
Impact of Effective Communication in a Marriage

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ABSTRACT

The study examined the impact of effective communication in marriage. Communication is viewed as an interaction and sharing of ideas among individuals or groups of people. Effective marital communication skills positively correlate with marital satisfaction and are considered to be of great importance to happily married couples. It also leads to a better understanding and increases intimacy between couples. Communication is a fundamental interaction in relationships and marriages. Not only is communication important, but there are also many ways individuals can choose to communicate with one another. Communication is a specific learned action that is very important in maintaining a relationship because it allows you to explain to someone else what you are experiencing and what your needs are. The act of communicating not only helps to meet your needs, but it also helps you to be connected in your relationship. The study concluded that marriage is a legally and socially sanctioned union, usually between a man and a woman, governed by laws, rules, customs, beliefs, and attitudes that define the spouses' rights and responsibilities, as well as the status of their offspring. Moreover, that marriage exists to bring a man and a woman together as husband and wife to be father and mother to any children their union produces. One of the recommendations made in the study was that for a unique and sustainable relationship in marriage, couples should enhance their relationship by understanding and applying relational communication skills to each other.

KEYWORDS: Effective Communication and Marriage

Introduction

Marriage is a significant milestone in a person's life. It comes in a variety of ways and purposes. Marriage is seen as a sacrament by most faiths, rather than a societal construct. Oriental civilizations, such as Japan's, China's, and India's, have a highly conventional and traditional view of marriage (Friedberg, 2009). In certain civilizations, such as Nigeria, marriage is seen as more than just a union between two people; it is also viewed as a gathering of families and communities. The choice of a mate or companion by an individual is limited. Likewise, Esere, Ake-Yeyeodu and Oladun (2014) expressed that marriage is an institutionalized social

connection of critical importance between a man and a woman. It is almost always more than a legalized sexual union between a man and a woman. It is a union between a man and a woman in which the children given birth to are recognized as both parents' legitimate offspring.

Many researchers, including Omeonu (2007b), Sherif & Stritof (2005), and Esere (2006), agree that communication is the single most important factor for a successful marriage and family. Ekanjume-Ilongo (2012) urged that communication is at the heart of everything in any marriage. It is the foundation for interaction between couples. Effective communication in any marriage has to do with understandings, feelings, desires, needs, and ideas. Effective communication enables couples to live together, work together, get along with each other, and make the earth the best possible place for their offspring. Furthermore, many other authors, such as Esere (2006), Olagunju & Eweniyi (2002), and Jolin (2007), have also noted that any marriage without effective communication is likely to crumble. With so many marriages ending tragically in divorce (Adegoke & Esere, 2008), it is as a result of no communication between husband and wife. So many problems escalate when there is no communication, and many problems are resolved when there is effective communication. Thus, communication is the key to a successful marriage, and without communication, no marriage can survive (Jolin, 2007).

Conceptual Review

Concept of Communication

Many scholars have attempted to define communication in a definite way. Communication, according to the Association of Perioperative Practice, is derived from the Latin term *communis*. The word *communis* is defined in terms of its parts: “*Com* means together with” and “*munis* connotes a gift of self, a strengthening or fortifying of the relationship, a binding of oneself with the other person” (Salz, 2007). Accordingly, Lunenberg (2010) agrees with them that communication has its root in Latin from the word *communis*. However, he asserts that it means ‘common’, which suggests that there must be a common understanding of the message between the source and the receiver concerning the message being communicated. Communication, in general, is viewed as a social context. A sender (source) and a receiver are usually involved in communication. It entails the exchange of signals between the interlocutors. These messages might be spoken, graphic, gestural, or visual in nature. In essence, communication entails the use of codes created by the eyes, bodily movement, or vocal sounds (Fatimayin, 2018). There is always a procedure in which someone begins a meaning intent that is conveyed to the interlocutor (receiver), regardless of how it is done. The process of communication can be fully completed, according to Daniel (2016), when feedback is delivered to the sender (source), which involves the receiver responding to the signal by commencing another circle of meaning exchange.

According to Okenimkpe (2010), communication is both the process of creating and ascribing meaning. It is the interaction and sharing of ideas among individuals or groups of people. Communication, according to the Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary of Current English (2004), is the activity or process of expressing ideas and feelings or providing information to others. On this basis, one can safely say that communication is the act of transmitting information and messages from one location to another, as well as from one person to another. In a like manner, the Online Business Dictionary (2010) described communication as a two-way process. It entails more than just encoding and decoding information, news, ideas, and feelings; it

also entails individuals developing a shared understanding. It is critical that they create and share meaningful content in the messages they pass along (Daniel, 2016). Furthermore, communication is viewed as a technique of connecting people and locations. When it comes to marriage, it is seen as a crucial function that necessitates a reciprocal sharing of one's self with one's partner. A more crucial definition of marital communication is the continuous interchange of information and messages between two spouses through speech, letter writing, telephone conversations, the display of bodily or facial expression, and other means (Lederer & Jackson, 2008).

Concept of Marriage

Marriage, also called matrimony or wedlock, is a legally and socially sanctioned union, usually between a man and a woman, governed by laws, rules, customs, beliefs, and attitudes that define the spouses' rights and responsibilities, as well as the status of their offspring. It is considered a cultural universal, but the definition of marriage varies between cultures and religions, and over time. Haviland (2000), cited in Özyiğit (2017), defined marriage as a relationship between one or more men (male or female) and one or more women (female or male) recognized by society as having a continuing claim to the right to sexual access to one another. Similarly, Haviland (1996) cited by Wimalasena (2016) defined marriage as a transaction and resulting contract in which a woman and a man are recognized by society as having a continuing claim to the right of sexual access to one another, and in which the woman involved is eligible to bear children. According to the Encyclopedia Britannica (2021), the universality of marriage within different societies and cultures is attributed to the many basic social and personal functions for which it provides structure, such as sexual gratification and regulation, division of labour between the sexes, economic production and consumption, and satisfaction of personal needs for affection, status, and companionship. Thus, marriage exists to bring a man and a woman together as husband and wife to be father and mother to any children their union produces. It is based on the anthropological truth that men and women are different and complementary, the biological fact that reproduction depends on a man and a woman, and the social reality that children need both a mother and a father (Anderson, 2013). The functional concerns of marriage, such as meeting the need for love and being loved, meeting both individuals' biological, social, psychological, and motivational needs, bringing new generations into the world, gaining a place in society, the feelings of being safe and protected, the sense of cooperation, being confident about the future, feeling proud of each other, and the healthy functioning of sexual life make marriage universal and significant for societies (Canel, 2012).

Importance of Communication in Marriage

Sustaining marriage and achieving a happy family is beyond true love, honesty and trust as communication in marriage (Sasa, 2018). Effective communication in marriage is the key to making any marriage successful and everlasting. Effective communication in marriage leads to better understanding and increases intimacy between couples. If you love your partner, make sure that they know about it. According to Kanksha, (2019), they must understand you whenever you are not comfortable with them. Keeping quiet for fear of annoying your partner may lead to more harm than good. Communicating is crucial in all interactions. But when misunderstanding occurs, it could be that one simply doesn't hear what the other person is saying. When people communicate using a different style than another, it is very much like speaking another language. Couples should recognize everyone has a unique way of communicating. Effective marital

communication skills positively correlate with marital satisfaction and are considered to be of great importance to happily married couples (Brown & Brown, 2002). Sustaining a personal relationship requires a lot of effort. Couples should enhance their relationship by understanding and applying a few relational communication concepts. Through that, the other person means no harm. Ask the other person what he thinks he heard you say. Begin by setting the ground rules. When engaging in a one-on-one, two-way conversation with a romantic partner, start with a non-threatening opening statement that establishes the purpose of the communication. Some of the crucial benefits of communication in marriage are as follows:

Better Marital Satisfaction: If you have opened the doors of effective communication with your spouse, you are more likely to experience a happy and peaceful relationship. Better communication means better satisfaction in a relationship in which you discuss everything with each other and thus lesser fights or quarrels.

Better Trust, Honesty and Respect: Marriage is a two-way street. You can not just keep expecting everything without giving. Therefore, if you are honest with your spouse and give and receive positive feedback or share other issues with complete honesty, it helps in building better trust in a relationship.

Better Understanding: Couples who often talk, discuss their lives, or communicate with each other regularly not only have a better understanding of each other, but it also helps them to have a stronger bond with each other. When you understand your spouse and the situations they may be dealing with, there will be less scope for misunderstanding or ambiguity.

Better Connection: Communication is a way of expressing your feelings and emotions towards your spouse. We understand that it is not important to express in words the love and affection that you have for your spouse. However, being expressive and vocal is one of the best ways of exhibiting your emotions towards your spouse, which would lead to a better connection.

Relationship and Communication

Communication is a fundamental interaction in relationships. Not only is communication important, but there are also many ways individuals can choose to communicate with one another. Because there are various ways individuals can choose to communicate, people expect different things. It is fascinated by the expectations that individuals have in their personal relationships. For example, expectations, including both how you're expected to act and the actions you expect from others, come from your understanding of how being in a relationship works. The actions of people in a romantic couple are shaped by the influence of their culture and are understood to be "learned" actions of their socialization (Buehler & Well 2011). Communication is a specific learned action that is very important in maintaining a relationship. It is a component used to reinforce relationship bonds (Spears et al, 2002). With advancements in communication technology, text messaging has become the main form of communication between young adults today (Skierkowski & Wood 2012), and it is important to understand the implications of this now widely available form of communication. In relationships, communication allows you to explain to someone else what you are experiencing and what your needs are. The act of communicating not only helps to meet your needs, but it also helps you to be connected in your relationship.

Levels of Communications in Marriage

The variation and frequency with which these communication levels are implemented in conversation impacts the resolution or development of communication issues in marriage. Depending on the subject discussed, couples may use one, two, or all five of these levels, mixing them up according to what the couple wishes to express.

- **Peak communication:** Deep and authentic relationships occur at the level of peak communication. Peak communication experiences occur when you are emotionally open and honest with the other person. According to Powell, (2009) in our human condition, this can never be a permanent experience. These should and will be the moments when an encounter attains perfect communication. At these times, the two people will feel almost perfect and mutual empathy.
- **My Ideas and judgments:** On these level of communication, couples communicate their ideas, opinions, and decisions. However, communication remains guarded.
- **Voicing and listening to each other's needs:** As with level four, couples that use this level of communication in their marriage have a true bond of trust between them, allowing them to listen to each other's needs actively, and acknowledge that they have heard and understood them. This is an extremely satisfying level at which to communicate.
- **My Feelings (emotion):** This level of communication describes what is going on inside of you, how you feel about a situation, experience, or person. Feelings are owned individually and sharing them with another person can be quite challenging. According to Powell (2009), most of us feel that others will not tolerate such emotional honesty in communication. We would rather defend our dishonesty on the grounds that it might hurt others, and having rationalized our phoniness into nobility, we settle for superficial relationships.
- **Cliche conversation:** This is when communication is reduced to the bare essentials, greetings or formalities. There may be requests to "pass the salt" or "who is picking up the kids?", but nothing is said that doesn't have to be said.

Helpful Information on what Couples Talk About

Time Together/Apart: Both the quantity and quality of time we spend together influence the well-being of our marital friendships (Victor, 2018). Spending time apart participating in other activities also influences the well-being of our relationships.

Money: How we think and talk about money, our spending habits, and our ability to budget, invest, and plan for the future impact a couple's financial management processes and practices.

Health: Couples must talk about many health-related issues, including nutrition, exercise, illness, disease, accidents, health care, mortality, and death.

Men/Women: Because men tend to be more task-oriented in their communication styles and women tend to be more process-oriented, men tend to want to solve issues immediately, while

women tend to want to talk about them more and come to a consensus about what should be done.

Children: How children develop physically, socially, intellectually, and spiritually is often the topic of discussion. Focusing on the best ways to consistently meet children's needs is considered being child-centered.

Commitment: How we "hang in there" and contribute to our marital friendship, even when things aren't well, is a sign of how committed we are to our relationship. Loyalty and fidelity are aspects of commitment and trust.

Trust: Trusting relationships are relationships in which both partners are dependable, available to support each other, and responsive to each other's needs. An ability to negotiate conflict and a positive outlook about the future of the relationship are also components of trust.

Intimacy: The social, intellectual, emotional, spiritual, and physical connections we make with each other determine the levels of intimacy we experience in our relationships.

Conclusion

The study concluded that marriage is a legally and socially sanctioned union, usually between a man and a woman, governed by laws, rules, customs, beliefs, and attitudes that define the spouses' rights and responsibilities, as well as the status of their offspring. Moreover, that marriage exists to bring a man and a woman together as husband and wife to be father and mother to any children their union produces. It is based on the anthropological truth that men and women are different and complementary, the biological fact that reproduction depends on a man and a woman, and the social reality that children need both a mother and a father. Also, sustaining a marriage and achieving a happy family is beyond true love, honesty, and trust as communication in marriage. Effective communication in marriage is the key to making any marriage successful and everlasting.

Recommendations

1. For a unique and sustainable relationship in marriage, couples should enhance their relationship by understanding and applying relational communication skills to each other.
2. Intending couples should also embrace effective communication skills while in a relationship, as they are the key to a successful and everlasting marriage.

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