

Brief Research Report



Inter-Cultural Marriages: Challenges and Coping Strategies in Akwa Ibom State, Nigeria

Uju Bridget Ejinkeonye^{1*}, Esther Etop Sunday¹, Glory Nwakpadolu², Ozioma Azubuiké¹

¹Department of Home Economics, Michael Okpara University of Agriculture, Umudike, Umuahia 7267, Abia State, Nigeria.

²Department of Agricultural Science/Home Economics Education, Michael Okpara University of Agriculture, Umudike, Umuahia 7267, Abia State, Nigeria.

***Correspondence:** Uju Bridget Ejinkeonye, Department of Home Economics, Michael Okpara University of Agriculture, Umudike, Umuahia 7267, Abia State, Nigeria. (Email: ejinkeonye.uju@mouau.edu.ng; ejimsuju@gmail.com)

Abstract: This study was to examine inter-cultural marriages in terms of the challenges and coping strategies in Ini local government area of Akwa Ibom state, Nigeria. The study adopted survey research design. The area of the study was Ini local government area, Akwa Ibom State. The population of one thousand, two hundred and fifty-four couples were into inter-cultural marriages in Ini L.G.A. Purposive random sampling technique was used in selecting the married couples that was used for the respondents. The instrument for data collection was structured questionnaire which was validated by three experts. The sample size was 300. The major findings includes 10 prospects of inter-cultural marriage which were heightened cultural awareness and empathy, people are more tolerant in inter-cultural marriages than others, children of inter-cultural marriages feel affinity from the cultures of both parents among others with mean ranged from 3.06 to 3.50 and standard deviations ranged from 0.48 to 1.06. Ten challenges of inter-cultural marriages were identified with mean ranged from 3.07 to 3.53 while the standard deviations ranged from 0.50 to 0.94. 10 coping strategies of inter-cultural marriage were identified. This study recommends that couples who intend to go into intercultural marriages must understand clearly from the start what their companions will bring to the marriage, habits and attitudes learned from his/her family and friends and be carefully discussed before marriage and after marriage.

Keywords: Challenges, Coping strategies, Inter-cultural, Marriages, Nigeria

1. Introduction

Globally, as a matrimonial relationship or union of person(s) who are usually of the opposite sex, marriage is an institution which represents all the behaviours, norms, roles, expectations, and values that are associated with legal union of a man and woman (Gove 2016). It is one of the principal life events that mark the passage into mature adulthood, and represents a lifelong commitment by two people to each other (Borgatta & Edgor, 2010). As a system, marriage is consummated, following a series of monumental procedures as practiced and understood by cultures of the parties involved. Different communities recognize patterns and types of marriages according to their cultural/social worldview (Doki, 2011). Thus, Nigeria, as a part of the wider African society, has been generally characterized with arranged marriages, polygynous marriages and others (Zakaria, 2010). The old tribal traditions are disappearing and more Nigerians are adopting Western concepts of marriage (Aiyetan & Kolapo, 2019).

Inter cultural marriages include individuals with differing racial and/or ethnic identities. Although research typically focuses on interracial couples, interracial unions are only a subset of interethnic unions (Hohmann-Marriott & Amato, 2018). The term inter-cultural acknowledges that culture extends beyond race and includes individuals with a Hispanic ethnic identity (a distinct ethnic group who may come from any racial background). The practice of inter-cultural marriages in Nigeria as part and parcel of the society is evident in the existence of Ini communities whose ethnic group formation stemmed from long-term, intense assimilation process that was catalyzed by inter-cultural marriage between non-native and native ethnic groups. Out of the context of Ini communities, the phenomenon has been under-studied and under-documented by the government and scholars alike (Doki, 2011). Thus, general description and perception of the phenomenon among Nigerian society is, at best, mixed. Positive perspective views inter-cultural marriages as beneficial in contributing towards social cohesion in the society, creating new generations that are more open towards others of different ethnic backgrounds, as well as possibility of producing progeny who are more advantageous in terms of intelligence, beauty, emotional and behavioral stability (Tan, 2018).

However, the positive perception of inter-cultural marriage tends to be over-shadowed by negative perception. This is mainly due to influence from popular writing and media coverage that sensationalize selected cases of high profile inter-cultural marriages among celebrities, public figures as well as controversial and lengthy court cases. As a result, inter-marriage is portrayed as problematic and wanting practice that is troublesome and short-lived (Zakaria, 2010). Negative perception towards inter-cultural marriage is more apparent when it involves conversion of religion as part of the requirement for the marriage to take place. In particular, Muslim-non-Muslim marriage in Malaysia is seen as notorious due to political and legal contestation between Islamic Syariah laws and civil laws (Baharuddin & Ahmad, 2011). Due to its seemingly conflict-prone nature, greater problem in marital relationship are recorded among inter-ethnic marriages than mono-cultural marriages, such as low marital satisfaction and higher rate of conflict (Ismail, 2013). Based on 1981 Marriage Survey, Tan (2018) finds that majority of countries, like Malaysian society that transcends gender and cultural groups agree that inter-ethnic marriage should not be encouraged. Such view still echoes in Malaysian society 30 years later (Jalil, 2010). In spite of the mixed perceptions, scholars

believed that the trend of inter-cultural marriage in Nigeria is on the rise (Nagaraj, 2019). According to Nagaraj (2019), analysis based on two per cent sample of the 2000 Population Census, finds that 4.6 per cent of marriages involve spouses from different ethnic groups.

Although small in number, it is an increase from about 0.5 per cent as suggested by Fertility and Family Survey conducted in the Peninsular (Tan, 2018). When examined further, higher number of inter-cultural marriages is found concentrated in regions and major urban growth centres whereby social distances between ethnic groups are shorter. This includes Osman (2011) observes that there is an upward trend in the practice of inter-cultural marriage among his respondents as compared to their parents' generation. Alternatively, Doki (2011) suggests the emergence of new social concepts used as labels in reference to progeny of specific types of inter-cultural marriages also denotes upward trend of the practice.

Despite the upward trend of the practice, Interethnic marriage has historically been a topic of controversy. Researches indicates that these couples are more likely to divorce than mono-racial white couples (Bratter & King, 2018). However, Zhang and Hook (2019) found that the risk of marital dissolution for Black/White couples was not higher than the risk for mono-racial Black couples. The risk of divorce was similar to divorce rates for the higher risk mono-racial group across all inter-cultural pairings. Therefore, the risk of divorce was based on the highest risk partner. Previous research has indicated that ethnic minority individuals are at greater risk for divorce, which may be a result of stresses related to societal racial discrimination (e.g. poverty, access to services, institutional discrimination) (Bratter & King, 2018). Despite higher divorce rates (Zhang & Hook, 2019), the number of inter-cultural marriages has steadily increased in recent decades and now accounts for 7.4% of all heterosexual marriages (Soliz et al., 2009). Ardayfio-Schandorf (2013) observed that family background and ethnic origin which were of considerable importance in traditional marriage practice have been replaced by love and affection between partners.

The dynamics of culture and human relationships have made researchers to observe many influences, manifestations, and occurrences in marriage within the Nigerian society (Ardayfio-Schandorf, 2013). Thus, these manifestations and occurrences have had significant impact on the stability of marriage in the modern Nigerian society. A recent observation of people's attitude to marriages in the country revealed the alarming negative effect of these occurrences (Animasahun & Fatile 2011). Factors that militate against the quality of marriage in 21st century Nigerian society have been a discussion among Nigerian social psychologists, religious authorities, behavioral scientists, sociologists, and anthropologists (Animasahun & Fatile 2011).

1.1 Statement of problem

The practice of inter-cultural marriage in Nigeria, albeit a welcome development, has opened up a plethora of issues which demand serious attention. Yet a substantial focus of research has reinforced cultural differences as a source of instability, conflict, or dissatisfaction for couples, rather than an opportunity for transformation. Many researchers concluded that inter-cultural couples face higher levels of marital challenges and are embedded with conflicts related to dormant allegiances of worldview, family structures, and communication patterns, rather than providing opportunities for a

positive transformation in marriages. Hence, the need to examine inter-cultural marriages, with its challenges and coping strategies in Ini local government area of Akwa Ibom state

1.2. Purpose of the Study

The main purpose of this study is to investigate inter-cultural marriages; its challenges and coping strategies in Ini local government area of Akwa Ibom state. Specifically, the study sought to: examine the nature of inter-cultural marriage in Ini local government Area, Akwa Ibom state.

- (a) identify the prospects of inter-cultural marriage in Ini local government Area, Akwa Ibom state.
- (b) identify the challenges of inter-cultural marriage in Ini local government Area, Akwa Ibom state.
- (c) suggest strategies for coping with inter-cultural marriage in Ini local government Area, Akwa Ibom state.

1.3 Research Questions

The following research questions guided the study;

- (a) What is the nature of inter-cultural marriage in Ini local government Area, Akwa Ibom state?
- (b) What are the prospects of inter-cultural marriage in Ini local government Area, Akwa Ibom state?
- (c) What are the challenges of inter-cultural marriage in Ini local government Area, Akwa Ibom state?
- (d) What are the strategies for coping with inter-cultural marriage in Ini local government Area, Akwa Ibom state?

1.4 Hypothesis

One null hypothesis were formulated and tested at 0.05 level of significance:

HO1: There is no significant difference in the mean response of male and female couples on the strategies for coping with inter-cultural marriage in Ini local government Area, Akwa Ibom state

2. Materials and Methods

2.1 Design for the Study

The study made use of a survey research, designed to access challenges and coping strategies in Ini local government area, using Akwa Ibom state

2.1.1 Ethics Statement

This research project received ethical approval from the Department of Home Economics, Michael Okpara University of Agriculture, Umudike, Nigeria. Informed consent was obtained from the study participants. We took permission from village heads of the three communities before the distribution and collection of the questionnaire.

2.2 Area of the Study

The area of the study was Ini local government area of Akwa Ibom state.

2.3 Populations and Sample

The population for the study comprised of married couples in Ini local government area,

Akwa Ibom state which was 16522 (National population Census, 2006). Three villages were selected from 52 villages in the area. The three villages that were used include: Mbiabong Ikot Etim, Mbiabong Ikot Udofia and Mbiabong Ikot Udo. The population of the married people in the study area were 4836(Mbiabong Ikot Udofia 2224 married people, Mbiabong Ikot Etim 1612 married people and Mbiabong Ikot Udo 1000 married people. A sample size of 300 married people was used purposively, that is 300 married people from Mbiabong Ikot Udo, 100 married people from Mbiabong Ikot Etim and 300 married people from Mbiabong Ikot Udo respectively.

2.4 Instrument for Data Collection

Structured questionnaire was used to collect data for the study. The questionnaire has four sections, Section I: dealt with the personal data of the respondents, which includes information on the age range, religion and spacing time and number of children, Section II: is structured to elicit information on the nature of inter-cultural marriage, Section III: is structured to elicit information on the prospects of inter-cultural marriage. Section IV: provides information on the problems of inter-cultural and the strategies in overcoming the problems of inter-cultural marriage in Ini local government Area, Akwa Ibom state. The instrument was validated by three experts. The expert's comments and suggestions were used in modifying the questions and items.

2.5. Data Collection Technique

The administration and retrieval of the instrument was done by the researchers.300 copies of the questionnaire were administered,which was retrieved within one week.

2.6. Data Analysis Technique

Research questions were analyzed using means and standard deviations, while hypothesis was tested at 0.005 level of significant

3. Results and Discussion

Table 1: Analysis of the responses of the respondents on nature of inter-cultural marriage in Ini local government Area, Akwa Ibom state.

S/N	Variable	Mean(x)	S.D	Decision
1	Ini local government people practice union of one man and one woman	3.17	0.79	Agreed
2	Ini local government indigenes practice union between two or more individuals	2.33	3.33	Disagreed
3	Ini local government people practice marriage between a woman and multiple men	2.07	2.49	Disagreed
4	Ini local government indigenes practice union of a woman and brothers	2.33	3.33	Disagreed
5	Ini local government people practice marriage between a man and multiple men	3.50	4.0	Disagreed
6	Ini local government people marry from their cultural group	3.36	0.71	Agreed

7	Ini local government indigenes marries from a culture different from theirs	3.53	0.51	Agreed
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Hint: when the value of mean is higher than the value of standard deviation, the response is positive and is accepted/agreed while if the standard deviation is higher than the mean, the response is negative and the idea rejected or disagreed.

The result in Table 1 revealed that all the 7 items had their mean values ranges from 2.07 to 3.53. 4 out of 7 was above the cut-off point of 2.50 on 4-point rating scale, indicating that they are the items identified as the nature of inter-cultural marriage in Ini local government area, Akwa Ibom state while item 2, 3 and 4 disagreed to this. The table also showed that the standard deviation of the items ranged from 0.51 to 4.0 indicating that the respondents were not far from the mean and from one another in their responses. The idea of union between one man and one woman has a mean of 3.17 and standard deviation (S.D) of 0.79 which indicates that the responses were positive and the idea agreed. Union between two or more individuals had a mean of 2.33 and a standard deviation of 3.33 which indicates that the responses were negative and the idea disagreed marriage between a man and multiple men had a mean of 3.50 and standard deviation of 4.0 which shows that the responses are negative and the idea disagreed. Marriage among people of the same cultural group has a mean of 3.36 and standard deviation of 0.71 which indicates a positive response and the idea was agreed by the respondents. Marriage between indigenes and people from other cultural background has a mean of 3.53 and standard deviation of 0.51 which indicates positive response and the idea was agreed by the respondents. The findings above is in line with the findings of Amponsah (2017) who stated the more popular union is a union between two people, a man and a woman such that the children born to the woman are the recognized legitimate of off-springs of both parents.

Table 2: Analysis of the responses of the respondents on the prospects of inter-cultural marriage in Ini Local Government Area, Akwa Ibom State.

S/N	Variable	Mean(x)	S.D	Decision
1	Heightened cultural awareness and empathy are significant prospect of inter-cultural couples	3.10	1.06	Agreed
2	People are more tolerant in inter-cultural marriages, than others	3.06	0.97	Agreed
3	Children of inter-cultural marriages feel affinity from the cultures of both parents	3.33	0.76	Agreed
4	Cultural literacy and an enhanced cultural adaptability is seen in inter-cultural marriage	3.50	0.51	Agreed
5	Cultural competency is enhanced through the development of a broader frame of inter-cultural marriage	3.47	0.78	Agreed
6	Cultural marriages gives a room for religious tolerance	3.33	0.48	Agreed
7	Inter-cultural couples stand a better chance at resolving issues/conflicts	3.40	0.62	Agreed
8	Heightened new cultural explorations are significant prospect for inter-cultural couples	3.06	0.97	Agreed

9	Inter-cultural couples stand a better chance at being open minded with each other due to cultural and racial diversity	3.33	0.76	Agreed
10	Inter-cultural marriage gives a room for a balanced parenting style	3.50	0.51	Agreed

Hint: when the value of mean is higher than the value of standard deviation, the response is positive and is accepted/agreed while if the standard deviation is higher than the mean, the response is negative and the idea rejected or disagreed.

In Table 2, the data presented revealed that the 10 items had their mean values ranges from 3.06 to 3.50 which are all greater than the cut-off items was above the cut-off point of 2.50 on 4-point rating scale, indicating the prospects of inter-cultural marriage in Ini local government Area, Akwa Ibom state. The table also showed that the standard deviation of the items ranged from 0.48 to 1.06 indicating that the responses were not far from each other. The concept of heightened cultural awareness and empathy as significant prospect of inter-cultural couples has mean of 3.10 and standard deviation of 1.06 which indicates positive response and the idea agreed by the respondents. People are more tolerant in inter-cultural marriages than other types of marriages has a mean of 3.06 and standard deviation of 0.97 which indicates positive responses and the idea agreed or accepted by the respondents. Children of inter-cultural marriages feel affinity from the cultures of both parents has a mean of 3.33 and standard deviation of 0.76 indicating a positive response and the idea agreed or accepted. Cultural literacy and an enhanced cultural adaptability is seen in inter-cultural marriage has a mean of 3.50 and standard deviation of 0.51 indicating positive response and the idea was agreed by the respondents. Cultural competency is enhanced through the development of a broader frame of inter-cultural marriage has a mean of 3.47 and standard deviation of 0.78 indicating a positive response and the idea agreed. Cultural marriages gives a room for religious tolerance has a mean 3.33 and standard deviation of 0.48 which shows a better chance at resolving issues/conflicts has mean of 3.40 and standard deviation of 0.62 showing positive response and the idea agreed. Heightened cultural new explorations are significant prospect for inter-cultural couples has mean of 3.06 and standard deviation of 0.97 which is positive and the idea agreed. Inter-cultural couples stand a better chance at being open-minded with each other due to cultural and racial diversity has a mean of 3.33 and standard deviation of 0.76 showing positive responses and the idea agreed or accepted. Inter-cultural marriage gives a room for a balanced parenting style has mean of 3.50 and standard deviation of 0.51 also indicating positive responses and the agreed or accepted. The ideas and concepts above are in line with with the research findings of Toomey (2019) who buttressed that inter-cultural marriages facilitate adaptive outcomes such as cognitive flexibility, improved social competence and increased self-awareness, fostering personal growth

Table 3: Analysis of the responses of the respondents on challenges of inter-cultural marriage in Ini Local Government Area, Akwa Ibom State

S/N	Variable	Mean(x)	SD	Decision
1	There is language barrier problem with inter-cultural couples	3.17	0.79	Agreed
2	Inter-cultural couples experience rejection from family or be disinherited	3.33	0.71	Agreed
3	Open hostility and intimidation is attached with inter-cultural couples	3.07	0.94	Agreed
4	There is daily disagreements over cooking	3.33	0.76	Agreed
5	Inter-cultural couples experience loss of identity	3.50	0.50	Agreed
6	Incompatible standard of family rituals	3.36	0.71	Agreed
7	Incompatible perception of life expectations	3.53	0.51	Agreed
8	There is daily disagreements over standard of hygiene	3.07	0.94	Agreed
9	Incompatible religious beliefs	3.33	0.76	Agreed
10	The children from inter-cultural marriages suffers from identity crises	3.50	0.50	Agreed

Hint: when the value of mean is higher than the value of standard deviation, the response is positive and is accepted/agreed while if the standard deviation is higher than the mean, the response is negative and the idea rejected or disagreed.

The result in Table 3 revealed that all the 10 items had their mean values ranges from 3.07 to 3.53 which are all greater than the cut-off items was above the cut-of point of 2.50 on 4-point rating scale, indicating that all the 10 items identified were the challenges of inter-cultural marriage in Ini local government Area, Akwa Ibom state. The table also showed that the standard deviation of the items ranged from 0.50 to 0.94 indicating that the respondents were not far from the mean and from one another in their responses. The concept of language barrier problem with inter-cultural couples has mean of 3.17 and standard deviation of 0.79 showing positive response and the idea agreed or accepted. Inter-cultural couple experience rejection from family or be disinherited generated mean of 3.33 and standard deviation of 0.71 showing positive responses and the idea agreed or accepted. Open hostility and intimidation is attached with inter-cultural couples has mean of 3.07 and standard deviation of 0.94 indicating a positive response and the idea accepted. There is daily disagreement over couples of inter-cultural background has mean of 3.33 and standard deviation of 0.76 showing a positive response and the idea accepted. Inter-cultural couples experience loss of identity due to changes in geographic area has a mean of 3.50 and standard deviation of 0.50 indicating a positive response and the idea accepted. Incompatible standard of family rituals can be seen among couples of inter-cultural background produced a mean of 3.36 and standard deviation of 0.71 showing a positive response and the concept accepted. Incompatible perception of life expectations may occur among couple of intercultural background has mean of 3.53 and standard deviation of 0.51 showing

a positive response and the concept accepted. There is daily disagreements over standard of hygiene among couples of inter-cultural background and has a mean of 3.07 and standard deviation of 0.94 indicating a positive response and the concept accepted. Incompatible religious beliefs may occur among couples of inter-cultural background has mean of 3.33 and standard deviation of 0.76 indicating a positive response and the idea accepted. Children from inter-cultural marriages suffer from identity crises has mean 3.50 and standard deviation of 0.50 showing positive responses and the idea accepted. This outcome is in line with Perel (2011) who identified issues such as language barrier, culture shock and diminished family acceptance. Divorce, unbalanced development in children and intra-family crises were observed as some of the effects of marital instability in inter-cultural marriages.

Table 4: Analysis of the responses of the respondents on the strategies for coping with inter-cultural marriage in Ini Local Government Area, Akwa Ibom State.

S/N	Variable	Mean (x)	SD	Decision
1	A good degree of individual patience and acceptance between both partners	3.10	1.06	Agreed
2	A good degree of cultural adjustment	3.06	0.97	Agreed
3	Mutual commitment to good relationships and good influences between both partners	3.33	0.76	Agreed
4	Developing and maintaining healthy communication among partners	3.50	0.51	Agreed
5	Adequate promotion of individual culture among other cultures	3.47	0.78	Agreed
6	Stimulation of inter-cultural marriage on the governmental level for inter-cultural couples	3.33	0.48	Agreed
7	Adequate promotion of cultural integration	3.40	0.62	Agreed
8	Mutual commitment to having patience and acceptance among partners	3.06	0.97	Agreed
9	Adequate education about both partner's cultural group	3.33	0.76	Agreed
10	Developing and maintaining high level of individual tolerance	3.50	0.51	Agreed

Hint: when the value of mean is higher than the value of standard deviation, the response is positive and is accepted/agreed while if the standard deviation is higher than the mean, the response is negative and the idea rejected or disagreed.

The result in Table 4 revealed that the 10 items had their mean values ranges from 3.06 to 3.50 which are all greater than the cut-off items was above the cut-of point of 2.50 on 4-point rating scale, indicating the strategies for coping with inter-cultural marriage in Ini local government area, Akwa Ibom state. The table also showed that the standard deviation of the items ranged from 0.48 to 0.97 indicating that the respondents were not far from the mean and from one another in their responses. The table also showed that the standard deviation of the items ranged from 0.50 to 0.94 indicating that the respondents were not far from the mean and from one another in their responses. A

good degree of individuals should practice acceptance between both partners especially about types of food to cook, place of worship, acceptance of each other’s culture and belief system before the union is consummated. The mean generated is 3.10 and standard deviation is 1.06 showing positive responses and the idea accepted. Couples from different background will experience a good degree of cultural adjustment to accommodate each other in the union. This has mean of 3.06 and standard deviation of 0.97 indicating positive responses and the idea accepted. There should be mutual commitment to good relationships and good relationship and good influences between both partners before the marriage. This produced a mean of 3.33 and standard deviation of 0.76 indicating a positive response and the idea accepted. Developing and maintaining healthy communication among partners of inter-cultural background will encourage cordial co-existence. This has mean of 3.50 and standard deviation of 0.51 indicating a positive response and the idea accepted. Adequate promotion of individual culture among other cultures can help to foster peace and unity among marriages of inter-cultural couples. This has mean of 3.47 and standard deviation of 0.78 showing a positive response and the idea accepted.

Stimulation of inter-cultural marriage on the governmental level for inter-cultural couples is one of the strategies for coping with issues or problems peculiar to inter-cultural union. The mean for this assertion is 3.33 and standard deviation is 0.48 indicating positive responses and the concept accepted or agreed. Adequate promotion of cultural integration enhances unity in inter-cultural marriages. The mean value for this 3.40 and standard deviation is 0.62 indicating positive responses and the idea accepted or agreed. Mutual commitment to having patience and acceptance among partners of inter-cultural background should be highly encouraged this has mean of 3.06 and standard deviation of 0.97 indicating positive responses and acceptance of the idea. Adequate education about both partner’s cultural group will create more awareness and enlightenment about inter-cultural marriages and its advantages and disadvantages. This generated mean of 3.33 and standard deviation of 0.76 indicating positive responses and idea accepted. Developing and maintaining high level of individual tolerance is crucial for the unity and cordial co-existence in inter-cultural marriages. The mean generated is 3.50 and standard deviation of 0.51 which indicates positive responses and the idea accepted or agreed. This finding is supported by the view of Kim (2011) who stated that for inter-cultural marriages to last, a degree of cultural adjustment must occur, which can facilitate adaptive outcomes such as cognitive flexibility, improved social competence, increased self-awareness, and personal growth.

Table 5: H₀ of no significant difference in the mean response of male and female couple’s strategies for coping with inter-cultural marriage in Ini local government Area, Akwa Ibom State.

Gender	N	X	$\bar{X} - X$	SD	Df	t-cal	t-crit	Sig.	Decision
Male	130	2.702	1.6801	.521	50	1.22	1.67	.063	Accepted H ₀₁
Female	170	2.889	1.8402	.613					

Source: Paired Samples t-test Result from SPSS

Data on Table 5 shows that t-cal of 1.22 is less than the t-cal of 1.67 at 0.05 level of

significance. Therefore, the hypothesis of no statistical difference in the mean ratings of male and female couples on the strategies for coping with inter-cultural marriage in Ini local government Area, Akwa Ibom State was accepted.

4. Conclusion

From the research work, It is discernable that although all relationships are inherently complex, dimensions of difference are magnified for inter-cultural couples and families because they combine at least two distinct cultural reference groups, different levels of acculturation, and influences on social location such as family, peers, school, and work. Despite seeming potentially disruptive and conflict-prone, studies have shown that acceptance of inter-cultural marriages is increasing at a rapid pace and an increasing number of inter-cultural couples are reporting that their families have openly accepted their inter-cultural relationship, and they feel comfortable speaking about their relationship in public. The increased acceptance of inter-cultural marriage could be traced to the decline in endogamy. For individuals in inter-cultural marriages, cultural competency can be enhanced through the development of a broader frame of reference, increased cultural sensitivity, and tolerance for diversity. Thus, most couples in inter-cultural marriages have continued to experience what could be expressed as an “opening up of the world” which has helped them to think outside of their closed cultural mindset. This has enhanced people’s way of thinking and dealing with problems. On the whole, it was observed that though inter-cultural couples face unique problems, such marriages have the potential of producing resilient and mature spouses. Inter-cultural couples and families may express vastly divergent cultural values, norms, and expectations, or they may have areas of commonality that supersede all other aspects of difference. Their commonality is in their diversity, or inter-culturalness, and the dynamics that characterize it. Couples who intend to go into inter-cultural marriages must understand clearly from the start what their companions will bring to the marriage, habits and attitudes learned from his/her family and friends and carefully discussed before marriage and after marriage. Parents and other family members should learn to allow their children decide whom they want to live their lives with and how they want to live.

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Conflict of interest

The authors declare that there is no conflict of interest.

Author Contributions

UBE and EES conceived and designed the research. GO, OA, EES and UBE developed the research design, instrument, involved in data collection while data analysis was done by EES.

Data Availability Statement

The original contributions presented in the study are included in the article. Further enquiries can be directed to the author.

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