

A Survey of Coital Positions of Married Couples in Ilorin Metropolis, Kwara State: Implications for Counselling

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Abstract

This study investigated coital positions among married couples in Ilorin metropolis, Kwara State. One research question was raised and three research hypotheses were formulated to guide this study. Descriptive research design of the survey type was used for the study. The population comprised all married couples in Ilorin metropolis of Kwara State. The validity and reliability of the research instrument were ensured. Sexual Positions Questionnaire (SPQ) was used to collect data from the respondents. Data were analyzed using descriptive statistics such as mean, frequency count and simple percentages. Also, inferential statistics like t-test and ANOVA were used to test the three hypotheses. Results of data analysis showed that married couples chiefly engage in missionary style of coital positions. Also, age, gender and religion do not influence married couples' engagement in different coital positions. Based on the findings, it was recommended, among others, that couples should mutually adopt the types of coital positions that will keep their marriages alive with glee. Both husband and wife should be confident enough to work against marital instability that could emerge from routine sexual position(s).

Keywords: coital positions, marital stability and married couples

Introduction

Sexual intercourse may be one of the basic needs required in sustaining marriages. It could be a source of fulfilling marriage vows that keep husband and wife bonded together till death separates them. Human beings appear to be highly dynamic social beings in their daily dealings, without exception to coital positions. Sex seems not to be a bedroom routine that should be too predictable among couples. Excitement tends to be added to marriage, when different coital positions are observed by legally married couples.

Alternating coital positions in marriage appears to be scintillating and enhances needed communication styles between husband and wife. It may change sexual routine activities to dynamism that lasts in couples' memories. Engaging in different coital positions may have some balancing effects on the couples' ways of living, which prompt marital stability. Akingbade (2018) revealed that engaging in different coital positions helps and builds confidence among couples. Excellent communication in marriages is also enhanced through some sorts of sexual trainings in marriages; this in turn makes couples to be

multitasking. She further stated that both newly wedded and old couples must intensify efforts in always being dynamic in their sexual relationship. Also, different coital positions create a good height of pleasure and sensation pulsing through the bodies of couples.

Couples' engagement in different coital positions may promote spending quality time together as a couple and sexual gratification. Experimenting different kinds of coital positions in marriage tends to be time consuming, aids mutual pleasure and climaxing together, which both husband and wife grin in happiness for reaching orgasm. Fiaveh (2015) citing Bizimana (2010), Carroll (2007) and Ratele (2008) declared that different sexual positions offer couples the ample opportunity to derive sexual satisfaction as and when due. Gallagher (2013) revealed that sexual dissatisfaction absolutely kills marriage, by promoting resentment and anger. Fifteen percent of married couples were reported to have unfulfilling sexual intercourse for six months. This deviates from having sexual pleasure to staying together as couples for reasons such as money, children or health insurance. If this attitude is internalized, they both lose their sexual drive as they advance in year, lose their closeness and intimacy which is not a good situation for a peaceful marriage. Corbett (2017) emphasized that different coital positions in marital relationship spice up sexual life. He added that few types of positions that work for individuals should not be impugned, but probably rotated with a few tweaks to improving sexual intercourse.

Age appears to influence the engagement of couples in alternating sexual positions in marriage. Young couples may want to engage in different kinds of coital positions, because of their great strength, experimentation of different pornographic films watched, newness to marriage and unvarying desire to satisfy his/her spouse. Stoppler (2016) however affirmed that age does not affect engagement of couples in different coital positions. Older couples only have challenges with sexual gratification emanating from coital positions due to medical problems, surgeries and changes in body appearance, among others.

Spicing up sexual life through different coital positions among elderly couples tends to be tiring and disgusting as a result of aging bodies. Past vigour and sexual pleasure may become history in older people's sexual communication, while indirectly leaving all sex-related activities to young couples to only enjoy at the peak. Older women may perceive alternating sexual positions as a less attractive event. The reason behind this includes but not limited to hormonal decrease, thinness of the vaginal wall, micro-tears in their vagina wall, drier, irritated and painful sexual intercourse. Men appear to engage in different coital positions that will give them sexual pleasure till death. Stoppler (2016) posited that age to men, turns to experience as regards sexuality issue. Older men slow down and pay attention to good sexual intercourse, though erection may take longer period, because the penis might not be sturdy as it used to be.

At every stage of life, there tends to be the best coital position(s) for each marriage. This puts pep into sexual intercourse among couples. Age may not be an excuse to enjoying coital relationship at its peak. Levine (2018) cited Herrera's findings that at the age range of 30s, cowgirl and spooning positions are the best for couples. While at the age of 40s, reverse

cowgirl and flatiron coital positions were recommended for couples. At menopause age (that is, in the 50s) sitting position should be practiced to prevent discomfort and to enhance sexual pleasure. At 60s, one third of both males and females suffer from osteoarthritis, couples are advised to practice standing position and this is recommended to reduce pressure on the knees and hips.

Changes in sexual desire as couple ages, especially in later life, have been described as a normal event, but the need for sexual intimacy among older people is ageless. Elderly people's coital positions and other needs must be communicated between the couples, though a change in hormonal level may diminish sexual drive (The HealthSite, 2014). Religion seems not to be against coital positions engaged in by married couples to derive sexual pleasure, as long as it is within a legally solemnized wedlock. Cherry (2018) quoted Genesis 1:27-28:

So God created human beings in His own image. In the image of God. He created them; male and female He created them. Then God blessed them and said be fruitful and multiply. Fill the earth and govern it. Reign over the fishes in the sea, the birds in the sky and all the animals that scurry along the ground.

He further revealed that engagement in different coital positions within marriage among Christians is a blessing from almighty God and well permitted. Whichever position(s) a couple wants should be practiced, as far as it will satisfy their sexual pleasure. Deviations such as “threesome” or group sex and watching pornography in the bedroom or during sex are prohibited and not honourable.

Islam helpline (2018) accords husband and wife the freedom to use any coital position to enjoy conjugal relationship with each other. Holy Quran chapter 2 Surah Baqarah 222-223 was quoted:

They ask thee concerning women's courses. Say, they are a hurt and a pollution; so keep away from women in their courses and do not approach them until they are clean. But when they have purified themselves, ye may approach them in any manner, time or place ordained for you by Allah. For Allah loves those who turn to Him constantly and He loves those who keep themselves pure and clean. Your wives are as a tilth unto you, so approach your tilth when or how ye will. But do some good act for your souls before hand and fear Allah and know that ye are to meet Him and give these good tidings to those who believe.

It was further reported that anyone who has genuine sexual intercourse with his wife will be rewarded by Allah. The physical strength of most men may be a factor why most of them, enjoy different coital positions in a bid to get sexual gratification. Women tend to admire the missionary style (chest to chest) due to its simplicity, their engagements in series of domestic

chores and to avoid being tagged as prostitutes by their husbands. Walansky (2019) found that most men enjoy several coital positions to have sexual pleasure in marriage. But the sexual positions men like may not be commensurate with the desire of the women, which may likely cause marital conflict. Buchanan (2017) argued that both males and females engage in different coital positions equally to enjoy their sexual relationship. He revealed that both males and females engage in doggy and missionary styles to keep them climaxing together, which in turn keeps marriages intact. Thompson (2018) opined that despite the prevalence of different sexual positions to keep marriages intact, the best positions for each family are those they mutually enjoy. These positions should be properly internalized and practiced to avoid marital problems.

Coital positions in marriage may not be given proper attention needed across homes. It tends to promote excellent marital communication between husband and wife. Pinto, Subramanyam and Kalra, Subramanyam and Pinto (2011) affirmed that either old or young, everyone is entitled to enjoy coital relationship. Young couples enjoy coital relationship in different positions to preserve their marriages, but elderly couples may not be able to engage in different coital positions to keep their sexual relationship alive, because of loss of sexual prowess, disapproval from society, perceiving different coital positions as contemptible and disgraceful.

Marital relationship seems to be a life-long activity which must be properly guided to prevent marital instability, which poses burden on the society at large. Men's Health and Ian (2020) asserted that coital relationship should not be too predictable; it must be invigorated by taking so many adventurous steps (sexual positions) in the bedroom. Couples should be innovative enough to achieve sexual orgasm at all times, though their engagement in different sexual positions will in turn promote marital intimacy. Coital positions have been linked to formulae for great sex and no couple should deviate from having great sexual intercourse through engagement in different coital positions.

Coital positions tend to positively improve couples' sexual life and intimacy. Undertaking variety of sexual positions in marriages may pave way for the burning of peace candles between husband and wife which may strengthen their emotional feelings and sexual compatibility. SexPositions (2019) affirmed that different coital positions in marriage promote very delightful and diversified emotions among couples. In addition, engaging in different sexual positions help couples to stimulate different sexual erogenous zones, which heighten sexual pleasure needed in marital relationship. Additionally, engaging in different coital positions assist in resolving sexual incompatibility in any sexual relationship, as these different positions, cater for anomalously small or too big penises. Whatever the size may be, mutually consented sexual positions relieve sexual incompatibility in marriages, which ordinarily could have caused marital conflicts.

As observed by the researcher, the engagement of couples in different coital positions mutually crafted by couples, may prevent nagging and unhappiness in marriages. A couple reportedly said that trying different coital positions in marriage sieve the brain of stress and restores the brain to maximal performance or its factory setting after a stressful day. Both

women and men that have all the time in the world to attend to their sexual life and positions, appear to be one of the happiest beings on earth. It is a source of concern recently, that couples seek divorce without voicing out the primary cause of disagreement (that is, sexual worries) among them. Chiefly, the basis of any problem in marriages could be traced to sex. When divorce occurs, the families, children and society pay for it in a hard way. Obinna (2019) reported that divorce is prevalent in Nigeria, with a recorded 14% increase in 2014. Divorce takes toil on most children as many of them suffer Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD), depression, borderline personality, self-harm and even suicide. It appears disturbing that couples are not interested in conferring the issue of coital positions in marriage. This silence has led to so many marital problems among married couples and the society at large. Therefore, there is the need to investigate coital positions of married couples in Ilorin, Kwara State.

Research Questions

The study is guided by two research questions:

1. What are the demographic characteristics of couples in Ilorin metropolis?
2. What are the coital positions engaged in by married couples in Ilorin metropolis?

Hypotheses

For the purpose of this study, the following research hypotheses were formulated and tested at 0.05 level of significance:

1. There is no significant difference between male and female married couples' coital positions.
2. Religion has no significant influence on married couples' coital positions.
3. Age has no significant influence on married couples' coital positions.

Methodology

The study adopted the descriptive research design of the survey type. The population for this study was all married couples in Ilorin Metropolis, Kwara State. Simple random sampling technique was used to select 300 married couples in Ilorin, Kwara State. The instrument used for the collection of data for this study was a self-designed questionnaire tagged "Sexual Positions Questionnaire (SPQ)". The research instrument has two sections: Section A elicited information about the respondents, while section B contained twenty items on sexual positions engaged in by married couples. The research instrument was validated by experts in the areas of Counselling Psychology and Tests and Measurement. They all adjudged the instrument appropriate and valid. Reliability of the research instrument was ensured through the use of test retest method. Data collected were subjected to Pearson Product Moment Correlation, a correlation coefficient of 0.86 was obtained. The research instrument was administered personally by the researcher and retrieved back on the spot to guard against any loss. The data collected were analyzed using simple percentage, mean, frequency count, t-test and Analysis of Variance (ANOVA).

Results

Research Question One: What are the demographic characteristics of couples in Ilorin metropolis?

Table 1

Percentage distribution of respondents based on age

Years	Frequency	Percent
25-29years	30	10.0
30-34years	55	18.3
35-39years	61	20.3
40-44years	37	12.3
45-49years	62	20.7
50years & above	55	18.3
Total	300	100.0

Table 1 shows the distribution of respondents by age. The table shows that 30 (10.0%) of the respondents were between the ages of 25-29 years, 55 (18.3%) of the respondents were between the ages of 30-34 years, 61 (20.3%) of the respondents were between the ages of 35-39 years, 37 (12.3%) of the respondents were between the ages of 40-44 years, 62 (20.7%) of the respondents were between the ages of 45-49 years, while 55 (18.3%) of the respondents were 50 years of age and above. This indicates that respondents who were between 45-49 years of age and above participated more in the study.

Table 2

Percentage distribution of respondents based on gender

Gender	Frequency	Percentage
Female	150	50.0
Male	150	50.0
Total	300	100.0

Table 2 shows the distribution of respondents by gender. The table shows that 150 (50.0%) of the respondents were male and 150 (50.0%) of the respondents were female. This indicates that male and female participated equally in the study.

Table 3

Percentage distribution of respondents based on religion

Religion	Frequency	Percentage
ATR	34	11.3
Christianity	129	43.0
Islam	137	45.7
Total	300	100.0

Table 3 shows that 34 (11.3%) of the respondents were practicing African Traditional Religion, 129 (43.0%) of the respondents were practicing Christianity while 137 (45.7%) of the respondents were practicing Islam. This indicates that respondents practicing Islam participated more in the study.

Research Question 2: What are the coital positions engaged in by married couples in Ilorin metropolis?

Table 4
Mean and rank order of the respondents' coital positions

S/N.	I use these skills confidently:	Mean	Rank
1	Missionary Style (Chest to chest)	33.83	1 st
8	Doggy style (The man entering the woman from behind)	3.33	2 nd
2	Cow girl (woman on top)	3.16	3 rd
9	Downward dog(She lies face down on the bed with hips slightly raised with the man keeping his weight off her and entering from behind)	3.13	4 th
4	Lazy man (Man sitting on the bed with legs outstretched and she lowers herself on to the man, using one hand to direct the penis in)	3.04	5 th
5	Trick and treat (Tilting her pelvis up and raising her feet on your shoulder)	3.04	5 th
6	The lazy girl (The woman sits on a chair with her legs wide open and the man takes it from there)	3.03	7 th
7	G-whiz (She lies on her back resting her legs on the man's shoulder)	2.98	8 th
11	Angle 69 (Have your partner lie down, flat on his back. Then climb on top, so you're facing away from your partner. Your vagina should be lined up with your partner's mouth, and his genitals should be lined up with your mouth)	2.96	9 th
3	Stair way to heaven (Her sitting on top of the man on the staircase)	2.83	10 th
10	Spooning (Lie side-by-side)	2.81	11 th
12	The Bicycle (The wife stands, bends forward at the hip, and then supports herself with her hands on the floor or something low such as an ottoman. The husband stands behind her and then straddles her legs so that he's standing with his feet on the outsides of her legs).	2.73	12 th

14	Crisscross (Sitting on the bed facing each other with legs forward)	2.72	13 th
15	Spider Monkey (The man sits down at his feet and leans backwards a little. He props himself up with his hand. The woman sits on the penis and leans forward, her legs spread apart and the feet are next to the male partner's legs. She puts hands in front of	2.71	14 th
17	Puzzle (The man sits and spreads his legs, and the woman lays and leans on elbows between the man's legs and their genitals are in tight contact. Legs of the female partner are on the man's shoulders and are closed behind his neck).	2.62	15 th
18	Cello (The woman lies on her stomach, hands behind her back, legs are driven apart. The male partner ceases on his knees, driving them widely apart, between her legs, with his hands he takes her by the hips and slightly raises the body of his mistress. The woman bends her knees and throws them on the male partner's waist, for better retaining in that position)	2.57	16 th
13	H2Ohh Yeah (Sex buoyancy in the water)	2.56	17 th
19	Captain (The woman lies on her back, legs are straight and lifted up. The male partner sits down on his knees next to the woman' buttocks, legs are driven wide. With his hands, the man takes his partner's ankles and spreads her legs apart, he sees very exciting view. With one hand the woman caresses her crotch, the other one she puts on the male partner's thigh and gently strokes it).	2.54	18 th
16	Fan (The woman lies face down, arms are bent in elbows, squeezed together and under the face, legs are slightly bent in knees and driven widely apart. The male partner squats above the lady's buttocks, pulls one hand back between her legs, rather near her	2.50	19 th
20	Torch (The male partner sits on his legs, which are driven apart a bit. The woman sits facing the man on his arms, she throws her legs on the shoulders of her male partner, with her arms she hugs his back and her head is thrown back. The man holds his mistress with his hands behind her back and makes the movements with her body, sticking her on the penis with increasing rhythm).	2.36	20 th

Adapted from Men's Health AND Ian Kerner's sex positions 2020

Table 4 presents the mean and rank order of coital positions engaged in by married couples. The table indicates that items 1, 8 and 2 with mean scores of 3.83, 3.33 and 3.16 are ranked 1st, 2nd and 3rd respectively. The items have “Missionary style (Chest to Chest), Doggy style (The man entering the woman from behind), and Cowgirl (Woman on top)” respectively. While items 19, 16 and 20 with mean scores of 2.54, 2.50 and 2.36 respectively and they had “Captain (The woman lies on her back, legs are straight and lifted up. The male partner sits down on his knees next to the woman's buttocks, legs are driven wide. With his hands, the man takes his partner's ankles and spreads her legs apart, he sees very exciting view. With one hand the woman caresses her crotch, the other one she puts on the male partner's thigh and gently strokes it); Fan (The woman lies face down, arms are bent in elbows, squeezed together and under the face, legs are slightly bent in knees and driven widely apart. The male partner squats above the lady's buttocks, pulls one hand back between her legs, rather near her; and Torch (The male partner sits on his legs, which are driven apart a bit. The woman sits facing the man on his arms, she throws her legs on the shoulders of her male partner, with her arms she hugs his back and her head is thrown back. The man holds his mistress with his hands behind her back and makes the movements with her body, sticking her on the penis with increasing rhythm).” All the items have mean score that is above 2.50 midpoint except item 20 with mean score of 2.36.

Ho1: There is no significant difference between male and female married couples' coital positions

Table 5

Mean, Standard Deviation and t-value of male and female married couples' coital positions

Gender	N	Mean	SD	df	Cal. t-value	Crit. t.	P-value
Male	150	52.01	6.90	298	1.145	1.96	.253
Female	150	53.13	9.89				

Table 5 shows that the mean of female married couples' coital position is greater than that of the male coital position with 53.13 and 52.01 respectively. But the difference is not statistically significant (df=298, tc= 1.145; p> 0.05). Therefore, the null hypothesis is retained.

Ho2: Religion has no significant influence on married couples' coital positions

Table 6

Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) showing married couples' coital positions based on religion

Source	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	93.528	2	46.764		
				.641	.527
Within Groups	21660.002	297	72.929		
Total	21753.530	299			

Table 6 shows that calculated significant value of 0.527 is greater than 0.05 alpha level ($0.527 > 0.05$), thus the null hypothesis is retained.

Ho3: Age has no significant influence on married couples' coital positions

Table 7

Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) showing married couples' coital positions based on age

Source	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	437.368	5	87.474		
				1.206	.306
Within Groups	21316.162	294	72.504		
Total	21753.530	299			

Table 7 shows that the calculated significance value of .306 of F(1.206) is greater than 0.05 alpha level ($.306 > 0.05$), thus the null hypothesis is retained.

Discussion

The study examined coital positions of married couples in Ilorin metropolis, Kwara State. The findings revealed that most married couples mostly engage in missionary coital position in their marriages. The plausible reason for this might be as a result of its simplicity. This corroborates the finding of Corbett (2017) that couples engage in coital position(s) that mutually please(s) them.

The result of hypothesis one showed that both gender engage in different sexual positions equally. Gender does not significantly influence couples' engagement in different coital positions. The reason behind this may be as a result of the need to get sexual pleasure. This

agrees with the finding of Buchanan (2017) that both male and female equally engage in different coital positions that will assist them get the most desired sexual gratification needed. However, the findings disagree with that of Walansky (2019) who found that most men enjoy different coital positions to have sexual pleasure in marriage which may not help women to reach orgasm.

The result from hypothesis two showed that religion did not significantly influence the engagement of couples in different coital positions. This may be as a result of religious doctrines and ideologies clearly teaching mutual sexual pleasure to prevent marital instability in marriages. This is in consonance with the submission of Islam helpline (2019) who reported that religion does not prohibit legally married couples from engaging in different sexual positions that will give them sexual pleasure. Also, couples no matter their religious inclination should enjoy sex through different positions in order to sustain their marriage.

Hypothesis three reveals that age does not significantly influence couples' engagement indifferent coital positions. The plausible reason might be that, at every age range, couples should be free to discuss all sexual matters to spice up their relationship. This finding is in line the Stoppler (2016) who found that age does not affect engagement of couples in different coital positions. Older couples only have challenge with sexual gratification emanating from coital positions due to medical problems, surgeries and changes in body appearance among others.

Conclusion

Family as an agent of socialization has witnessed so many concerns especially in relation to inability of couples to satisfy themselves sexually. The findings from this study revealed that missionary style (Chest to Chest); Doggy style (The man entering the woman from behind); and Cowgirl (Woman on top) are the most preferred coital positions engaged in by married couples in Ilorin metropolis. This study revealed that both male and female couples engage in different coital positions equally. Also, religion has no influence on the engagement of married couples in different coital positions. Findings from this study further revealed that age has no influence on married couples' coital positions.

Counselling Implications of the findings and Recommendations

- 1) The findings from this study will help counselling practice, in settling so many marital disputes easily. This will in turn stabilize the society at large.
- 2) Couples should mutually adopt the kinds of coital positions that with keep their marriages alive with glee. Both husband and wife should be confident enough to work against marital instability that could emerge from routine sexual position(s).

- 3) Each family should visit a marital/family counsellor to assist them on sexual issues before exacerbating to domestic violence, abusive relationship, assaults and divorce.
- 4) Coital positions needed by both genders should be jointly rehearsed, experimented and internalised.
- 5) Religious organizations should encourage couples to be sincere and seek counselling when handling issues relating to coital positions.
- 6) Marriage counselling should be made compulsory by government for all age groups of married couples
- 7) Both husband and wife should be confident enough to work against marital instability that could emerge from routine sexual position(s).

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