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THE EFFECTS OF ACCULTURATIVE STRESS ON MARITAL

ADJUSTMENT AMONG AFRICAN IMMIGRANTS

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A Project

Presented to the

Faculty of

California State University,

San Bernardino

_____

In Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree

Master of Social Work

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by

Colleen Nomsa Chali

June 2006

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Colleen Nomsa Chali

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ABSTRACT

This study examined the effects of acculturative

stress on marital adjustment among African immigrants.

The data was collected from 60 respondents drawn from

Africans living in the Inland Empire and Los Angeles

area, mostly from the churches and associations to which

they belong. The study was a quantitative, exploratory

cross sectional study and employed a survey design using

self-administered questionnaires.

The responses revealed that there was a significant

relationship between environmental stressors and marital

adjustment. Environmental stressors included items that

reflect subtle and overt acts of racism, ranging from

jokes about Africans to pressure to assimilate in the

United States, sentiments of opposition to basic

citizenship rights of Africans, and resulting feelings

caused by barriers that must be transcended if progress

is to be made in a new country.

Social workers need skills and abilities to advocate

for African immigrants against the underlying devaluation

of cultural experiences based on differences and

oppression. Cultural competence of social workers

requires awareness of uniqueness of African immigrants.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

DEDICATION

I would like to dedicate this research project to the memory of my Late father Wilfred Mukuma Mwesa, and my late sister Lily Cathy Mukuma Mwesa. To the men in my life, my husband Ricky and my sons Malvin and Alvin, you guys have been my motivation and strength. I would also like to thank my mother Brenda Nomsa Mwesa for having brought me up to be a responsible woman. To all my friends, siblings (Jill, Patricia, Roy, Sindiso, James, Ian, Clara, Chota, Mwaba), Cousins, aunties and uncles thank you for supporting me and encouraging me in my educational pursuits.

To every woman, out there struggling to educate herself and take care of her family, utilize the strength within you, God did not create you to be a failure but a strong being capable of overcoming all hurdles on the way. It's not an easy road but through God's grace we arrive at our destination.

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

Problem Statement

Since the establishment of the immigration policy of

1965 in the United States, there has been a significant

number of Africans migrating to the U.S. and other parts

of the world. In the 1980s, ten percent of Africa's 350

million inhabitants left for various reasons. This trend

has continued to the 21st century. Most of these

migrations are due to push and pull factors such as poor

economic performance, political instability, cultural

dependency relations, and lack of adequate educational

opportunities in their countries, (Takyi, 2002). Africans

that immigrate to other western countries face

challenging acculturation issues as they adapt to western

society and cultures. These acculturation issues have a

great impact on their marriages that have their

foundation in African cultures. There is not much

literature that has been published on this subject as

most research on acculturation does not include African

immigrants.

According to the Britannica encyclopedia, acculturation is the process of changes in artifacts, customs, and beliefs that result from the contact of societies with different cultural traditions. African immigrants that come to the United States are faced with acculturation as they try to adapt to a new cultural and economic environment (Acculturation, 2005). Acculturation involves learning to adapt to new cultural setting, overcoming language barriers to accommodate to different situational demands, and finding a place among varied groups of individuals. Immigrants face a number of challenges including stress related to acculturation, change of environment, and loss of family in their countries. Some identifiable experiences of immigrant populations are social isolation, cultural shock, cultural change, and goal striving stress (Kamya, 1997).

Ecke (2005) viewed acculturative stress as the loss of familial ways, sounds and faces, coupled with a sense of not knowing quite how to belong, connect and get support. Issues that haunt immigrants are decreasing functionality, sense of isolation, multiple compound losses over time leading to unresolved attachment status

despite political freedom, educational opportunities and economic improvement.

In Africa, most married couples adhere to traditional rules that follow strict gender roles. People perform their expected gender roles without much question or difficulty, but once they migrate to the United States they are faced with new challenges and stressors connected to acculturation and a totally different way of life. African people in general practice strict gender roles in marital obligations and duties in the marriage. In addition the extended family plays a big role in the family structure. Children are raised by the community in conjunction with the parents, such that when families migrate to the United States or elsewhere, they are confronted with child care problems due to lack of extended family networks.

Nyowe (2000) states that, unlike western-based contemporary marital therapies, the modern approach to marriage therapy for west and east Africans is grounded in the role theory framework, where obligation, expectation and privileges are taken as being linked to occupancy of social positions. According to this view, when people perform their expected roles with dedication,

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there is peace and harmony, while disharmony is likely to occur if the parties do not perform their expected roles.

Policy Context

In the last ten years there have been a number of immigrants of different ethnic groups moving towards industrialized western countries, due to political and economic instabilities in their native countries (Kosic, 2004). Due to the favorable immigration policies that allow for family unification, there is a possibility of the African community in the United States growing larger (Takyi, 2002).

Voluntary immigration of peoples of African descent did not begin in earnest until passage of the Hart-Cellar Immigration Act of 1965, which revolutionized the criteria for immigration to the United States. The Act called for the admission of immigrants based on their skills, professions, or relationships to families in the United States. Congress reformed U.S. policy toward refugees in the 1980s, thereby facilitating a rise in the number of Africans turning to the United States for refuge (Eissa, 2005).

Due to the current mass immigration of Africans to the United States, it is important for social workers to

recognize the need for social policies that are
culturally sensitive to this group of immigrants.

Practice Context

Social workers in a variety of practice settings are
likely to come into contact with African immigrants,
needing marital or individual counseling. As immigrants
adjust to new cultures, they are likely to experience
difficulties that cause acculturation stress, (Kosic,
2004). Therefore social workers that are called upon to
address the needs of these African immigrants, need to
have knowledge of these factors. Such knowledge will be
helpful to the social workers in assisting African
immigrant couples with issues related to acculturation
stress.

Swartz-Kulstad and Martin (1999) suppose that
increasing diversity of the United States population
requires counselors to reexamine how they work with
individuals of all ethno cultural backgrounds. The field
of counseling has been changing in response to the rapid
social and demographic realities of the current United
States population.

It is important that social workers be cognizant of
the effects acculturation stress has on marital

adjustment among immigrants from Africa. For example,
when a couple present with a communication problem, it
could be that they are experiencing acculturative stress
due to spousal differences to acculturation. It then
becomes the job of the social worker to distinguish the
problems caused by acculturation stress, from those
caused by other factors before recommending a treatment
plan.

People of African descent have been grouped together
as one people and culture to include African Americans,
Blacks from the Caribbean, and Blacks from Africa. There
is need to stratify Black people by culture and region as
opposed to classifying them as one culture and people.
The importance of cultural competent social workers is
encouraged and promoted due to the diversity in the
United States.

The United States continues to undergo major
demographic changes that heighten diversity in social
work practice settings. These demographic changes have an
impact on the social work practice setting. An important
dimension to cultural competence is the capacity to
communicate. Social workers need to take into
consideration the diverse needs of clients through an

understanding of beliefs, values, and practices with special consideration to religious practices. Diverse groups have differential experiences within society. Social workers need skills and abilities to advocate for clients against the underlying devaluation of cultural experiences based on differences and oppression. Cultural competence requires awareness of uniqueness.

Purpose of the Study

Though some studies have focused on the effects of acculturation, none of the studies have focused on the effects of acculturation stress on marital adjustment of African immigrants. The purpose of the study was to examine how acculturation affected marital adjustment among African immigrants. The study research design was a quantitative, exploratory cross sectional study. This study employed survey design standardized instruments that measured acculturation stress related to proximity of migration and marital adjustment. An additional set of questions was added to examine how the respondents viewed their marital quality before and after migrating to the United States. The research questions that guided this study were: 1.) "Does acculturative stress have an effect

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on marital adjustment of African immigrants?" and 2.)
"Does the proximity to migration experience and spousal
differences to acculturation have an effect on marital
adjustment?"

Significance of Study to Social Work Practice

There is not much literature that has been published
on this subject. African immigrants have largely been
excluded from research on issues that confront them as
immigrants, resulting in a lack of information on the
needs of this population. This study may serve to inform
social workers of issues that affect African immigrants
as they try to acculturate into the American Society.

Since no empirical studies had been published on
this issue in general in the United States, the study may
contribute to the general knowledge on married African
immigrants and the effects of acculturation on their
marriages. Contrary to the common belief that Africa is
just one country, and that all Africans have the same
culture, Africa is a continent with 54 countries and
diverse cultures that vary from place to place. Africans
have always been studied as part of the African American
community here in the United States, but their needs may

somewhat be different, and have not been uniquely met (Ukiru, 2002).

This body of knowledge could help practitioners in implementing effective intervention of marital therapy with African immigrants, and this study may be beneficial in the assessing, planning and implementation of the generalist model. The study could also broaden the understanding of social services needs among married African immigrants, and would help social workers to be aware of some of the issues that need to be addressed when dealing with married African immigrants seeking help. The study could also provide the information that could assist social workers to be more culturally competent towards this group of immigrants.

Research Question: To what extent does the proximity of immigration and spousal differences to acculturation affect marital adjustment of African immigrants?

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

Introduction

This chapter consists of relevant literature to the study and looks at different studies that have been done on immigrant acculturation and marital adjustment in general, since there is not so much literature specific on African immigrants in particular. Lastly the chapter looks at different theories that guide the study.

Africans in Diaspora

In the last ten years there have been a number of immigrants of different ethnic groups moving towards industrialized western countries, due to political and economic instabilities in their Native countries (Kosic, 2004). In the 1980's 10% of Africa's 350 million inhabitants left the continent for various reasons. Most of these migrations were due to economic and political factors such as push and pull factors, political instability, dependency relations in African countries, educational opportunities and changing immigration policies in USA (Takyi, 2002).

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Nationwide, 1.7 million people claim sub-Saharan ancestry. Africans now represent 6 percent of all the immigrants to the United States and about 57 percent of those immigrated between 1990 and 2000. Those born in Africa form 1.6 percent of the black population in the United States and over the past ten years, this group has increased by 134 percent. Africans are dispersed throughout the country, and in no state do they number fewer than 150. New York has the largest African community, followed by California, Texas, and Maryland. However, the District of Columbia, Maryland, and Rhode Island have the highest percentages of Africans in their total populations (Sylviane, 2005).

The impact of acculturation on African immigrant marriages continues to be an issue of great importance, and requires continuous study and investigation. There is not much literature that has been published on this subject. African immigrants have largely been excluded from research on issues that confront them as immigrants resulting in a lack of information on the needs of this population.

Voluntary immigration of peoples of African descent did not begin in earnest until passage of the Hart-Cellar

Immigration Act of 1965, which revolutionized the criteria for immigration to the United States. The Act called for the admission of immigrants based on their skills, professions, or relationships to families in the United States. European recessions during the 1970s and 1980s led to a tightening of immigration laws, leading many Africans to migrate to the United States rather than to Europe and the mounting economic pressures on the African continent after the 1970s, including economic "structural adjustment" programs demanded by the International Monetary Fund, led to unprecedented unemployment. In addition to the changes taking place in Europe and Africa, Congress reformed U.S. policy toward refugees in the 1980s, thereby facilitating a rise in the number of Africans turning to the United States for refuge (Eissa, 2005).

Acculturation Process

According to the Britannica Encyclopedia, acculturation is the processes of changes in artifacts, customs, and beliefs that result from the contact of societies with different cultural traditions. African immigrant that comes to the United States are faced with

acculturation changes as they try to adapt to a new cultural and economic environment. Acculturation involves learning to adapt to new cultural setting, overcoming language barriers to accommodate to different situational demands, and finding a place among varied groups of individuals (Acculturation, 2005).

Immigrants face a number of challenges including stress related to acculturation, change of environment, loss of family by migrating to the USA, and trauma. There are a number of identifiable experiences of immigrant populations that are significant, as stated by Kamya (1997). These are outlined social isolation, cultural shock, cultural change, and goal striving stress.

Classical accounts of immigrant process predict elevated distress for new immigrants because international migration disrupts family and other support networks, exposes migrants to prejudice and discrimination at destination and leads to low socioeconomic standing. Time in the receiving country and acculturation will be associated with declining distress, Srole et al. (as cited in Bratter & Eschbach, 2005).

Burley (1995) found that work-family conflict had both direct and indirect effects on marital adjustments,

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and a study of acculturation differences among international people by Plake and Sodowsky (1992) found that permanent U.S. residents and naturalized citizens seemed to acculturate much faster into the US society, while the international students and those on temporally visas had a harder time acculturating.

Plake and Sodowsky (1992) also found that ethnic groups such as Africans, Asians, and South Americans were significantly less acculturated than Europeans.

<center>Marital Issues</center>

According to Woods and Hollis (2000), recent years have witnessed rapid changes in many culturally determined role expectations in all types of interpersonal relations. Conflict in marriage may derive in part from changing roles of men and women. This could be true when different definitions exist concerning decision making in general, or childcare and distribution of household tasks, especially when a woman is working outside the home.

Research shows that marital communication is especially affected by stress. There has been evidence that daily workloads led to negative dyadic interaction

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at home, and that stress exerted a direct negative influence on marital interaction. Studies have shown a relationship between role strain and marital cohesiveness. In order to achieve satisfaction in any given role, one has to have the ability to manage the combination of roles effectively (Bodenmann & Shantinath, 2004).

A study of 608 Finnish couples (Kinnunen & Feldt, 2004) found that economic circumstances were linked to marital adjustment through economic strain, which was related to increased psychological distress, and psychological distress was in turn reflected in marital adjustment.

A study among dual earner Mexican American families found that there was a positive relationship between work family balance and marital satisfaction and that reduced role strain was correlated to marital satisfaction (Barnett, Del Campo, Del Campo, Steiner, 2003).

Contrary to expectations a study done by Spasojevic, Heffer, and Snyder (2000) of 40 Bosnian refugee couples living in the United States found that acculturation level was not a strong predictor of marital distress. More highly acculturated individuals had a somewhat lower

rate of marital problems. Wives higher acculturation and less traditional gender roles were not associated with poorer relationship functioning, and differences between spouses' acculturation levels were not predictive of marital distress.

Education and Work

Dodoo (1997), in his research found that Africans were highly educated, but had lower paying jobs than the African Americans and Caribbean blacks. Most of the Africans came to the United States with their degrees from their home countries and they were regarded as inferior to the American degrees, thus making it hard for the Africans to get jobs in their field of expertise.

Burley (1995), states that evidence continues to suggest that working women-dual earners as well as dual career women still carry primary responsibility for family work, thus the unequal situation may function as an important mediator in the negative relationship between work family conflict and marital well being. Gilbert study (as cited in Burley, 1995) found division of labor and parenting to be high sources of tension for both partners.

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Role Strain and Acculturation

Topologo (1999) defines role strain as the general stress experienced when the demands of one or more roles are unrealistic, inappropriate or unfair, which can result in marital tension, and a women's declining interest in marriage and sometimes may lead to divorce.

In his research Topologo (1999) found that African women who combined careers with household duties were likely to experience role strain. Western culture encourages assertiveness, African women are not socialized to be assertive, but to be passive and submissive. Topologo (1999) found that in most African families, men were still the main decision-makers and rulers. African women were socialized to stay home and spend their leisure time in the home attending to household chores, while male counterparts have more time to visit friends and spend time in public places. He also found that most African men still believe that it is the woman's responsibility to attend to chores and to do this without their help. The men also believed that they were doing their wives a favor if they did help out in house hold chores.

Life for immigrats has had definitive repercussions on the African family in America, including gender relations. Americans and Africans often have different views of marriage, family life, and gender roles (Sylviane, 2005).

Most of the African immigrants adhere to the norms of strict gender roles. Social role theory is the principle that men and women behave differently in social situations and take different roles, due to the expectations that the society puts upon them including gender stereotyping. This includes women taking positions of lesser influence in the social, political and economic spheres, meeting 'glass ceilings,' having home-making roles, etc. In Africa, most married couples adhere to traditional rules that follow strict gender roles (Eagly 1987).

People perform their expected gender roles without much question or difficulty, but once they migrate to the Unites States they are faced with new challenges and stressors connected to acculturation and a totally different way of life. African people in general, practice the role theory in marital obligations (Nyowe, 2000). In addition to this theory, the extended family

plays a big role in the family structure. The community helps raise the children thus alleviating the stress from the biological parents. Hence, when families migrate to the United States or elsewhere, they are also confronted with the lack of this social connection to help take care of their children while they attend to either work or academic pursuits. A common phrase among Africans is that "it takes a community to raise a child."

There are three common patterns in today's economic setting that tend to classify the role that women take in social and economic settings. These are (1) women take on more domestic tasks, (2) women and men have different occupational roles and, (3) women often have lower social status. When African immigrants arrive in the United States these roles are challenged because men and women are forced to take the same roles due to time and financial constraints, Eagly 1987 (as cited in changing minds.org).

Theories Guiding Conceptualization

Theory of Acculturation

The theory of acculturation could be used to conceptualize and study the acculturative changes of

international people as they experience continuous, first hand contact with the dominant culture, white United States Society. The acculturation model offers a promising approach to understand the adjustment difficulties of international people as they attempt to acculturate to the host society (Plake and Sodowsky, 1992).

An acculturation period can take over days to generations and involve changes in identities, attitudes, values, beliefs, as well as physical, political and economic adjustments. At this point individuals from minority groups experience a range of physical, social, and psychological consequences like acculturative stress. This is defined as difficulties experienced by minority group members when they contact majority cultures. Symptoms of acculturative stress include anxiety, depression, confusion, low esteem, and psychosomatic illness. Most of the Africans who come to the United States are faced with acculturative stress, which reduces as they adapt to their environment (Greenland & Brown, 2005).

Role Theory

Most of the African immigrants adhere to the social Role theory. Eagly (as cited in Franke, Crown, & Spake, 1997; Changing minds.org, 2005) proposes that social role theory is the principle that men and women behave according to the stereotypes associated with the social roles they occupy, due to the expectations that society puts upon them. This includes women taking positions of lesser influence in the social and political and economic, meeting 'glass ceilings', having home-making roles, etc.

According to Vogel, Wester, Heesacker, and Madon (2003) social role theory proposes that one reason women and men confirm gender stereotypes is because they act in accordance with their social roles, which are often segregated along gender lines. As such women and men behave in gender typed ways because the social roles that they perform are associated with different expectations and require different skills.

Attachment Theory

According to attachment theory, the desire for closeness is part of our evolutionary drive and extends to both people and environment. Since attachment security

separation and loss are the core themes of attachment theory, it is well suited for examining the experiences that immigrants have in common of separation from family in the home country and other support system over time from an attachment perspective. This theory posits that we like to explore as long as we have a secure base to which to return. Humans like animals have evolved and survived because of building and maintaining close relationships. Separation does not devastate us as long as we are confident of the possibility of returning to our secure base. Experiences of abandonment, loss, or inconsistency in relationships, however can cause us to feel threatened at a survival level, prompting us to alter both awareness of our emotions and behaviors in attachment relationships. Acculturative stress can be seen in attachment theory as not only a separation and accompanying attachment behavior, but also as a loss accompanied by protest and despair (Ecke, 2005).

Summary

The United States has seen an influx of immigrants in the past ten years. Most of these migrations are due to economic and political factors such as push and pull

factors, political instability, dependency relations in African countries and educational opportunities and changing immigration policies in USA. African immigrants are faced with a lot of challenges as they try to settle in American society, which results in acculturation Stress and can have a negative effect on marital adjustment.

CHAPTER THREE

METHODS

Introduction

In this section of the paper, an overview of the research methods that were used in the study is presented. The study design, sampling methods, data collection and instruments that were used, the procedures, protection of human subjects, data analysis and a brief summary of the chapter are addressed.

Study Design

The study was a quantitative, exploratory cross sectional study and employed a survey design using self-administered questionnaires. Marital adjustment was assessed by using the Locke Wallace marital adjustment scale (as cited in Corcoran & Fischer, 2002) and acculturation stress was measured by using the Social, Attitudinal, Familial, and Environmental (SAFE) acculturative stress scale (Fuentes, & Westbrook, 1996). A few background questions were asked at the beginning of the questionnaire to establish the demographics of the respondents. The research questions that guided this study were: 1.) "Does acculturative stress have an effect

on marital adjustment on African immigrants?" and

2.) "Does the proximity to migration experience and spousal differences to acculturation have an effect on marital adjustment?"

One limitation of this study was that there was no standardized instrument that was known to be culturally sensitive in measuring acculturation stress and marital adjustment among African immigrants. Most of the instruments available measured Mexican immigrants or Asian immigrants. Therefore there was a chance that the scales would not be reliable or valid measures, when it came to African immigrants. One way this study would attempt to combat this limitation was by making the instruments culturally sensitive so the African respondents could easily understand them. Adapting the scale to fit with African culture did this.

Another limitation of the study was the reliance on self-report, as there was no other way of knowing that the participants were truthful about their responses. Despite the limitations of the study, the study represented an important step towards finding out the effects of acculturative stress on marital adjustment among African immigrants.

Sample

The sample size (N = 60) was drawn from Africans living in the Inland Empire and Los Angeles area, mostly from the churches and associations to which they belong. The sampling criteria for the study was ethnicity and marital status: participants were to identify themselves as a legally married husband and wife couple, having been born in Africa, married in Africa, and then came to the United States, after having spent some of their married life in Africa. There would not be any age limit as long as the participants met the standards above.

The researcher had access to most of the Africans through the All Nations African Church in San Bernardino. The researcher also got in touch with some African associations the researcher was familiar with like the Zambian Association, Zimbabwean Association, and Kenyan Association through the church members that belonged to these associations. All questionnaires did have a stamp and self addressed envelope and were given to the participants personally by the researcher. Some of the questionnaires were mailed out for those participants the researcher could not get to personally.

Participation in the research was be voluntary and participants were be reminded that the survey was confidential and anonymous.

Data Collection and Instruments

The data for this study was collected by means of self-administered questionnaires. The questionnaire contained a number of background questions as well as the scales on acculturative stress and marital adjustment.

The dependent variable, marital adjustment, was measured using the Locke - Wallace Marital Adjustment Test (LWMAT) (as cited in Corcoran & Fischer, 2002). The LWMAT is a 15-item instrument that measures accommodation of partners to each other at any given time. LWMAT assesses overall marital happiness, as well as several specific aspects of marital life, including finances, conflicts, sexual compatibility, and commonality of interests. The internal consistency was estimated using the Spearman Brown Formula and was significant, with a correlation of .90. The LWMAT has evidence of known group's validity, with scores discriminating between adjusted and maladjusted couples. There was also evidence of concurrent validity, with scores on the instrument

correlating with the Locke-Wallace Marital Predictions Test, a measure of predicted future adjustment (Fischer & Corcoran, 2002).

The independent variable, acculturative stress, was measured using the SAFE scale (as cited in Fuentes, & Westbrook, 1996). The SAFE scale is a 24-item instrument, measuring emotions that could manifest themselves in stressful situations. Participants were asked to evaluate on a five point scale ranging from (1 = not stressed to 5 = extremely stressed). The SAFE scale was found to be a reliable and valid measure when conducted on Hispanic college students (Fuentes & Westbrook, 1996).

The issue of cultural sensitivity was addressed by changing the scale to refer to Africans rather than Hispanics. Background questions consisted of closed ended questions on gender, country of origin, educational background, number of children, religious affiliation, income, employment status, years of marriage and number of years in the U.S.A.

In addition factors like proximity of immigration and spousal differences to acculturation were measured by comparing the number of years respondents had been in the U.S. and their level of acculturation.

Procedures

First, the researcher got permission from the pastor at All Nations African Church in San Bernardino to carry out my study with the church members. All selected participants were approached and presented with an overview of the study. The participants were informed that participation was voluntary and withdrawing from the study was allowed at any time. The study was to confidential, anonymous, and only group data was be used in the study.

The couples that agreed to participate in the study were given a package consisting of two questionnaires, one for the husband and one for the wife; a consent form and a debriefing statement was included. Each participant was instructed to complete the instrument without help from his/her spouse and mail the instrument in the provided stamped and self-addressed envelope.

Protection of Human Subjects

Protecting anonymity and confidentiality of the study participants was of great importance. Since this research involved getting personal information on African immigrant couples, it was important that they were asked

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to sign consents before they began filling out the questionnaire and were debriefed after they completed the study. The researcher took measures to ensure the confidentiality of the data. First, lists of study subjects were kept in a locked drawer to which The researcher had exclusive access. Also computer files of lists of the subjects were deleted from the researcher's personal computer after the completion of the study. Secondly, as completed questionnaires came to the researcher, all identifying information (names, addresses, and telephone numbers) were removed from the questionnaires. Thereafter, the raw data and computerized data were identified only by a study-supplied identification number. The questionnaires were also destroyed after the study was completed.

The participants were informed of their right to refuse or withdraw consent at anytime without penalty, and that they could refuse to answer any questions they were uncomfortable with and could withdraw from the study at anytime.

Data Analysis

The data analysis was conducted utilizing a quantitative approach. Descriptive statistics including uni-variant statistics such as frequency tables, measures of central tendency and dispersion were employed to describe the demographic characteristics of participants.

Inferential statistics (the t tests, Chi-square, Pearson's tests) were used to determine whether the relationship between the two variables, acculturative stress and marital adjustment, existed.

In order to explore the relationship between acculturative stress, the independent variable and marital adjustment the dependent variable, and Pearson's correlation coefficient were utilized.

Summary

The purpose of this study was to determine how acculturative stress affected marital adjustment among African immigrants, while looking at factors like the proximity of immigration experience and spousal differences to acculturation. The Sample was N = 100 and inferential and descriptive statistics were utilized to determine the measures of tendency and relationships

between the independent variable, acculturative stress, with the dependent variable marital adjustment. The findings of this study will hopefully shed light on the needs of African immigrant couples.

CHAPTER FOUR

RESULTS

Introduction

In this chapter the results of the study will be
presented. These will include the demographics of the
respondents and summaries of the responses from the
marital adjustment and acculturative scale.

Presentation of the Findings

Demographic Characteristics

Table 1 shows the information on the demographic
characteristics of the respondents. The final sample
consists of 60 participants with 48% male and 52% female.
The age of the respondents ranged from 28 to 69 years
with an average age of 43 years. The majority of the
participants (31.7%) were from Zambia, Zimbabwe, 28.3%,
Kenya, 18.3%, Botswana, 10%, and other 13.4%. Other
countries included Ethiopia, South Africa, Ghana, Nigeria
and Uganda. Over 83% of the respondents had lived in the
United States for 10 years or less, 15% had lived in the
United States between 11-20 years, and only 1.7% had
lived in the United States over 20 years. Most

respondents (93.3%) had children still living in the home.

The great majority of the respondents (96.7%) had attained college level education or higher. Nearly a third of the respondents (31.1%) reported no income or an income of $10,000 or less, followed by 18.7% of the respondents who reported annual incomes of between $10,001 and $30,000, while 48.2% reported $30,001 or above.

Table 1. Demographic Characteristics of the Respondents

Variable	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)
Gender (n = 60)		
Male	31	51.7%
Female	29	48.3%
Age (n = 56)		
28 – 37	9	16.1%
38 – 47	33	68.8%
48 – 57	11	25.7%
58 – 70	3	5.4%
Country of Origin (n = 60)		
Botswana	5	8.3%
Kenya	11	18.3%
Zambia	19	31.7%
Zimbabwe	17	28.3%
Other	8	13.4%
Years in U.S. (n = 60)		
1 – 10	50	83.3%
11 – 20	9	15.0%
21 – 30	1	1.7%
Children still living in the home (n = 60)		
Yes	56	93.3%
No	4	6.7%

Variable	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)
Education (n = 60)		
High School	2	3.3%
College	23	38.3%
Graduate	24	40.0%
Post Graduate	11	18.3%
Income (n = 59)		
No income	6	12.1%
Below 10,000	7	19.0%
10,001 - 20,000	11	12.1%
20,001 - 30,000	7	8.6%
30,001 - 40,000	5	13.8%
40,001 - 50,000	14	24.1%
Above 50,001	9	10.3%

Responses to Marital Adjustment Questions

Table 2 shows the responses to the marital adjustment items. Over half (58%) of the respondents have been married between 11-20 years, 22% between 21-30 years, 13% between 1-10 years and only 6% have been married between 31-40 years. The mean years of marriage were 17.6 years. Over half (57%) of the respondents had been married between 1-10 years before migrating to the US, 35% were between 11-20 years, 5% between 31-40 years and 4% were between 21-30 years. The mean years of marriage before migrating were 10.7 years. About two thirds (64.9%) of the respondents perceived their marriage to have been well adjusted before migrating, 22.8% perceived it as adjusted, while 12.3% perceived

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their marriage either as somewhat adjusted or not

adjusted.

Most respondents (80%) reported that given their

life to live over they would marry the same person, 5%

would marry another person, 10% would not marry at all

and 5% wished that they had never married. Most

respondents (86%) reported that they confided in their

mates in most cases or in everything.

Table 2. Marital Adjustment

Variable	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)
Total length of marriage (N = 60)		
1 - 10	8	13.3%
11 - 20	34	58.4%
21 - 30	13	21.6%
31 - 40	4	6.7%
Mean Age 17.60		
Years in Marriage before U.S. (N = 60)		
1 - 10	34	56.7%
11 - 20	21	35.0%
21 - 30	2	3.3%
31 - 40	3	5.0%
Mean Age 10.69		
How well adjusted before migrating (N = 57)		
Well Adjusted	37	64.9%
Adjusted	13	22.8%
Somewhat Adjusted	4	7.0%
Not Adjusted	3	5.3%
When disagreements occur (N = 57)		
Husband give in	7	12.3%
Wife gives in	7	12.3%
Mutual give and take	43	75.4%
Engage in interests together (N = 60)		
All of them	8	13.3%
Some of them	37	61.7%
Very few of them	9	15.0%
None of them	6	10.0%

Variable	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)
In your leisure time you generally prefer (N = 58)		
To be on the go	28	48.3%
To stay at home	30	51.7%
Does your mate generally prefer (N = 55)		
To be on the go	26	52.7%
To stay at home	30	47.3%
Do you ever wish you had not married? (N = 60)		
Frequently	5	8.3%
Occasionally	7	11.7%
Rarely	13	21.7%
Never	35	58.3%
If you had your life to live over (N = 60)		
Marry the same person	48	80.0%
Marry another person	3	5.0%
Not marry at all	6	10.0%
Not sure	3	5.0%
Do you confide in your mate? (N = 58)		
Almost everything	1	1.7%
Rarely	7	12.1%
In most cases	28	48.3%
In everything	22	37.9%

The marital adjustment scale consisted of 8 items, which were on a likert scale as shown on Table 3. These items included questions on the extent to which couples agree or disagree on issues concerning finances, recreation, affection, friends, sex relations, conventionality (right, good or proper conduct), philosophy of life and in-laws. The scale ranged from "0" "always disagree," to "5" "always agree." The general score had a mean of 3.81 showing that most respondents regarded themselves as occasionally disagreeing or almost

always agreeing with their spouses in the way they dealt with marital issues.

Table 3. Marital Adjustment Questions on the Likert Scale

Variable	N	Mean
Handling family finances	60	3.95
Matters of recreation	60	3.37
Demonstration of affection	60	3.68
Friends	60	3.77
Sex relations	69	3.97
Conventionality (good/proper conduct)	58	3.98
Philosophy of life	59	3.86
Ways of dealing with in-laws	60	3.93
Total mean		3.81

Note: 0 = Always disagree, 1 = Almost always disagree, 2 = Frequently disagree, 3 = Occasionally disagree, 4 = Almost always agree and 5 = Always agree

Responses to Acculturative Stress Questions

Table 4 presents the results on the responses to acculturative stress questions. Questions on acculturative stress were put in five different dimensions. These dimensions included environmental stressors, attitudinal stressors, social stressors and familial stressors and a category of open-ended questions on acculturation. The questions ranged from "1" = "not stressful" to "5" = "very stressful." Under the environmental stressors respondents seemed most stressed when others made jokes or put down people of their ethnic background, a mean of 3.03, and they felt that they did

Table 4. Acculturative Scale

Variable	N	Mean
Environmental Stressors		
1. Because I am different, I do not get enough credit for the work I do.	59	2.78
2. I often feel ignored by people who are supposed to assist me.	60	2.43
3. I often feel that people actively try to stop me from advancing	59	2.19
4. Many people have stereotypes about my culture or ethnic group and treat me as if they are true	59	2.85
5. In looking for a job, I sometimes feel that my ethnicity is a limitation	60	3.17
6. I feel uncomfortable when others make jokes about or put down people of my ethnic background	60	3.03
7. I have more barriers to overcome than most people	60	2.30
8. Because of my ethnic background, I feel that others often exclude me from participating in their activities	60	2.28
9. It bothers me when people pressure me to assimilate.	60	2.18
10. People look down on me if I practice customs of my culture.	60	2.08
Total mean		2.52
Attitudinal Stressors		
11. Loosening my ties with my country is difficult.	58	2.88
12. It bothers me that I cannot be with my family	60	3.20
13. I often think about my cultural background	60	2.75
14. It is hard to express to my friends how I really feel	60	2.38
Total Mean		2.80
Social Stressors		
15. I have trouble understanding others when they speak	60	1.63
16. I don't have any close friends	60	1.43
17. People think I am unsociable when in fact I have trouble communicating in English	60	1.22
18. I don't feel at home	60	2.12
Total mean		1.60
Familial Stressors		
It bothers me that family members I am close to do not understand my new values.	60	1.82
Close family members and I have conflicting expectations about my future	59	1.78
My family does not want me to move away but I would like to	60	1.77
Total Mean		1.79

Note: 1 = not stressful, 2 = somewhat stressful, 3 = Stressful, 4 = Very stressful and 5 = extremely stressful

not get enough credit because they were different, a mean of 3.03. Overall environmental stressors had a mean of 2.52. Under the attitudinal stressors most respondents were bothered that they could not be with their family, a mean of 3.20, and the overall mean was 2.80. This category scored the highest showing that people were most affected by broken ties with their homeland and family members. Respondents were less stressed by familial stressors with a mean of 1.60 and social stressors with a mean of 1.60.

Open Ended Questions on Acculturative Stress
Question 1: "What do you consider stressful about living in the U.S.?"

Most of the complaints could be categorized in the following themes centered around:

- Family: lack of time with family due to working long hours to try and make ends meet; children growing up in a foreign country and unable to learn their cultures; and staying far away from extended family members.

- Finances: Lots of bills to pay; working low income jobs, unable to work to meet tuition

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fees, due to foreign student status, baby sitting expenses; and insufficient funds to travel back and forth to Africa to visit family.

- Society: Ethnocentrism in U.S. society; discrimination; materialistic society; and people speaking too fast.

Question 2: "Do you find anything particularly stressful as a consequence of being African in the U.S.?"

Most of the respondents felt that they were particularly stressed by:

- Lack of Employment due to skin color; strong accents; and education earned in Africa looked down upon and not considered.

- Lack of social support, and social network; less time to spend with family due to time spent working.

- Fear for their children being lost culturally.

- Prejudice and perceived assumptions about Africans.

- Finance problems and credit history they encounter in the U.S.

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Question 3: "Do you feel more stress than other people?"

- Most respondents felt that they were not more
  stressed than other people. A couple of
  respondents felt they were more stressed than
  other people due to their status as students or
  due to the fact that they were a minority, and
  others due to the change in societal status.
  Those that answered no attributed their not
  being more stressed than others to their faith
  in God and their educational attainment.

Table 5. Open Ended Responses on Acculturative Stress

1. What do you consider stressful about living in the U.S
   - No Social time, to spend with family and friends most of the time is taken up by jobs and School.
   - It is too materialistic
   - Working unprofessional jobs, which do not match skill.
   - Children growing in a different culture, away from family in Africa. Children learning American culture and language, and forgetting their roots.
   - Ethnocentrism in U.S. culture
   - Working hard to make ends meet, paying high tuition fees for non residents. Bills and limited income.
   - Individualistic society
   - Fast paced life. Tight schedules.
   - No legal status or sufficient funds to travel to Africa in times of family emergencies.
   - Baby sitting
   - Breaking in the job of one's specialization
   - Speaking too fast
   - Discrimination

2. Do you find anything particularly stressful as a consequence of being African in the U.S.?
   - Accents limits job offers and being told you're inaudible.
   - Racial discrimination, profiling and looked down upon.
   - Education from Africa looked down upon, experience from Africa not considered.
   - Judged by color of skin and not what you can do.
   - prejudice and perceived assumptions of Africans
   - No loans, no financial aid, no grants, more fees for international students.
   - 911 and aftermath for internationals.
   - Finances and credit history
   - Children been lost culturally
   - No social network and extended family support
   - Less family and social life, more work to survive.
   - Work twice as hard to match up with main stream status.
   - Lack of understanding the American culture
   - Employment and wage discrimination.
   - Jobs available are those locals can't do
   - Being considered lazy and dangerous.
3. Do you feel more stress than other people? Please elaborate on your answer.
   - Yes, as long as you are a minority you are bound to be stressed.
   - Yes can not qualify for government assistance.
   - No I am better because I am educated.
   - Not stressed
   - Very stressed, because I am not really a public person, thus I do not go out a lot, prefer to stay home watch TV or call Africa.
   - Difficult to say
   - Yes no future, no status, and no school.
   - Yes looking after my children and school.
   - Yes torn between who I really am, and who I have become to survive in the U.S.
   - Being alone without my husband to help out with the bills.
   - Yes, having a high status back in Africa, having a low status here. Degradation.
   - No Stress by God's grace.

Research Question One

The first research question asked whether

acculturative stress had an effect on marital adjustment

of African immigrants. In an effort to see if there was a relationship between acculturative stress, our independent variable, and marital adjustment, our dependent variable, bivariate statistics were utilized using the Pearson's Correlation coefficient test.

The questions on acculturation were divided into 4 groups that were comprised of questions on environmental stressors, attitudinal, social and familial. The only category that seemed to be significant with marital adjustment was the environmental stressors that had a negative relationship, meaning that the more environmental stressors you had the less adjusted you were in your marriage, $(r = -.273, p < .05)$.

Research Question Two

The second research question asked if the years of residency in the U.S. and gender differences to acculturation had an effect on marital adjustment.

To test this, a t-test was run using gender as the independent variable and acculturation stress, marital adjustment, and length of stay as the dependent variables.

The mean score for marital adjustment was 32.9 for the men and 28 for the women, showing that women were

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less adjusted in marriage than their male counterparts, t (53) = -2.318, p = .024. The mean score for acculturative stress was 44 for men and 53 for women showing that woman were more stressed than men, t (55) = 2.454, p = .017.

Summary

This chapter presented the findings of the study, and the demographics of the study participants. The chapter also presented the descriptive statistics and tried to show if any relationships were present between acculturative stress and the marital adjustment. A series of t-tests were also run to see if there was a relationship between gender differences and the length of stay, marital adjustment and acculturative stress.

CHAPTER·FIVE

DISCUSSION

Introduction

This chapter discusses the results, and limitations of the study and recommendations for social work practice, policy and research.

Discussion

Education and Income

The results showed that 96.7% of the respondents had attained college level education or higher and 49.8% of the respondents earned $30,000 or less. Perhaps, this is due to the fact that respondents worked in jobs which are not commensurate with their educational training and accomplishments and probably at low wage. Most respondents, through the open-ended questions on acculturative stress, complained about working in jobs that did not match their educational backgrounds.

This may be due to racial discrimination, language and accent, lack of recognition for their degrees, and difficulty in securing employment. These sentiments are consistent with Dodoo's (1997) study which found that Africans were highly educated, but had lower paying jobs

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than the African Americans and Caribbean blacks. Most of the Africans came to the United States with degrees from their home countries, which were regarded as inferior to the American degrees, making it hard for the Africans to get jobs in their field of expertise.

It is possible that the African immigrants do not understand the culture and employment processes in America. Quite often they may be satisfied with a minimal remuneration in order to survive in a foreign country. It is common to hear African immigrants comparing their wages in dollars with the equivalent remuneration in their countries. The result is that the low wages appear to be very high when compared to their equivalent earnings in their native countries. Realities and stress begin to set in when current income cannot support their current expenses in America.

Environmental Stress and Marital Adjustment

The study reveals that there is a significant relationship between environmental stressors and marital adjustment. Environmental stressors included items that reflect subtle and overt acts of racism, ranging from jokes about Africans to pressure to assimilate in the United States, sentiments of opposition to basic

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citizenship rights of African and resulting feelings caused by barriers that must be transcended if progress is to be made in a new country. Responses to the open ended questions such as discrimination, lack of employment due to skin color, fear of cultural loss, and ethnocentrism in U.S. society matched the responses to environmental stressors.

It is possible that the environmental stressors had an effect on marital adjustment because when people perceive themselves as not being able to succeed in the United Stated because of racial barriers and pressure to assimilate, they in turn may try harder to succeed by working harder to prove that they are as effective as the Americans. At the same time, this may affect time spent with family, thereby having an impact on marital adjustment.

The other dimensions of acculturative stress did not seem to have a significant relationship with marital adjustment. These were attitudinal stressors: items that arise from separation from family, friends, and culture in country of origin; social stressors: items that relate to quality of immediate interpersonal relationships and that reflect difficulties in speaking English,

understanding English speakers, being sociable, making friends, and feeling at home; and familial stressors: items that reflect conflicts between personal values, expectations, and aspirations of respondents and those in their families.

The results show that there are differences along gender lines when it comes to acculturative stress, length of stay and marital adjustment. Men had been in the United States longer than woman by at least 2 years. This could suggest that the men immigrated to the United States earlier than their wives in an effort to settle before bringing their families over to the U.S.

Association to Gender Roles

The results also reveal that women are less adjusted in their marriages, and had more acculturative stress than their male counterparts. This finding is contrary to common belief that women adjust faster than men. Despite the differences in gender levels of acculturation and marital adjustment, results show that most respondents reported to have stable marriages. The general score on the marital adjustment scale had a mean of 3.81, showing that most respondents regarded themselves as occasionally disagreeing or almost always agreeing with their spouses

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in the way they dealt with marital issues. Most respondents (80%) reported that given their life to live over they would marry the same person.

It is very interesting to find that in spite of high acculturation stress levels, most marriages were reported to be stable. According to the results women had more acculturative stress than their male counterparts and seemed to be less adjusted in their marriage. The question then to ask is "how are women able then to manage stable relationships in the midst of turmoil?" Research shows that marital communication is especially affected by stress. There has been evidence that daily workloads led to negative dyadic interaction at home, and that stress exerted a direct negative influence on marital interaction. Studies have shown a relationship between role strain and marital cohesiveness. In order to achieve satisfaction in any given role, one has to have the ability to manage the combination of roles effectively (Bodenmann & Shantinath, 2004).

Perhaps one could explain this contradiction by going back to the dual roles played by African women. As stated in the literature review most African women hold dual roles, and therefore may be able to manage issues

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related to acculturative stress better than their male counterparts since they are already used to multi tasking.

On the contrary one could conclude that there does not have to be a connection between marital adjustment and acculturation stress. Heffer and Snyder (2000) in their study of 40 Bosnian refugee couples found that acculturation level was not a strong predictor of marital distress and that wives' higher acculturation and less traditional gender roles were not associated with poorer relationship functioning, and differences between spouses' acculturation levels were not predictive of marital distress.

Family and Community Support

It appears that the respondents were more stressed by environmental and attitudinal stressors than familial and social stressors. One could relate this low level of stress to strong familial support and church affiliation as coping mechanisms. This is possible because most of the respondents had a religious background and therefore could use their faith in God and support from the church family as a place they could turn to when in trouble with issues concerning their marriage.

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Privacy and Trust

Another interesting observation was when the research was being administered, most of the individuals approached by the researcher did not respond. Most of them approached the researcher and explained that they were uncomfortable with some questions especially on the marital adjustment questionnaire. The researcher had to repeatedly explain to them the necessary steps taken to maintain confidentiality for the participants.

It appears that the low number of respondents was due to the lack of trust. It could also be that most African people are very private about what happens in their marriage and therefore are not comfortable sharing the marital issues with anyone. This could also affect the results in that most respondents could have just painted a rosy picture of their marriage and not really told the truth.

Limitations

A number of limitations of this project should be acknowledged. First of all, this project was a correlational study, and does not rule out other causal interpretations. Secondly the sample was mainly comprised

of religiously affiliated individuals within the Inland Empire, thus there was little diversity in terms of non-religious individuals, since it could be argued that most of the respondents found solace in their Christian community when faced with marital problems.

Third, the sample size was small, and it is plausible that using a larger sample may have found more diversity among participants. The forth limitation of this study was that there was no standardized instrument that was known to be culturally sensitive in measuring acculturation stress and marital adjustment among African immigrants. Therefore, some questions may have needed to be omitted or added to make the questionnaire more appropriate for the population being studied.

Lastly the study was based on the reliance of self-report. Thus there was no other way of knowing that the participants were truthful about their responses.

Recommendations for Social Work
Practice, Policy and Research

As the numbers of immigrant families continue to increase, their need for social services will continue to increase. Therefore policies and services need to be developed in a cultural and linguistically sensitive

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manner. Social workers must gain culturally competent knowledge and skills to work with immigrants coming from diverse African countries.

Since Africans seem to be very particular about issues of privacy and trust, and most of them seem to have a religious affiliation. Most of all respondents' marriages were most affected by issues of discrimination in job settings, lack of acceptance of their degrees earned in their native countries, working in jobs that did not match their educational skills, and being looked down upon because of skin color.

Social workers need to take into consideration the diverse needs of clients through an understanding of beliefs, values, and practices with special consideration to their religious practices. Diverse groups have differential experiences within society. Social workers need skills and abilities to advocate for clients against the underlying devaluation of cultural experiences based on differences and oppression. Cultural competence requires awareness of uniqueness.

Due to the favorable immigration policies that allow for family unification, there is a possibility of the African community growing larger. Therefore it is

important for social workers to recognize the need for social policies that are culturally sensitive to this group of immigrants. It is important for social work agencies and organizations to train workers in relevant legislation and policy, in order for them to remain aware of current issues affecting African immigrants.

Most importantly the social workers need to understand how acculturative stress affects African immigrants, especially environmental stressors which are mainly issues of how immigrants feel they are treated in the American society in terms of ethnic background, cultural practice, ethnocentrism, stereotyping and assimilation, and how these factors affect marital adjustment among African immigrants in the United States.

Lastly there is need for more research to be done on issues affecting African immigrants. A lot of studies have focused on other immigrant groups and thus there is a lack of knowledge about issues that affect Africans as they adjust in American society. It is imperative that more research be conducted on topics that involve African immigrant populations in order for them to gain in-depth knowledge and awareness of issues faced by this population.

Conclusions

The results of this project reveal that there is a significant relationship between environmental stressors on the acculturative stress scale and marital adjustment. The other dimensions, social stressors, familial stressors, and attitudinal stressors, do not seem to affect marital adjustment.

As the numbers of immigrant families continue to increase, their need for social service will continue to increase. Therefore, policies and services need to be developed in culturally and linguistically sensitive manners.

There is still need for more research to be done on issues affecting African immigrants in order for practitioners to gain more insight on ways to better serve this population.

APPENDIX A

QUESTIONNAIRE

Survey Questionnaire

A Study on How Acculturative Stress Affects Marital Adjustment Among African Immigrants

PART A: BACKGROUND

In this section I would like to ask you a few questions about you. Please write or circle your answer.

A1.   What is your gender?
   1.   Male
   2.   Female

A2.   How old are you? _____Years.

A3.   Which country are you originally from? _____

A4.   How long have you been living in the United States? _____

A5.   What is your highest level of education?
   1.   Primary school
   2.   high school
   3.   college
   4.   graduate school
   5.   Beyond graduate school

A6.   Are there children still living in the home?
   1.   Yes
   2.   No

A7.   How long have you been married? _____

A8.   How long were you married before migrating to the USA? _____

A9.   How well adjusted was your marriage before migrating?
   1.   Very well adjusted
   2.   Adjusted
   3.   Some what adjusted
   4.   Not adjusted

A10.   Are you currently gainfully employed?
   1.   Yes
   2.   No

A11. What is your income range?
1. Below 10,000
2. 10,001 – 20,000
3. 21,001 – 30,000
4. 31,001 – 40,000
5. 41,001 – 50,000
6. Above 50,001

A12. What is your religious affiliation?
1. Catholic
2. Protestant
3. Muslim
4. Other

A13. If you answered that you are a protestant in question A12, state your denomination.

_____

PART B: LOCKE-WALLACE MARITAL ADJUSTMENT SCALE (LWMAT)

Circle the number on the scale line below which best describes the degree of happiness, everything considered, of your present marriage. The middle point "happy," represents the degree of happiness which most people get from marriage, and the scale gradually ranges on one side to those few are unhappy in marriage, and on the other , to those few who experience extreme joy or felicity in marriage.

0	2	7	15	20	25	35
Very unhappy			Happy			Perfectly happy

State the approximate extent of agreement or disagreement between you and your mate on the following items by circling a number for each item.

5= Always agree
4= Almost always agree
3= Occasionally disagree
2= Frequently disagree
1= Almost always disagree
0= Always disagree

B1.	Handling family finances	5	4	3	2	1	0
B2.	Matters of recreation	5	4	3	2	1	0
B3.	Demonstration of affection	5	4	3	2	1	0
B4.	Friends	5	4	3	2	1	0
B5.	Sex relations	5	4	3	2	1	0
B6.	Conventionality (right good, or proper conduct)	5	4	3	2	1	0
B7.	Philosophy of life	5	4	3	2	1	0
B8.	Ways of dealing with in-laws	5	4	3	2	1	0

B9. When disagreements arise, they usually result in
1. husband giving in
2. wife giving in
3. agreement by mutual give and take

B10. Do you and your mate engage in outside interests together?
1. All of them
2. Some of them
3. very few of them
4. None of them

B11. In leisure time do you generally prefer: 1. to be "on the go"
     2. to stay at home?

   Does your mate generally prefer   1. to be "on the go"
     2. to stay at home?

B12. Do you ever wish you had not married?
1. Frequently
2. Occasionally
3. Rarely
4. Never

B13. If you had your life to live over, do you think you would:
1. marry the same person
2 marry a different person
3 not marry at all

B14. Do you confide in your mate?
1. Almost never
2 Rarely
3 In most cases
4 In everything

PART C. SOCIAL, ATTITUDINAL, FAMILIAL, ENVRONMENTAL ACCULTURATIVE SCALE (SAFE)

I would like to ask a few questions on how you feel about your stress with acculturating to the USA. Rate your self with the following scale by circling in what best fits your feelings.

1 = not stressful
2 = somewhat stressful
3 = stressful
4 = very stressful
5 = extremely stressful

Environmental

		Not Stressful	Somewhat Stressful	Stressful	Very Stressful	Extremely Stressful
C1.	Because I am different, I do not get enough credit for the work I do.	1	2	3	4	5
C2.	I often feel ignored by people who are supposed to assist me.	1	2	3	4	5
C3.	I often feel that people actively try to stop me from advancing.	1	2	3	4	5
C4.	Many people have stereotypes about my culture or ethnic group and treat me as if they are true.	1	2	3	4	5
C5.	In looking for a job, I sometimes feel that my ethnicity is a limitation.	1	2	3	4	5
C6.	I feel uncomfortable when others make jokes about or put down people of my ethnic back ground.	1	2	3	4	5
C7.	I have more barriers to overcome than most people.	1	2	3	4	5
C8.	Because of my ethnic background, I feel that others often exclude me from participating in their activities.	1	2	3	4	5

	Not Stressful	Somewhat Stressful	Stressful	Very Stressful	Extremely Stressful
C9. It bothers me when people pressure me to assimilate.	1	2	3	4	5
C10. People look down on me if I practice customs of my culture.	1	2	3	4	5

Attitudinal

C11. Loosening my ties with my country is difficult.	1	2	3	4	5
C12. It bothers me that I cannot be with my family.	1	2	3	4	5
C13. I often think about my cultural background	1	2	3	4	5
C14. It is hard to express to my friends how I really feel.	1	2	3	4	5

Social

C15. I have trouble understanding others when they speak.	1	2	3	4	5
C16. I don't have any close friends	1	2	3	4	5
C17. People think I am unsociable when in fact I have trouble communicating in English.	1	2	3	4	5
C18. I don't feel at home	1	2	3	4	5

Familial

C19. It bothers me that family members I am close to do not understand my new values.	1	2	3	4	5
C20. Close family members and I have conflicting expectations about my future	1	2	3	4	5
C21. My family does not want me to move away but I would like to.	1	2	3	4	5

Open Ended Questions

C22. What do you consider stressful about living in the United States?

_____

_____

_____

C23. Do you find anything particularly stressful as a consequence of being African in the United States?

_____

_____

_____

C24. Do you think that you feel more stressed than other people? Please elaborate on your answer.

_____

_____

_____

APPENDIX B

INFORMED CONSENT

Informed Consent

The Study in which you are being asked to participate in is designed to investigate the effects of acculturative stress on marital adjustment. This study is being conducted by NOMSA CHALI under the supervision of DR. JANET CHANG, ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR in the Department of Social Work. This study has been approved by the Department of Social Work Institutional Review Board Sub Committee, California State University, in San Bernardino.

In this Study you will be asked to respond to questions on acculturation and marital adjustment. You will be asked some background questions, acculturative stress questions, and marital adjustment questions. This should take about 15 to 20 minutes to complete. All of your responses will be held in the strictest of confidence by the researchers. Your name will not be reported with your responses. All data will be reported in group form only. You may receive the group results of this study upon completion on SEPTEMBER 16, 2006, at the following location: The Pfau Library at California State University, San Bernardino.

Your participation in this study is totally voluntary. You are free not to answer any questions and withdraw at any time during this study without penalty. When you have completed the combined questionnaire, you will receive a debriefing statement describing the study in more detail. In order to ensure the validity of the study, we ask that you not discuss this study with other participants.

There are no foreseeable risks to you in this study, though minor risks may result from your discomfort from the nature of the questions in the questionnaire pertaining to certain personal and background questions such as age, income, educational level and intimate questions regarding your marriage.

There are no direct benefits for you as participant in this study. But there may be indirect benefits in the long run. This body of knowledge could help practitioners in implementing effective intervention of marital therapy with African immigrants seeking for help. The study will also provide the information that can assist social Workers to be more culturally competent towards the African population.

If you have any questions or concerns about this study, please feel free to contact DR. JANET CHANG at (909) 537-5184.

By placing a check mark in the box below, I acknowledge that I have been informed of, and that I understand, the nature and purpose of this study, and I freely consent to participate. I also acknowledge that I am at least 18 years of age.

Place a check mark here ☐   **Today's Date**_____

APPENDIX C

DEBRIEFING STATEMENT

Study of Effects of Acculturative Stress on Marital Adjustment

Debriefing Statement

This study you have just completed was designed to study the effects of acculturative stress on marital adjustment. The proximity to immigration experience and spousal differences to acculturation and their effects on marital adjustment was assessed. The ultimate goal was to see whether indeed there was a relationship between acculturative Stress and marital adjustment.

Thank you for your participation and for not discussing the contents of the study with other participants. If you have any questions about the study, please contact NOMSA CHALI or PROFESSOR CHANG at (909) 537-5184. If you would like to obtain a copy of the group results of this study, please contact Pfau Library at California State University at (909) 537-5090 after September, 2006.

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