

## MARRIAGE AND CONFLICT MANAGEMENT IN CONTEMPORARY ANAMBRA FAMILY STRUCTURE

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### **Abstract**

*The major institution that is responsible for raising children and building the youth is the family. More-so, within the family the only process that facilitates the proper upbringing of children and inculcating values that make them constructive citizens is parenting. Considering the place of proper parenting in national development, this work undertook to examine the problem associated with family structure and parenting issues as a fundamental strategy to ensuring a peaceful and stable society. In other words, in any society where there is a culture of right parenting, there is a viable and enterprising future for that society.*

**Keywords:** Marriage, Conflict Management, Family, Values, Development

### **Introduction**

Currently in the Nigeria society, there is a general decline in the standard of morality among the citizenry as Jonathan cited in Ombe (2012) attributed the problem to lack of right attitude to issues and realities of life among the citizenry. Through this ugly trend of moral depravity, negative outlook of life cuts across the age groups. Okoye (2012) maintains that it is more ravaging among the youths in Nigeria. The implication is that young people are of the high and increasing levels of social vices such as prostitution, armed robbery, corruption and general insecurities. This point is also buttressed by Marietta (2009) who observed that the youth in Nigeria are involved in recent times. This implies that the major problem with the Nigeria society is structural in the sense that something is apparently going wrong at the home front and the nation is feeling it's effect in terms of youth dysfunction and depravity which dovetails into various other social and moral problem that lead to the observation of Nwabueze cited in Edike, (2013) that Nigeria is on the verge of becoming a failed state. According to him:

This country is on the verge of becoming a failed state, there are so many failed states in Africa and Nigeria is on the verge of getting that status of a failed state. Before now, we did not know about kidnapping but has become a way of life. Did we know about bombing before? But today churches, schools, offices are being bombed on daily basis; the worst is that the bombers are not coming from outside the country. We are bombing ourselves. A nation that cannot provide a credible election for her people is a failed state in 2003, 2011 we had no credible elections yet we are talking about democracy. A country that cannot guarantee social and economic rights for her people is a failed state. Read chapter 2 of Nigeria's constitution and you will understand what I am talking about, they are not leaders but looters.

On the strength of the foregoing, this work argues that despite the fact that there is increase in the tide of crime, immortality and generational dysfunction among the youths, the problem of poor parenting is highly fundamental. This stems from the observation that whatever one sees in the large society is a reflection of what goes on in the family. In other words, although the researchers acknowledged neither causes of unfortunate culture of Wanton waste and impunity but study pictures its tent with single parenting. The major factor in taking this position is orchestrated by the manner of child upbringing, which is being referred to her a single parenting. By extension, this means that there is a slack in parenting today and as a result, certain un-cherished behavior is fast becoming the culture of the people. This view is buttressed by Azu (2012) who observed that, with the prevailing situation in Nigeria, the country is in dire need of innovative parenting to raise outstanding children and build them. It has been established that poor parenting is at the heart of the numerous challenges facing the society today, be it economic, social or political.

### **Concept of Marriage and family in traditional Anambra Society**

In our society marriage is the ultimate fulfilment that confers on the individual involved the sense of respect, maturity and responsibility of adult irrespective of other areas of an individual's attainment in life. But it is observed that increasing frustration and loss of faith in family as a sacred union of husband and wife has given birth to single parenting. Marriage is conceived as a union between a man

and a woman such that children born to the woman are recognized legitimate offspring of both parents.

An examination of marriage rules in the so called primitive and advanced societies lay stress on property rights ownership of children, legitimacy of children rights and status as according to children and these are often determined by the flow of property in some direction, like Igalla in South Africa, the number Okrika in the Niger Delta area in Nigeria the degree of fulfilment of all the marital rights which are based on some expenditure that determine who lays claims over the children. This is in consonance with the stress of most western marriage laws which indeed far from being based on religion are concerned with property rights, welfare of partners and children, and the social health of their country.

Marriage can come into effect by either or a combination of the following traditions as:

- a. Customary or native marriage
- b. Marriage by ordinance or statutory marriage
- c. Church or Ecclesial including marriage under Islamic religion law
- d. Some cultures provide that when a man and a woman are not below marriage and suffer no incestuous prohibition but prevented to marry by parents such couple could elope to another country or community. Successful elopement without recapture legalizes their union as marriage. There are two universal principles governing marriage, the principle of incest and rule of exogamy. All societies no matter the difference in the marital rules or arrangement observe these two principles. They may or not observe to the same degree but it is explicitly present somehow. For example, there is the insistence that marriage of near or close relatives should not be allowed. Incest is the sexual relation between closely related people; it is prohibited in Igbo culture. The rule of exogamy stipulates that individuals marry out of the immediate family even in societies where some forms of endogamy is practiced. The obligation to marry out establishes the exogamous principle and this universal.

In human society, family from Latin: *familia* is a group of people related either by consanguinity by recognized birth or affinity by marriage or other relationship. The purpose of families is to maintain the well-being of its members and of society. Family would offer predictability, structure and safety as members mature and participate in the community. In most societies, it is within families that children acquire socialization for life outside the family and acts as the primary source of

attachment, nurturing, and socialization for humans. Also, as the basic unit for meeting the basic needs of its members, it provides a sense of boundaries for performing tasks in a safe environment, builds a person into a functional adult, transmits culture, and ensures continuity of human kind with precedents of knowledge.

Anthropologists generally classify most family organizations as multifocal (a mother and her children), patrifocal (a father and his children); conjugal (wife, her husband and children, also called the nuclear family); avicular (for example a grandparent; a brother, his sister and her children); or extended (parents and children co-reside with other members of one parent's family).

Members of the immediate family may include spouses, grandparents, brothers, sisters, sons, and daughters. Members of the extended family may include aunts, uncles, cousins, nephews, nieces and siblings-in-law. Sometimes these are also considered members of immediate family, depending on an individual's specific relationship with them, and the legal definition of immediate family varies. Sexual relations with family members are regulated by rules concerning incest such as the incest taboo.

According to Molver and page the family is a society or group characterized by enduring sexual relationship, which provides for the procreation and care of children. This definition makes mating relationship and procreation the central or defining character of the family.

Haralambos adds that the family includes children own or adopted. These definitions and others conceptualize the family in various ways. Some define the family as a social system, containing people, statuses, roles and role relations governed by the values, norms and sanctions others conceptualize the family in terms of its functional prerequisites and indispensability. Such definitions regard the family as an institution whose role is the legitimating of sexual behavior, procreation, socialization, mutual affection and economic assistance. There is also a behavioural approach to the definition and economic assistance. There is also a behavioural approach to the definition of the family regards the family as an interaction system, certain forms of activities, roles, and modalities of behaviour, mutual affections and assistance in a family system.

## **Igbo Family Life**

The Igbo family life is a communal life system where everybody is his brother's keeper. It is more of extended family type which involves husband, wives, children, aunties, uncles, both from maternal and paternal lineage or blood related family. Igbo family creates conditions for mutual affection amongst its member. Every member of the family is fixed together for sustenance and progress of the family.

Polygamous family system is one of the main characteristics of Igbo family; the reason for this is to ensure the existence of the family and for productivity. Akanbi (1999) states that in agrarian society there was plenty of land for everybody; standard of living was more uniform that it is now; there was no social or economic reason to make birth control a rational proposition. And with a very high degree of infant mortality there was need for a multitude of wives to ensure a large number of children which in turn would ensure adequate productivity by the family. This suggests marriage as a natural way of increasing economic potentiality of the Igbo family. Also the number of wives a man has determines whether he would be regarded as a social or political figure. This explains why the kings, chief, and men who have numerous wives, children and large barn were considered wealthy in the traditional society.

Furthermore, in Igbo family, training of children is a communal affair. A child is not only the property of the parents but the extended family and community at large. The extended family shared the joys and sorrows of bringing up the children and young adult in the family. The sick the physically and mentally challenged persons were cared for in traditional society.

## **Types of Family**

Family structure has changed dramatically over the last 50years and several variations of family have been created. There are six specific types of family structures identified by society today. The following types of families exist today, with some families naturally falling into multiple categories. For example a single parent family who lives on a larger, extended family while these types of families are distinct in definition, in practice the lines are less clear. As laws and norms change, so do family structures for example, the 2020 U.S census will b the first to give respondents the chance to indicate that they are part of a same-sex couples, either married or unmarried.

Nuclear/ the elementary/simple family type generally, this refers to a group consisting of a wife, husband and children. The nuclear family is the traditional type of family structure. This family type consists of two parent and children. The nuclear family was long held in esteem by society as being the ideal in which to raise children. Children in nuclear family receive strength and stability from the two parent structure and generally have more opportunities due to the financial case of two adults. According to 2010 US census data, almost 70 percent of children live in a nuclear family. This is also known as the conjugal family or family of procreation.

Nuclear families are comprised of married partners and their offspring. This is common in industrial societies, but it is not the most common types of family in the world, although the practice is spreading through modern development. Some anthropologists identify a second type of nuclear family, the non-conjugal family. In this type of nuclear family, there is one parent with dependent children.

### **The Extended Family**

This type of family consists of a number of compounds or nuclear families occupying separate but nearby homesteads, which are corporate and independent within some spheres but subject to a common head. The extended family structure consists of two or more adults who are related wither by blood or marriage. This family includes many relatives living together and working towards common goals. Such as raising the children and keeping up with the household duties. Many extended families include cousins, aunts or uncles and grandparents living together. This type of family structure may form due to financial difficulties or because older relatives are unable to care for themselves alone. Extended families are becoming increasingly common all over the world. This family includes at least three generations, grandparents, married offspring and grandchildren. The extended family often and eventually graduates into a minimal lineage or even a house.

### **Compound family**

Onwuejeogwu (1975) distinguishes three types of these “the first is the polygamous compound family made up of man, wives and children b. the other is polyandrous consisting of a woman her husbands and children c. the third is made up of a remarried widows family who has children by the former husband” (p.286).

### **The Joint Family**

In joint family two or more close relatives of the same sex with their wives and children reside in single homestead and are subject to common head. There are varieties of this namely, patrilineal, matrilineal, fraternal and avunculoc joint families. Avunculoc joint family refer to a family of a man plus wife, younger children, the men's married sisters, sons and their wives and children. This according to Onwuejeogwu is typical of matrilineal societies.

### **Single Parent Family**

The single parent family consists of one parent raising one or more children on his own. This family may include a single mother with her children, a single dad with his kids or a single person with their kids. The single parent family is the biggest change society has seen in terms of the changes in family structure. One in four children is born to a single mother. Single parent families are generally close and find ways to work together to solve problems, such as dividing up household chores. When only one parent is at home, it may be a struggle to children as there is only one parent working. This limits income and opportunities in many cases, also many single parent families have support from relatives and friends.

### **Childless Family**

While most people think of family as including children, there are couple who either cannot or choose not to have children. The childless family is sometimes the forgotten family as it does not meet the traditional standards set by society. Childless families consist of two partners living together. Many childless families take on the responsibility of pet ownership or have contact with the nieces and nephews.

### **Functions of Family**

#### **Reproduction Function**

In all societies the family, no matter its structure is the recognized condition for procreation. No matter the differences in definitions two basic rules of sexual union make its existence and function comprehensible. Those are rules of incest

and exogamy, at least the unit that must make children must respect these cultural norms.

### **Economical Function**

Man as an adult or infant has certain material needs, he needs land to produce food to eat, or milk as an infant, members of provide mutual economic assistance to each other. The infant child is the neediest of this assistance. In the period of commodity production and exchange based on money, man needs of food, shelter and clothing, with their uncertainties of job, income and insecurities the family has become a very important economic unit either as a unit of production or provide in need.

### **Socialization Function**

Socialization function involves the inculcation of societal values and norms, skills, knowledge, preferences and ideas to others. The family has been at the forefront of fulfilling this role in human society. Transmitting knowledge, the idea of morality, right and wrong, history, value and political participation are all transmitted to younger ones by the family. It teaches skill and ideas and practices of division of labour.

The entire community is expected to take part in the training and upbringing of the Igbo child. It is usually any adult in the family and community that get involved in the training and discipline of a child. Instilling respect for parents and other adults is very important. Having strong but loving control over a child is thought to be vital. It is the responsibility of mothers to train and bring up their children to be of godly characters and be good citizens in the society.

### **Concept of Family Crisis**

Family crisis can be defined as a state in which relationship are strained to the point that they eventually break up the family unit. Many families have different types of events that can lead to crisis, and how these crises affect the family with family breakup. Family crisis can be a turning point in a family as things cease to go on as usual in the family as a result of some changes going on in the family. Both the stress and crisis are normal parts of family life, but when crisis is

triggered, it causes a change in the family's circumstances and an increase in stress and anxiety.

### **Types of Family Crisis**

Family crisis are inevitable as far as families are concerned. There are many types of family crisis in the Igbo families in Anambra state, Nigeria.

#### **Crisis Arising from Family Conflict Situation**

This type of crisis involves emancipation from over protection or dependence upon families, feeling of being unwanted and rejected by the parents and conflict with the relatives and between brothers and sisters, unwanted child in the family, illegal abortion or rejection after birth, extra marital affairs and husband and wife nagging irritating and complaining crisis.

#### **Crisis Relating to Social Stigma**

This type includes alcoholics, jobless, delinquency, physical and deterioration, premarital relationship, pregnancy of unmarried daughters and presence of mentally deficient or physically handicapped children in the family.

#### **Premarital Separation**

This type of crisis occurs even when the two spouses are still living in the same house but they will not be together in everything they do, like eating together, taking bath together. No more communication, they will be cooking differently in the same house. No peace and love as before. Crisis increase to affect their children, the separation brings about the children division, also father will love some children, and the mother will also have her favourite children. To train the children morally will be a problem to the parents because they are not showing the children examples.

## **Divorce**

Divorce is rampant today in over society. In families, when things are no more normal, crisis erupts and there will be divorce, leaving their children alone to wander away in the society. Divorce can occur because of infertility or not having a male child in the family. When husband and wife have no more peace, love in their marital life, crisis increases to the extent of separation and divorce take place.

## **Single Parent**

This family crisis starts from when one of the spouses is no more, the crisis of taking care of children alone by either father or mother sets in. Different types of one-parent families are family headed by a widowed parent and a family headed by a single parent who isn't married or is a single parent by choice. It is a type of family crises because in the society, single parent is not the ideal of family system. Igbo family system did not value it, especially, when it has become the other of some ladies and gentlemen who purposely take delight as their choice to care for their children alone. They believe it is the way they want to live their lives in the society.

## **Causes of Family Crisis**

In the Igbo family system today marriages and family structures have broken and some couples are divorce or separated, while others are at logger-head, having indiscriminate squabbles and strife that distract them from managing their families. This results to lack of care and affection towards their children, child abuse and neglect in families. Children with little or no income from their parents and relations engage in all sorts of child labour to sustain themselves in area such as feeding and needs and also to find succor and reduce frustration and abandonment. Children who are orphans may even be forced by poverty and lack of care to become the breadwinner of their family due to parent's absence.

Inadequate interpersonal relationship, class membership pressure, economic and other stresses, social disgrace are the causes of family crisis and involves a threat to the family organization to its form and structure. The causes of family crisis are associated with the following factors, lack of understanding, laziness, negative thoughts frustration, poverty and poor planning. These causes will be explained as follows:

### **Economic Factor**

Economic factor is one of the causes of family crisis in our society today. With the recent insecurity in Nigeria, a lot of foreign investors have fled the country due to fear of being killed or kidnapped, some of the industries, factories and companies have been burnt in the course of bomb attacks by boko haram sect, bandits, herdsmen, hoodlums and so on. Nigeria is a poor nation; Nigeria is a hungry nation as many of her citizens are dying due to poverty that is ravaging the country, society and family. When all these are happening, family crisis will occur.

According to Okoye (2006) poverty level in the country is so high and alarming that there is no day you cannot read about crises related stories in Nigeria (p 62). This brought about family crisis, when there sources of income is terminated or temporary destroyed, it can lead to financial hardship and by implication hunger. Lack of basic amenities causes crisis in the families, children are compelled by circumstances beyond their control such as daily needs to contribute to the family income, even it is detrimental to their health.

### **Cultural Differences**

Culture as one of the family crisis is a concerned one, here the cultural differences occur and can cause crisis, when husband and wife who loved themselves, in peace and oneness, but all of a sudden their individual culture became a problem, for example family background, where each come from, how their parents and family members does.

### **Religious Factor**

This crisis is caused by individual religious belief, may be African traditional religion (ATR) or Islam, or Hindus or Confucianism, or Christianity. This occurs when one marries another before one gets converted.

### **Family Size Factor**

Many families in Nigeria and Igbo family in Anambra state are too large due to polygamous marriage and extended family affiliations. In such families it becomes difficult or almost impossible for parents to cater adequately for numerous children in the areas of nutrition, health care and education. For the children to survive, many of them may be sent out to work outside home as house helps, baby

sitters, sales-girls and boys' apprentices and most of these children may be unfortunately sent out by their parent to live at times with wicked employers who may also abuse them physically and emotionally through child labour. In families like these, children leaving home are a relief to parent as the mouths to feed are reduced. Other children at home may engage in hawking, begging, working in building construction or truck pushing to make ends meet for their family and it causes crisis.

### **Childless marriage or infertility**

Most people think of family as including children. It is the wish of every married couple to have babies to call their own as it gives joy to every couple. This causes crisis in the family when what they expected is not met. When the couple try over and over to see if they will at least have a baby to call their own and nothing works out, it can lead to disunity. The childless family is sometimes the forgotten family as it does not meet the traditional standard set by society. Childless families consist of two partners living together. Many childless families take on the responsibility of pet ownership or have extensive contact with their niece and nephew, young couple lying on the bed together playing with their pet cat. The man starts thinking of how to marry another woman who can bear a child of his own. Because of this, the woman feels depressed and worried. If the man finally remarries as he wished, broken home begins.

### **Effects of Family Crisis**

Any crisis is a blow to the family because all members are affected. Crisis has short and long-term effects upon the family. It creates sorrow, anger or anguish for family members and they play their role without enthusiasm. Majority of family problems are not under the control of the family; it is not a task to be accomplished by a single individual.

### **Social Effect of Family Crisis**

Social effect of family crisis will be considered in two ways:

**Disrespect:** This could occur as a result of the father, who is the breadwinner of the family facing challenges like serious sickness that may take years or even lead to the death. The wife might start to perform the functions made for the man, she

then works hard to make the money that the family needs for their feeding. The woman might start feeling like the king and begin to disrespect the husband through insult. Some stubborn children in the family may support the mother.

**Hatred:** when a couple gets married they find their togetherness as something that will never end. In fact, they see their unity as heaven on earth, but what happens after they have stayed like ten to fifteen years of marriage. Things begin to take another shape or direction and all begin to bring out their full colour and real selves. The effect of the changes can result to hatred. The two of them may begin to see each other as Satan and enemy of progress in the family and society. When this Hatred or dislike grows from level one to level ten, the family collapse.

### **Education or Academic**

One of the couples may be more educated than the other and even earn more salary. If the wife is the more educated, she may use her education against the man. She may insult the man.

### **Factors that affect Parenting in the 21<sup>st</sup> century**

Being a parent in the contemporary times is one of the most challenging tasks anyone can undertake. The present day Nigeria is bedeviled by violence, indecent dressing and sexuality, crises everywhere one looks. The children of today are far ahead of their parents in the contexts of information, exposure and aspiration and the like, the reason is technological advancement in recent times especially the availability of mobile phones which has greatly influenced the children of this era. While there is little that parents can do to eliminate the external factors, there are ways to help control them or reduce their influences. And this can only be achieved by first of all understanding what these factors are and then seek means to break up with factors. There is a plethora of factors and work of this nature may not take all of them into consideration. However, the research centred on some of the most crucial ones which are:

#### **1. Unemployment, work and time**

The level of unemployment in Nigeria has increased over the years and there is no doubt about the effects on parents and children. According to the statistician general of the federation, Dr. Teminkale, about 20.3 million Nigeria are currently jobless and not employed in any form of job. However, Kaiser (2012) maintains that the effect of unemployment on individuals is clear: lack of income, housing

and lack of care experience and these has drastic effects on the children. On the implications towards the development of the child he says: New studies have begun to focus on the long term effects on children whose parents have suffered from extended periods of unemployment. Researchers have found that this can lead to poor academic performance, behaviour issues and effects that may last for the rest of the child's life.

Unemployment is associated with elevated rates of mental and physical health problems increases mortality rates, and detrimental changes in family relationships and the psychological well-being of spouses and children. An analysis by Paul and Moser (2009) reinforces these findings by stating that unemployment was associated with depression, anxiety, psychosomatic symptoms, low subjective well-being, and poor self-esteem. Therefore, the impact of unemployment extends beyond individuals and families to communities and neighbourhoods.

## **2. Poor Parenting Skills**

Any man can be a father and any woman can be a mother, but not everyone in these categories can be a parent. This is because parenting involves skills and is something that should be adequately prepared for. Before many couples begin to give birth to children, they do not take it as a responsibility to learn how to give care to their children and how to do the parenting work. The implication of such nonchalant attitude for Gerace (2013) is the main reason why children do act abnormally because there is no connection or bonding time with their parents at home. Before many couples begin to give birth to children, they do not take it as a responsibility to learn how to give care to their children and how to do parenting work. This was why Miller Wilson (2012) was of the opinion that while no one is the perfect parent, there are certain parenting behaviours that can have serious negative effects on children and such behaviours need to be avoided if one must be an ideal parent. Hence, poor parenting according to Miller Wilson (2012) expose children to the following higher risk of psychological disorder, poor performance in school, depression and low self-esteem, violence and behaviour, failure to thrive, problems with the law and poor social adjustment among others.

In the same vein, Umezulike (2010:44) observes that the behaviour of children from both poor and rich families are shocking and degenerating every day. They are always considered as delinquents. One cannot teach them, live with them or even accommodate them. For a child to greet in the morning or afternoon, it must be by force. It seems that parents are no more carrying out the family responsibilities.

Chukwuekwu, (1991) opines that the child is the father of the man but not until the child grows to be man himself. He noted that if a child is castrated, it cannot father any other child which grows up to manhood and it is quite unfortunate that poor parenting has castrated many children psychologically, socially, physically, intellectually and spiritually.

### **3. Television and Home movies**

Between the late 70's and late 80's the television program that crowded our television stations, most especially NTA were the likes of the new masquerades, things fall apart, the village headmaster and others that were very informative, educative and full of morals. However, in recent times, television programmes that communicate nudity, violence, strong language and raw sex flood homes and unfortunately children are exposed to this audio-visual pollution of the mind. Dekache and Chiong (2009) observe that television programmes and videos serve a variety of purposes for parents, some parents consider them a safe activity to keep young children occupied which free parents to do chores, prepare a meal, or get ready for work for some parents' video and television serve educational purposes. These parents believe that young children can learn numbers, the alphabet and foreign languages at an early age through video. Other parents believe that when children are fussy or quarrelling with siblings, videos calm them down. Lastly, some parents use videos and television as rewards and incentives for good behaviour. In contemporary times, most homes are full of home movies with very terrible sexual and violent scenes and it is not a secret that most home movies rated 18 are widely watched by every person at home.

The characters, "Aki and Paw-paw are big challenges to children because while they look like children they are mature adults. Christakis and Zimmerman (2009) believe there are three reasons why it is important to study the effects of media on young people. First, young brains undergo rapid changes during the first three years of life. External stimuli are known to influence neurological development and to set patterns for life. Therefore, the quality and quantity of stimulation that young children are exposed to, carries lifelong cognitive effects. It is worth noting that they estimate that children three years and younger are watching an average of one to three hours of television per day. Second, the more television young children watch, the more television they demand to watch in subsequent years. Third, they explain that although, certain programs have been shown to be appropriate for pre-schoolers, other programmes and videos have been found to put young children's cognitive and behavioural development at risk.

Callahan (2007) believes that the entertainment of the noise begins before children even learn to walk or talk and their role as passive viewers increases the prospect of becoming imitative rather than original, inventive, and inspired "dancers and actors" (P. 252-253). Her greatest concern however, is that young children become imitators of role models that live in direct contrast to biblical values. She went further to reveal that "the noise" i.e. television, has for many families, become a god. Media, considered as a conglomerate, bear the attributes of God in that they are everywhere (omnipresence), inform us about everything (omniscience) and seemingly can accomplish anything (omnipotence). In subtle and not as subtle ways, televisions and film are contributing to the indifference to Christian spirituality.

To counteract the lasting effects of the noise, Callahan (2007. 256) suggests that reading is a lost art that fosters the spiritual development of children. The connection established between parent and child during family times of reading is one of the primary benefits of the practice. She believes that when parents read to their children, the emotional bonds established provide children with the framework from which the attributes of God can be experienced. She advised parents to inculcate the art of reading rather than the watching of movies for her: Loving touch is particularly important in the early years of life. Rocking and reading to an infant can promote feelings of security and peace. With drawing with a child to a quiet place and reading a book together can result in a oneness of heart and mind, and can allow both the child and adult to hear the voice of God.

It is unarguable that reading cultivates important disciplines such as solitude, silence, study, and meditation for parents and educators. The multitude of videos and television programs produced specifically for infants and toddlers is rapidly growing. As a society, parents are engaged in a vast and uncontrollable experiment with children, plunging them into home environments that are saturated with electronic media. Therefore, parents must try to understand their actions and its attendant consequences.

#### **4. Internet and Modernization**

The internet no doubt is a wonderful educational tool for children. It provides them with access to information and knowledge at the touch of a button. Children can access and complete their homework directly on the computer, they can research any school project without long hours at the library and they can listen to all of their favourite music while doing so. They can keep in touch with friends

and family all over the world, sharing emails, photos and even videos. They can learn new languages with the help of online programmes. The possibilities are seemingly endless. But it is quite unfortunate that a significant number of children these days spend excessive time on the internet, concerns have grown among parents over the impact of the internet on children's behaviour and the possible threats they face in the virtual sphere. In view of that; Kosan (2009) comments:

With internet connections becoming ubiquitous, children have also become keen users of the internet. There is no doubt about the positive role of information and entertainment; however, there exists a growing concern about its harmful effects when misused. It can not only inflict social and psychological damage on children but can also push them into being isolated, anti-social individuals living in a virtual world; away from real life over us may ultimately lead to internet addiction which negatively affects the children's school performance, relationship with the family and psychological health (p.3).

Yet most cases of internet addiction stem from loneliness and a lack of parental care and attention in families where both parents are working and this cannot allocate adequate time for them. When parents do not spend time with their children or provide social and emotional support, children often tend to connect to the internet which is an easy way to make new friends and escape from the real world. Therefore, parents should become friends with their children and spend more time with them to overcome the child's desire to escape into the virtual world. For Kosan (2009), it is important that parents talk to their children every day for at least 45 minutes about their daily activities and interests. This will prove helpful in keeping the parties in touch so that children do not feel they are lacking parental care or support. Without this interaction, too much exposure to the internet may lead to addiction, when a child is no longer able to keep himself from using the internet every day for hours and is having problems keeping track of time online.

The benefit of social media in this present time cannot be denied. It has helped tremendously to re-awaken the consciousness of events happening in the world and in just twinkling of eyes all events around the world will be showcased to everybody who wished to know. Regardless of that benefit, its challenges in the upbringing of the present day children cannot be overlooked, its implication is so severe to the society that if nothing is done, the moral values and ways of life of the people can be eroded because of the information released from social media. There is no doubt that it has caused an increase in prostitution, criminal activities

among others as a result of the child, trying to emulate what was learnt from social media. In view of that, parents to make it a point of duty to be scrutinizing the type of materials their children are exposed in order to maintain adequate family values and that of the society.

### **Authoritative Parenting Style**

Maccoby & Martin (1991) explains that authoritative parents are responsive to their children and willing to listen to questions. When children fail to meet their expectations, they are more nurturing and forgiving rather than punishing. Baumrind suggests that these parents “monitor and impart clear standards for their children’s conduct. They are assertive, but not intrusive and restrictive. Their disciplinary methods are supportive, rather than punitive. They want their children to be assertive as well as socially responsible, and self-regulated as well as cooperative. He also states that people with authoritative parenting styles want their children to utilize reasoning and work independently, but they also have high expectations for their children. When children break the rules, they are disciplined in a fair and consistent manner. Authoritative parents are also flexible. If there are extenuating circumstances, they will allow the child to explain what happened and adjust their response accordingly. However, child development experts generally identify the authoritative parenting style as the “best” approach to parenting. Children raised by authoritative parents tend to be more capable, happy and successful. According to Baumrind (1967:43) children of authoritative parents: “tend to have a happier disposition, develop good emotional control and regulation, good social skills, and are self-confident about their abilities to learn new skills.”

### **Authoritarian Parenting Style**

This style can be very rigid and strict. Parents who practice this style of parenting have a strict set of rules and expectations thereby requiring rigid obedience. Disobedience to the set down rules attracts punishment as means to ensure complete obedience. It is demanding but not responsive. It can also be called strict parenting, and is characterized by high expectations of conformity and compliance to parental rules and directions, while allowing little open dialogue between parent and child. Authoritarian parenting is a restrictive, punitive parenting style in which parents make their children to follow their directions and to respect their work and effort. In this style, parents expect much of their child but generally do

not explain the reasoning for the rules or boundaries. Parents are less responsive to their children's needs, and are more likely to ground their child rather than discuss the problem. Hence, Maccoby (1992: 1006) concludes that "children are expected to follow the strict rules established by the parents. Failure to follow such rules usually results in punishment". Authoritarian parents fail to explain the reasoning behind these rules. If asked to explain, the parent might simply reply, "Because I said so." These parents have high demands, but are not responsive to their children.

### **Permissive or indulgent Parenting**

In this style, parents are more responsive but not demanding. Child freedom and autonomy are valued and parents tend to rely mostly on understanding the children instead of imposing his views on them. This makes the children of such parents to be happy. Permissive parenting is sometimes known as indulgent parenting. Cherry (n.d) observes that parents who exhibit this style make relatively few demands upon their children. Because these parents have low expectations for self-control and maturity, they rarely discipline their children and according to Baumrind (1991: 44) "permissive parents are more responsive than they are demanding. They are non-traditional and lenient, do not require mature behaviour, allow considerable self-regulation, and avoid confrontation."

### **Uninvolved Parenting Style**

In this style, parents are often emotionally absent and sometimes physical absent. Parents have no expectations of the child and regularly have no communication. Such parents are not responsive to the child needs and therefore appear to accommodate any pattern of behaviour from them. It is characterized with a large gap between parents and children in terms of communication and relationship. In view of such neglect, such children suffer from social incompetence, academic performance, psychological development and behavioural problem. Uninvolved parenting, sometimes referred to as neglectful parenting, is a style characterized by a lack of responsiveness to a child's needs.

### **Conclusion**

The act of parenting differs depending on the society and religious faith in which one belongs. Developmental psychologists have long been interested in how

parents impact child development. However, finding actual cause-and-effect links between specific actions of parents and later behaviour of children is very difficult. Some children raised in dramatically different environments can later grow up to have remarkably similar personalities. Conversely, children who share a home and are raised in the same environment can grow up to have astonishingly different personalities than one another. On differences in religious faith, Cawley (1969:128) pointed out that the Chief Justice of Massachusetts Supreme Court, Marus Perrin Knowlton stated, in the case of Purinton V. Jamrock, that "the law assumes that the child will be as well taught in one church as in the other, and that her future happiness is likely to be promoted in one as in the other" However, Lareau (2002) maintains that certain factors like social class, wealth and income have greater influence on what methods parents adopt in child rearing. In view of that Baumrind (1967, 1971, 1978.) and McKay (2006) identify the following parental styles in early child development.

Consequently, it can be concluded that it is the influence of modernity on Igbo family that increases the rate of single parenthood in the Igbo society. Influence of Western culture has made the Igbo to push some of their cherished cultural values aside. The Igbo socio-religious life has been modernized. The family web has disintegrated to excessive individualism thereby increasing the rate of single parenthood.

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