

NAGGING, PHYSICAL HARASSMENT, AND VERBAL BULLYING AS RED FLAGS INFLUENCING MARITAL SATISFACTION OF SECONDARY SCHOOL TEACHERS IN AKWA IBOM NORTH-WEST SENATORIAL DISTRICT, NIGERIA

^a Derine K. Akpan, ^b Gertrude J. Udoh, and ^c Inwang E. Udom

Department of Guidance and Counselling
Faculty of Education

University of Uyo, Uyo, Nigeria

Correspondence: myderken@gmail.com 09067294845

<https://orcid.org/0009-0002-3965-2383>

Abstract

Marital satisfaction is vital for personal well-being and professional effectiveness, yet relational red flags such as nagging, physical harassment, and verbal bullying undermine marital harmony. This study examined their influence among secondary school teachers in Akwa Ibom North-West Senatorial District, Nigeria, using a descriptive survey of 520 married teachers selected from a population of 5,202, with data collected via the validated “Red Flags and Marital Satisfaction of Teachers Questionnaire (Cronbach’s $\alpha = 0.792\text{--}0.961$) and analyzed using mean, standard deviation, and independent samples t-tests at 0.05 significance level. Findings revealed that teachers with low marital satisfaction reported higher levels of nagging (2.44), physical harassment (1.92), and verbal bullying (2.18) than those with high satisfaction (1.79, 1.39, 1.48). With significant differences across all variables (nagging: $t(507) = 11.548$, $p = .000$; physical harassment: $t(507) = 9.146$, $p = .000$; verbal bullying: $t(507) = 12.800$, $p = .000$), indicating that these behaviours significantly reduce marital satisfaction by eroding trust, communication, and emotional intimacy, and highlighting the need for targeted counselling interventions and support systems to improve marital well-being among teachers. It was concluded that persistent nagging create tension and reduce open communication between spouses. Physical harassment and verbal bullying damages trust, emotional safety and mutual respect, often leading to fear, resentment and psychological distress. It was recommended among many others that Teachers who are in abusive relationship whether at home or at work should seek support from counselling psychologists, social workers or legal aid so as to gain awareness on how to do away with physical harassment and other forms of domestic abuse.

Keywords: Red flags, Nagging, Physical harassment, Verbal bullying, Marital satisfaction

Introduction

Marriage is a socially and legally recognized institution that establishes a union between two individuals, guided by cultural, legal, and religious norms. It is typically founded on love, trust, mutual support, and shared responsibilities, serving purposes such as companionship, procreation, and social stability (Cherlin, 2014). In Nigeria, particularly in Akwa Ibom State, marriage extends beyond the couple to include family and kinship ties, reinforcing its cultural and communal significance (Adebowale et al., 2020). Sustaining marital harmony therefore requires the avoidance of red flags—behaviours that threaten relationship stability and satisfaction.

Red flags are recurring negative behaviours or interaction patterns that signal potential marital problems and, if ignored, may lead to dissatisfaction or divorce (Marks & Lambert, 2021). These include nagging, verbal bullying, and physical harassment, which undermine communication, emotional safety, and mutual respect. Nagging, characterized by persistent criticism, fosters resentment and weakens intimacy (Baucom et al., 2018). Verbal bullying, such as insults and

threats, damages emotional well-being and reduces relationship quality (Hines & Douglas, 2018). Physical harassment, a form of intimate partner violence, threatens both physical and psychological health and often escalates over time.

Statement of the Problem

Marriage in Nigeria is increasingly strained, with secondary school teachers—who face heavy workloads, economic pressures, and high emotional demands—especially vulnerable to marital stress that affects both their well-being and job performance. Persistent nagging, verbal bullying, and physical harassment are common marital red flags that erode trust, emotional safety, and intimacy, thereby reducing marital satisfaction and, in turn, negatively impacting teachers' classroom effectiveness and professional stability. Although previous studies have examined Relationship Red Flags, however, there still exist a dearth in knowledge which have largely failed to examine these specific behaviours collectively within the unique occupational and socio-cultural context of teachers, leaving a gap that limits effective, context-specific counselling and intervention; hence, a need to empirically investigate how nagging, verbal bullying, and physical harassment influence marital satisfaction among secondary school teachers in Akwa Ibom North-West Senatorial District, Nigeria.

Purpose of the Study

The central purpose of this study was to examine the influence of red flag behaviours on marital satisfaction of secondary school teachers in Akwa Ibom North-West Senatorial District, Nigeria: Implication for marital counselling. Specifically, the sought to determine:

1. The influence of nagging on marital satisfaction of secondary school teachers in Akwa Ibom North-West Senatorial District, Nigeria.
2. The influence of physical harassment on marital satisfaction of secondary school teachers in Akwa Ibom North-West Senatorial District, Nigeria.
3. The influence of verbal bullying on marital satisfaction of secondary school teachers in Akwa Ibom North-West Senatorial District, Nigeria.

Research Questions

The following research questions were raised to guide the study:

1. How does nagging influence marital satisfaction of secondary school teachers in Akwa Ibom North-West Senatorial District, Nigeria?
2. How does physical harassment influence marital satisfaction of secondary school teachers in Akwa Ibom North-West Senatorial District, Nigeria?
3. How does verbal bullying influence marital satisfaction of secondary school teachers in Akwa Ibom North-West Senatorial District, Nigeria?

Research Hypotheses

The following research hypotheses were formulated to guide the study:

1. There is no significant influence of nagging on marital satisfaction of secondary school teachers in Akwa Ibom North-West Senatorial District, Nigeria.
2. There is no significant influence of physical harassment on marital satisfaction of secondary school teachers in Akwa Ibom North-West Senatorial District, Nigeria.
3. There is no significant influence of verbal bullying on marital satisfaction of secondary school teachers in Akwa Ibom North-West Senatorial District, Nigeria.

This study is anchored on four interrelated theoretical perspectives—Conflict Theory, Structural Theory of Marital Stability, ABC-X Family Stress Theory, and Psychosocial Theory—which collectively explain how nagging, verbal bullying, and physical harassment function as red flags influencing marital satisfaction among secondary school teachers. Conflict Theory (Marx, 1848; Collins, 1975) frames these behaviours as expressions of power struggles, emotional deprivation, and inequality within marriage, where nagging reflects unmet expectations, while verbal bullying

and physical harassment indicate dominance and control; this is particularly relevant for teachers whose occupational and economic stress may intensify marital conflict (Butzer & Kuijer, 2020), making these behaviours key indicators of power imbalance and reduced marital satisfaction.

Structural Theory of Marital Stability (Minuchin, 1974) explains that nagging, verbal bullying, and physical harassment arise from poor role coordination, imbalance, and ineffective communication, disrupting marital structure and harmony, especially for teachers balancing demanding professional and family roles (Nichols & Schwartz, 2020), thereby undermining stability and satisfaction.

Hill's ABC-X Family Stress Theory (1958) further conceptualizes these behaviours as stressors (A), whose impact depends on coping resources (B) and perception (C), leading to outcomes (X) ranging from adaptation to crisis; among teachers facing workload, financial pressure, and limited counselling access (Okon & Etim, 2019), persistent nagging, verbal bullying, and physical harassment can exceed coping capacity, resulting in marital dissatisfaction, making the theory central to analyzing how stress processes influence outcomes.

Erikson's Psychosocial Theory (1963), particularly the Intimacy vs. Isolation stage, highlights how these behaviours erode emotional bonding, mutual respect, and intimacy, leading to emotional distance and isolation (Newman & Newman, 2020), which is critical for teachers whose emotional stability affects both personal and professional functioning. Collectively, these theories demonstrate that nagging, verbal bullying, and physical harassment are interconnected red flags rooted in power imbalance, structural dysfunction, stress processes, and unmet emotional needs, providing a comprehensive framework for examining their impact on marital satisfaction among secondary school teachers and guiding effective counselling interventions.

These theories collectively explain nagging, verbal bullying, and physical harassment as red flags rooted in power imbalance, structural dysfunction, stress, and unmet psychosocial needs, providing a framework for understanding their impact on marital satisfaction among secondary school teachers and guiding targeted counselling interventions.

Marital satisfaction reflects spouses' overall evaluation of their relationship, including emotional intimacy, communication, and mutual fulfilment. High satisfaction promotes psychological well-being, while low satisfaction leads to conflict and distress (Butzer & Kuijer, 2020). Among teachers, marital challenges may be intensified by occupational stress, contributing to emotional fatigue and relational strain. Despite the importance of early intervention and counselling (Falade & Ogunleye, 2021), there is limited localized research on how specific red flags influence marital satisfaction. This study therefore examines these issues among secondary school teachers in Akwa Ibom North-West Senatorial District.

Methodology

This study adopted a descriptive survey design to examine how red flag behaviours—specifically nagging, verbal bullying, and physical harassment—influence marital satisfaction among secondary school teachers, allowing the collection of quantitative data without manipulation of variables and capturing real marital dynamics for counselling relevance (Nworgu, 2015). The study was conducted in Akwa Ibom North-West Senatorial District, Nigeria, covering ten LGAs (Abak, Essien Udim, Etim Ekpo, Ika, Ikono, Ikot Ekpene, Ini, Obot Akara, Oruk Anam, and Ukanafun), with a population of 5,202 teachers across 85 public secondary schools (State Secondary Education Board, 2024/2025). A sample of 520 married teachers (10%) was selected using a multi-stage sampling technique involving proportionate sampling, systematic random selection of five LGAs, stratified school selection, and simple random (balloting) sampling of respondents to ensure representativeness and minimize bias (Nwana, 1995).

Data were collected using the validated "Red Flags and Marital Satisfaction of Teachers Questionnaire (RFMSTQ)," which included sections on demographics, 64 items on nagging, verbal bullying, and physical harassment, and 20 items on marital satisfaction, measured on a four-

point Likert scale; the instrument showed high reliability ($\alpha = 0.792-0.961$) following expert validation by three University of Uyo specialists. A total of 509 valid responses were retrieved, and data were analyzed using descriptive statistics and independent samples t-test at 0.05 significance level to determine how nagging, verbal bullying, and physical harassment affect marital satisfaction. Ethical principles were strictly upheld through informed consent, confidentiality, voluntary participation, and proper data use.

Results

Research Question One: How does nagging influence marital satisfaction of secondary school teachers in Akwa Ibom North-West Senatorial District, Nigeria?

Table 1: Summary of mean and standard deviation on the influence of nagging on marital satisfaction of secondary school teachers

Variable	Marital Satisfaction Group	N	Mean (\bar{X})	SD	Weighted Mean
Nagging	Low Marital Satisfaction	265	2.44	0.62	2.44
Nagging	High Marital Satisfaction	244	1.79	0.65	1.79
Grand Mean	—	509	2.12	—	2.12

The result in Table 1 shows that secondary school teachers with low marital satisfaction recorded a higher mean score on nagging ($M = 2.44, SD = 0.62$), while those with high marital satisfaction had a lower mean score ($M = 1.79, SD = 0.65$). This indicates that increased levels of nagging are associated with decreased marital satisfaction, suggesting that frequent nagging negatively influences marital satisfaction among secondary school teachers, whereas lower exposure to nagging corresponds with higher levels of satisfaction.

Research question two: The influence of physical harassment on marital satisfaction of secondary school teachers in Akwa Ibom North-West Senatorial District, Nigeria.

Table 2: Summary of mean, standard deviation and weighted mean on the influence of physical harassment on marital satisfaction.

Variable	Marital Satisfaction Group	N	Mean (\bar{X})	SD	Weighted Mean
Physical Harassment	Low Marital Satisfaction	265	1.92	0.75	1.92
Physical Harassment	High Marital Satisfaction	244	1.39	0.54	1.39
Grand Mean	—	509	1.66	—	1.66

The result in Table 2 shows that secondary school teachers with low marital satisfaction recorded a higher mean score on physical harassment ($M = 1.92, SD = 0.75$), while those with high marital satisfaction had a lower mean score ($M = 1.39, SD = 0.54$). This indicates that increased levels of physical harassment are associated with decreased marital satisfaction, suggesting that physical harassment is a significant negative predictor of marital satisfaction among secondary school teachers.

Research question Three: The influence of verbal bullying on marital satisfaction of secondary school teachers in Akwa Ibom North-West Senatorial District, Nigeria.

Table 3: Summary of mean, standard deviation and weighted mean on the influence of verbal bullying on marital satisfaction.

Variable	Marital Satisfaction Group	N	Mean (\bar{X})	SD	Weighted Mean
Verbal Bullying	Low Marital Satisfaction	265	2.18	0.73	2.18
Verbal Bullying	High Marital Satisfaction	244	1.48	0.46	1.48
Grand Mean	—	244	1.83	—	1.83

The result in Table 3 shows that secondary school teachers with low marital satisfaction recorded a higher mean score on verbal bullying ($M = 2.18$, $SD = 0.73$), while those with high marital satisfaction had a lower mean score ($M = 1.48$, $SD = 0.46$). This indicates that increased levels of verbal bullying are associated with decreased marital satisfaction, suggesting that verbal bullying is a significant negative predictor of marital satisfaction among secondary school teachers in Akwa Ibom North-West Senatorial District, Nigeria.

Research hypotheses one: There is significant influence of nagging on marital satisfaction of secondary school teachers in Akwa Ibom North-West Senatorial District, Nigeria.

Table 4: summary of independent t-test analysis on the influence of nagging on marital satisfaction of secondary school teachers

Variable	Group	N	Mean	SD	t	df	p-value	Mean Difference
Nagging	Low Marital Satisfaction	265	2.44	0.62	11.548	507	.000	0.65
Nagging	High Marital Satisfaction	244	1.79	0.65	—	—	—	—

The result in Table 4 shows that secondary school teachers with low marital satisfaction recorded a higher mean score on nagging ($M = 2.44$, $SD = 0.62$) compared to those with high marital satisfaction ($M = 1.79$, $SD = 0.65$). The independent samples t-test revealed that this difference is statistically significant, $t(507) = 11.548$, $p < 0.05$, leading to the rejection of the null hypothesis. This indicates that nagging has a significant influence on marital satisfaction, with higher levels of nagging associated with lower marital satisfaction among secondary school teachers in Akwa Ibom North-West Senatorial District, Nigeria.

Research hypotheses two: There is significant influence of physical harassment on marital satisfaction of secondary school teachers in Akwa Ibom North-West Senatorial District, Nigeria.

Table 5: Summary of independent t-test analysis on the influence of physical harassment on marital satisfaction of secondary school teachers

Variable	Group	N	Mean	SD	t	df	p-value	Mean Difference
Physical Harassment	Low Marital Satisfaction	265	1.92	0.75	9.146	507	.000	0.53
Physical Harassment	High Marital Satisfaction	244	1.39	0.54	—	—	—	—

The result in Table 5 shows that secondary school teachers with low marital satisfaction recorded a higher mean score on physical harassment ($M = 1.92$, $SD = 0.75$) compared to those with high marital satisfaction ($M = 1.39$, $SD = 0.54$). The independent samples t-test revealed a statistically

significant difference, $t(507) = 9.146$, $p < 0.05$, leading to the rejection of the null hypothesis. This indicates that physical harassment significantly influences marital satisfaction, with higher levels associated with lower satisfaction. Additionally, the large effect size (Cohen's $d = 0.812$) suggests a strong practical impact on marital satisfaction among secondary school teachers in Akwa Ibom North-West Senatorial District, Nigeria. There is significant influence of verbal bullying on marital satisfaction of secondary school teachers in Akwa Ibom North-West Senatorial District, Nigeria.

Table 6: summary of independent t-test analysis on the influence of verbal bullying on marital satisfaction of secondary school teachers.

Variable	Group	N	Mean	SD	t	df	p-value	Mean Difference
Verbal Bullying	Low Marital Satisfaction	265	2.18	0.73	12.800	507	.000	0.70
Verbal Bullying	High Marital Satisfaction	244	1.48	0.46	—	—	—	—

The result in Table 6 shows that secondary school teachers with low marital satisfaction recorded a higher mean score on verbal bullying ($M = 2.18$, $SD = 0.73$) compared to those with high marital satisfaction ($M = 1.48$, $SD = 0.46$). The independent samples t-test revealed a statistically significant difference, $t(507) = 12.800$, $p < 0.05$, leading to the rejection of the null hypothesis. This indicates that verbal bullying significantly influences marital satisfaction, with higher levels associated with lower satisfaction. Additionally, the very large effect size (Cohen's $d = 1.136$) suggests a strong practical impact on marital satisfaction among secondary school teachers in Akwa Ibom North-West Senatorial District, Nigeria.

Discussion of Findings

Nagging and Marital Satisfaction

The result shows that nagging significantly reduces marital satisfaction among secondary school teachers in Akwa Ibom North-West Senatorial District, as lower levels of nagging are associated with higher marital satisfaction, while higher levels contribute to tension, resentment, frustration, poor communication, reduced trust, weakened emotional intimacy, diminished respect, and emotional withdrawal, especially under the stress of teaching, thereby undermining emotional stability at home and affecting both personal well-being and professional effectiveness. This finding supports Ijeoma and Adekunle (2022), who reported that nagging leads to dissatisfaction and emotional withdrawal, and underscores the need to minimize nagging and promote constructive communication to enhance marital satisfaction. The study also support the work of Barton et al. (2015) who reported that Demand/withdraw patterns (criticizing/nagging) are associated with lower marital quality. Spousal gratitude is linked to higher satisfaction and can buffer the negative effects of demand/withdraw.

Physical Harassment and Marital Satisfaction

The result demonstrates that physical harassment significantly reduces marital satisfaction among secondary school teachers in Akwa Ibom North-West Senatorial District, as its absence is associated with higher satisfaction while its presence leads to lower satisfaction, with behaviours such as hitting, slapping, or choking undermining emotional safety, eroding trust, weakening intimacy, and replacing affection with fear. For teachers already experiencing occupational stress, this further diminishes emotional stability, marital harmony, and professional effectiveness, and its persistent, cyclical nature may lead to anxiety, depression, and post-traumatic stress, increasing emotional withdrawal and detachment, thereby lowering satisfaction. Finding aligns with Ameh and Sunday (2021), on its links to relational instability and psychological harm, and highlights the

need for early intervention, counselling, and conflict resolution to reduce its negative impact. The finding also aligns with Ali *et al.* (2016) and Spencer *et al.* (2019), who established that physical harassment is associated with poor psychological outcomes, reduced relationship satisfaction, and increased likelihood of relationship breakdown.

Verbal Bullying and Marital Satisfaction of Secondary School Teachers

The findings of this study reveal that verbal bullying exerts a significant negative influence on marital satisfaction among secondary school teachers in Akwa Ibom North-West Senatorial District, Nigeria. Verbal bullying, which includes persistent criticism, insults, ridicule, and belittling remarks, undermines the emotional foundation of marriage. It erodes trust, diminishes self-esteem, and creates an atmosphere of hostility rather than support. For teachers, who already face considerable professional stress in managing classrooms and meeting academic demands, the presence of verbal bullying at home compounds their emotional burden. Instead of finding comfort and stability in their marital relationship, they experience heightened tension and dissatisfaction.

The result corroborates the findings of Adewunmi and Bakare (2019), and Enwelu and Akpan (2021), who revealed that verbal bullying negatively predicts marital dissatisfaction among married female secondary school teachers. These studies confirm that verbal aggression, though often overlooked compared to physical violence, is equally destructive in undermining marital satisfaction. Thus, the study underscores the importance of fostering respectful communication and eliminating verbal bullying to enhance marital stability and emotional well-being among teachers.

Conclusion

Based on the findings of the study, it was revealed that nagging, physical harassment, and verbal bullying, negatively undermine marital stability and overall well-being. Persistent nagging create tension and reduce open communication between spouses. Physical harassment and verbal bullying damages trust, emotional safety and mutual respect, often leading to fear, resentment and psychological distress. These marital stressors for secondary school teachers may extend beyond the home, affecting job performance, classroom effectiveness, emotional stability and professional relationships.

Teaching requires patience, emotional balance, and dedication, marital dissatisfaction may negatively influence their productivity and interaction with students. The presence of these destructive behaviours significantly reduces marital satisfaction among secondary school teachers. Married teachers whose relationship foster a positive atmosphere where each other feel heard and respected, build a blissful family relationship where peace and harmony prevails. Thus, promoting healthy communication, mutual respect, financial transparency, faithfulness and forgiveness is essential for sustaining satisfaction and stable marriage.

Recommendation

- i Marriage counsellors should use available medium of communication to encourage spouses to adopt healthier communication pattern by always expressing their needs, desires and concerns in a calm and respectful manner instead of nagging.
- ii Teachers who are in abusive relationship whether at home or at work should seek support from counselling psychologists, social workers or legal aid so as to gain awareness on how to do away with physical harassment and other forms of domestic abuse.
- iii. Spouses who frequently bully each other verbally should seek professional assistance through counselling to address the behaviour before it causes irreparable damage.

References

- Adebowale, A. S., Oladipo, O. O., & Dipeolu, I. (2020). *Socio-cultural determinants of marital stability and family cohesion among Nigerian couples. Journal of African Studies and Development*, 12(3), 45–57.
- Adewunmi, T., & Bakare, O. (2019). *Influence of verbal and emotional bullying on marital satisfaction among civil servants in Oyo State, Nigeria. Nigerian Journal of Social Sciences*, 12(3), 45–58
- Ali, P. A., Dhingra, K., & McGarry, J. (2016). A literature review of intimate partner violence and its classifications, consequences, and interventions. *Aggression and Violent Behavior*, 31, 16–25.
- Ameh, E. O., & Sunday, J. A. (2021). Intimate partner violence and marital stability among couples in Benue State, Nigeria. *Nigerian Journal of Social Psychology*, 5(1), 112–125.
- Barton, A. W., Futris, T. G., & Nielsen, R. B. (2015). Linking financial distress to marital quality: The intermediary roles of demand/withdraw and spousal gratitude expressions. *Personal Relationships* 22: 3. 536–549 DOI: 10.1111/per.12094
- Bassey, M. I., & Umoh, J. E. (2021). Occupational stress and marital satisfaction among secondary school teachers in Cross River State, Nigeria. *Journal of Educational and Social Research*, 11(3), 112–122. <https://doi.org/10.36941/jesr-2021-0058>
- Baucom, D. H., Epstein, N., & Rankin, L. (2018). Communication patterns and relationship outcomes in couples. *Journal of Marital and Family Therapy*, 44(2), 278–291. <https://doi.org/10.1111/jmft.12264>
- Brown, J. K., & Taylor, P. J. (2023). Trauma sequelae and psychological outcomes of intimate partner physical aggression. *Journal of Interpersonal Violence*, 38(11–12), 3480–3502. <https://doi.org/10.1177/08862605211027973>
- Butzer, B., & Kuijter, R. G. (2020). Relational outcomes of marital dissatisfaction: Psychological distress and workplace implications. *Journal of Family Psychology*, 34(7), 837–848. <https://doi.org/10.1037/fam0000649>
- Cherlin, A. J. (2014). Marriage, families, and social change: Family patterns in global perspective. *Journal of Marriage and Family*, 76(1), 6–22. <https://doi.org/10.1111/jomf.12096>
- Collins, R. (1975). *Conflict sociology: Toward an explanatory science*. Academic Press.
- Crane, D. R., Allgood, S. M., Larson, J. H., & Griffin, D. (2018). Emotional intelligence, communication skills, and marital adjustment: A dyadic analysis. *Journal of Marital and Family Therapy*, 44(1), 142–158. <https://doi.org/10.1111/jmft.12267>
- Ekanem, S. A., & Udo, T. J. (2020). Premarital counselling and marital adjustment among couples in Akwa Ibom State, Nigeria. *International Journal of Educational and Counselling Psychology*, 5(2), 47–58.

- Enwelu, I., & Akpan, E. (2021). Communication styles and marital satisfaction among couples in South-South Nigeria. *Journal of Marriage and Family Studies*, 18 (2), 112–129.
- Erikson, E. H. (1963). *Childhood and society* (2nd ed.). W. W. Norton & Company.
- Falade, D. A., & Ogunleye, A. A. (2021). Conflict resolution training and marital satisfaction: Evidence from educators in Nigeria. *Journal of Family and Community Studies*, 33(1), 85–102.
- Hill, R. (1958). *Families under stress: Adjustment to the crisis of war separation and reunion*.
- Hines, D. A., & Douglas, E. M. (2018). Psychological abuse in intimate partner relationships: The role of controlling behaviors and verbal aggression in predicting relationship distress. *Journal of Interpersonal Violence*, 33(5), 744–764. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0886260515618946>
- Ijeoma, O., & Adekunle, F. (2022). Behavioural predictors of marital breakdown among working class couples in urban Nigeria. *African Journal of Family Studies*, 9(1), 101–120.
- Jeffrey, A. (2020). Psychological abuse and marital satisfaction: A review of the literature. *Journal of Family Studies*, 26(3), 345–359.
- Johnson, M. D., Lavner, J. A., & Beach, S. R. H. (2021). Negative communication and relationship satisfaction over time. *Journal of Family Psychology*, 35(8), 1009–1018. <https://doi.org/10.1037/fam0000958>
- Lawrence, E., Yoon, J. S., Langer, A., & Ro, E. (2019). Marital satisfaction across the transition to parenthood: Evidence for change and stability. *Journal of Family Psychology*, 33(4), 423–434. <https://doi.org/10.1037/fam0000520>
- Marks, A. D. G., & Lambert, J. K. (2021). Predictors of marital satisfaction and stability: Communication patterns and conflict management styles. *Journal of Family Issues*, 42(5), 1072–1095. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0192513X20968164>
- Marx, K. (1848). *The Communist Manifesto*.
- Minuchin, S. (1974). *Families and family therapy*. Harvard University Press.
- Newman, B. M., & Newman, P. R. (2020). *Development through life: A psychosocial approach* (13th ed.). Cengage Learning.
- Nichols, M. P., & Schwartz, R. C. (2020). *Family therapy: Concepts and methods* (11th ed.). Pearson.
- Nwana, O. C. (1995). *Introduction to educational research*. Heinemann.
- Nworgu, B. G. (2015). *Educational research: Basic issues and methodology* (3rd ed.). Wisdom Publishers.

Okon, E. E., & Etim, P. U. (2019). Marital counselling and teacher well-being in Akwa Ibom State. *Nigerian Journal of Educational Research*, 21(1), 88–102.

Spencer, C. M., Stith, S. M., & Cafferky, B. (2019). What puts individuals at risk for physical intimate partner violence? A meta-analysis. *Journal of Family Violence*, 34(4), 289–301.

Smith, S. G., Zhang, X., Basile, K. C., Merrick, M. T., Wang, J., Kresnow, M., & Chen, J. (2022). *The National Intimate Partner and Sexual Violence Survey: 2022 Report on intimate partner violence and prevalence in the United States*. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

World Health Organization. (2021). *Violence against women: Intimate partner and sexual violence against women*. World Health Organization.