage cultural sensitivity and understanding within couples.
- 4) Financial Literacy Programs: Financial literacy programs should be created to assist couples in better managing financial conflicts.
- 5) Early Intervention: Conflicts should be handled as soon as possible, and giving resources for early intervention may help to avoid conflicts from increasing and becoming chronic.

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