

Religion as Determinants of Male Child Parenting Among Married Adults in Kwara State¹Ramata Funsho Sanni, ¹Adekola Kamil Lasisi, ¹Taiye Hassan Ahmed¹Department of Educational Management and Counselling, Faculty of Education, Al-Hikmah University Ilorin, Nigeria**Research Article****Citation Information:**Sanni, R. F. ., Lasisi, A. K. ., & Ahmed, T. H. (2024). Religion as Determinants of Male Child Parenting Among Married Adults in Kwara State. *International Journal of Universal Education*, 2(2), 113–118. <https://doi.org/10.33084/ijue.v2i2.8408>

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ABSTRACT

Parents' religious inclination has been reported as a major determinant of rearing children. The study examined religion and psychological well-being as determinants of male-child parenting in Kwara State, Nigeria. The research aims to investigate the influence of religion on male child parenting among married adults in Kwara Central and determine its contribution to this issue. Two corresponding research questions and hypotheses guide the study. A descriptive survey of correlation was used. The study was conducted among male-child parents in Kwara Central. The population under scrutiny in this research comprises all wedded adults in Kwara Central with a projected estimate of 965,000 (National Population Commission, 2018). The study involved 384 married adults with male children from three Local Government Areas in Kwara Central, selected using the Kredjcie and Morgan table, specifically from Ilorin West, Ilorin South, and Ilorin East LGAs. The research instrument was a self-designed "Religion as Determinants of Male Child Parenting Scale (RDMCPQ). Experts assessed The RDMCPQ for its content, construct, and content validity. Its reliability was established through pilot testing and Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient Statistics (PPMS), with a reliability index of 0.86. The findings show that religion has no significant relationship with male child parenting ($F_{cal}=5.32$, $p>0.05$). Based on the findings, religion only explains about 11.7% of male child parenting in Kwara Central. The study recommended that married adults emphasise religious practice, especially for their male children. This will assist in enhancing the moral development of the children.

Keywords: Male-Child, Child Parenting, Religion

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Faculty of Education, Al-Hikmah University Ilorin, NigeriaEmail: sanniramotaajike@gmail.com**INTRODUCTION**

It has been observed that children are exhibiting all manner of behaviours which are contrary to societal norms and values with blame on the kind of parenting styles adopted by the parents. Not only this, it also demands the conjoin efforts of husband and wife as one entity to be able to give proper monitoring, supervision, and above all, adequate parenting for the successful nurturing of these children. Parenting is a social act, a responsibility, a process and a role that is essential for society to ensure social stability, harmony and progress. It is an act that demands a high degree of commitment, sacrifice, perseverance, attitude, knowledge, tolerance and determination from conjoin parents in bringing up their wards. It is a sort of function that is institutionalized by the family system in society and goes with a sense of care, relationship, love, compassion and hope. It is an act of close guidance and control of children in the smallest unit of society which is the family.

Parenting can be seen as the act of training, educating and entrenching social norms and values in children at the micro-social level (Okoroafor & Njoku, 2012). The rise in Nigerian children engaging in social vices like indecent dressing, cultism, stealing, lying, drug addiction, and pre-marital sexual activities raises concerns about married couples' parenting practices (Elechii & Uriahii, 2018; Okam, 2024). Monteleone (2012) asserted that some parents go to the extent of conveying approval of or encouraging their children's pre-conscious interest in the areas of sexuality, aggression, violence and substance abuse. Religion and psychological well-being play critical roles in male-child parenting.

Religion can play a significant role in shaping parenting practices, particularly when it comes to raising male children. Religion can influence male child parenting in terms of gender roles and expectations which has to do with religious teachings often define traditional gender roles. This can impact parenting styles and expectations for male children. Also, religion provides a moral framework for parenting, influencing values and principles passed on to male children and religious beliefs can shape discipline methods and authority structures within the family.

Furthermore, religious education and values can be passed on to male children, thereby influencing their worldview and behaviour. Religiously inclined parent usually develops spirit of community involvement in their children by providing community support networks and role models for male children. Another importance of religious practice in child parenting is ritual passage. This is done by inculcation of rituals and ceremonies that mark important life transitions, such as birth, coming of age, and marriage. Similarly, the spiritual development of the child focuses on nurturing male children's spiritual growth and development as well as religious communities can socialize male children to adopt specific values, norms, and behaviours. It's essential to note that these factors can vary greatly across different religions and cultures. Additionally, individual parents may interpret and practice their religion in unique ways, influencing their parenting approaches.

Statement of the Problem

Poor parenting can negatively reinforce undesirable behaviour and corrupt tendencies if parents abandon their responsibilities by not punishing the errant child when he/she acts aggressively towards them or other people (Sarwar, 2016). Ogunleye (2019) reported how parents breed children with immorality, he averred that a great moral deficiency leading to social vices across the country has to do with family and moral decline. He suggested that the greatest gifts parents can offer to their children, apart from unconditional love, is a set of values that the parents must promote and exemplify. Thus, proper child parenting is needed to instil good morals in the younger generation (Sarwar, 2016). The United Nations Population Division, Department of Economic and Social Affairs, reported that Nigerians have a higher population of children under 5 and 18 years, with a total population of 35,907,491 million, 110,797,959 million, and 71,855,762 million children above 18 years of age (Afolabi, 2018). This high population of children necessitates the kind of parenting parents need to adopt in the face of the enormous task of raising a male child successfully. The study examined religion as a determinant of male-child parenting among married adults in Kwara State.

Objectives of the Study

1. To examine whether religion is a determinant of male child parenting among married adults in Kwara Central of Kwara State.
2. To find out the level of contribution of religion to male child parenting among married adults in Kwara Central.

Research Questions

1. Does religion determine male child parenting among married adults in Kwara Central?
2. What is the level of contribution of religion to male child parenting among married adults in Kwara Central?

Research Hypotheses

H01: Religion has no significant relationship with male child parenting among married adults.

H02: Religion has no significant contribution to male child parenting among married adults.

Literature Review

Petro et al. (2018) highlight the significant role religious inclination plays in shaping parenting practices, particularly in raising male children. Religious beliefs and practices can profoundly influence various aspects of life, including parenting approaches, as per their research. Religion emphasizes moral codes designed to instil values such as self-control and social competence. Religious groups' prioritization of these soft skills may come at the expense of academic performance, which is generally diminished for youngsters raised in religious homes when compared with their non-religious peers (Horwitz, 2020).

Horwitz, (2021) research highlights the positive impact of parental religious attendance and participation in religious communities on children's health, mental well-being, positive parenting attitudes, child health, and school engagement. This research supports the importance of religious participation in parents' lives. Wen's (2014) research indicates that religious attendance significantly impacts parent health, mental well-being, positive parenting attitudes, child health, and school engagement in the U.S.

McWhirter and McIntyre's (2021) and Henderson's (2016) research highlight the importance of religious attendance in maternal levels of parenting satisfaction and stress. They emphasize the protective effects of religious attendance on later depression and the need for research-based best practices in faith and parenting. However, parents often resort to harshness in ensuring their children are raised religiously. McHale et al. (2002) research emphasizes the need to understand the benefits of religion in the home and adopt research-based best practices for faith and parenting, highlighting the challenges parents face in religiously raising children. Religion plays a significant role in shaping parenting approaches in the Ilorin metropolis of Kwara State, with individual families' interpretations and practices influencing the factors influencing male-child parenting. Given this, the study examined religion as a determinant of male child parenting in Ilorin metropolis of Kwara State.

Religion as determinants of male child parenting among Married Adults

Omorogiuwa and Igun (2023) investigated the influence of parents' cultural and religious beliefs on Girl-Child Beliefs on Girl-Child Education in Government secondary schools in Edo State, Nigeria. 7, 500 respondents and a sample of 500 participated in the study. A self-structured questionnaire was used to collect data. Frequency, mean and standard deviation were used for data analysis. The results show that parents' religious convictions have some degree of effect on how well the girl child is educated.

Amadi-Nche (2022) examined the effects of godly parenting on youth upbringing in Nigerian society. The study employed socio-historical and descriptive methods. The study showed that the proper upbringing of the youth lies solely on godly parenting in the family. The study maintained that although it is the task of government at various levels to provide basic amenities and protect the lives and properties of their citizens, in addition to creating an enabling environment for the citizens, however, the upbringing of youth to abate societal vices lies primarily on parents.

King et al. (2013) examined whether religious adults (measured by the frequency of attendance at religious services) report more extensive ties with their parents. 9,002 were the respondents. Bivariate and multivariate regression models were used. The results show that adult children who attended religious services more frequently were significantly more likely to assist parents, and they reported higher quality relationships and more frequent contact with both their fathers and mothers. Results were similar for sons and daughters and younger and older adult children.

Myers (2004) examines the link between religion and intergenerational assistance between parents and adult children. The hypotheses are tested separately for continuously married and divorced parents, and interaction models are estimated to determine if the effect of religion varies between adult daughters and sons. Findings support the second argument—religious congruence is more important than individual religiosity in influencing intergenerational assistance. The link between religion and assistance is positive among continuously married parents and adult children, but religion has a mostly negative effect among divorced parents and adult children. Assistance is especially low when either the divorced parent or adult child or both are evangelical protestants.

King's (2003) study explored how aspects of a father's religiousness are related to the type and quality of involvement with his children. A sample of 810 fathers was used. The result indicates that religious fathers are more involved and report higher quality relationships with their children; this is true for both married and divorced fathers. Gaps from the literature reviewed indicated that there are no in-depth examinations of the impact of religion on male child parenting in Ilorin, Kwara State Nigeria.

METHOD

A descriptive survey of correlation was used. The study was conducted among male-child parents in Ilorin metropolis of Kwara State. The population under scrutiny in this research comprises all wedded adults in Kwara State with a projected estimate of 965,000 (National Population Commission, 2018). A sample of 384 encompassed married adults with male children was selected from the three Local Government Areas in Kwara Central using the Kredjcie and Morgan (1970) table. Purposively, the researcher selected 384 married adults with male children from three Local Government Areas in Ilorin, Ilorin West, Ilorin South and Ilorin East LGAs of Kwara Central. The choice of these local government areas is that male child is observed to have exhibited negative behaviour and parents are perceived to be unable to control their children, especially male children. Other Local Government Areas in the State are excluded. The respondents for this study would be couples who are fathers and mothers with male-child. The main instrument was a self-designed "Religion as Determinants of Male Child Parenting Scale (RDMCPQ). The validity of RDMCPQ was observed by experts who adjudged its contents, construct and contents validity. The reliability of RDMCPQ was established through pilot testing adopting a test-retest method of administration within two-week intervals and the two sets of scores were correlated using Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient Statistics (PPMS) with a reliability index of 0.86. Data analysis adopted descriptive and inferential statistical tools. Mean and standard deviation were used to present answers to research questions, while Linear Regression Analysis statistics to test hypotheses at a 0.05 level of significance. IBM Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) version 25.0 was adopted.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

1. Does religion determine male child parenting among married adults in Kwara Central?

Table 1. Religion as Determines Male Child Parenting among Married Adults

S/N	ITEMS	SA	A	UD	D	SD	Mean	STD
1.	Religious rituals and ceremonies mark important life transitions, such as birth, coming of age, and marriage.	260 67.7	79 20.6	0 0.0	45 11.7	0 0.0	1.44	.694
2.	Religion provides a moral framework for parenting, influencing values and principles passed on to male children.	2 0.5	2 0.5	2 0.5	51 13.3	327 85.2	1.18	.502
3.	Religious communities can socialise male children to adopt specific values, norms, and behaviours.	2 0.5	30 7.8	2 0.5	119 31.0	231 60.2	1.50	.708
4.	Religion can focus on nurturing male children's spiritual growth and development.	15 3.9	15 3.9	15 3.9	224 58.3	115 29.9	1.65	1.006
5.	Religion can be closely tied to cultural heritage, influencing parenting practices and traditions.	0 0.0	0 0.0	0 0.0	339 88.3	45 11.5	1.12	.322
6.	Parents' religious beliefs and practices can serve as a model for male children.	56 11.7	45 11.7	15 3.9	53 13.8	226 58.3	1.12	.322

7.	Religious communities can provide support networks and role models for male children.	0 0.0	14 3.6	0 0.0	12 3.1	358 93.2	2.04	1.468
8.	Religious education and values can be passed on to male children, influencing their worldview and behaviour.	30 7.8	34 8.9	16 4.2	266 69.3	38 9.9	1.10	.408
9.	Religious beliefs can shape discipline methods and authority structures within the family.	30 7.8	15 0.3	7 1.8	35 9.1	307 79.9	1.76	1.319
10.	The religious inclination of the couple determines the kind of children to be brought up.	15 3.9	90 23.4	75 19.5	24 6.3	180 46.9	2.31	1.364
11.	Religious beliefs and practices have the potential to profoundly influence many aspects of life, including approaches to parenting.	0 0.0	2 0.5	0 0.0	320 83.3	62 16.1	1.17	.391
12.	Religion has been found to influence parenting and parenting behaviours.	2 0.5	1 0.3	19 4.9	95 24.7	267 69.5	1.37	.629
13.	Religion emphasizes moral codes designed to instil values such as self-control and social competence.	28 7.3	28 7.3	14 3.6	121 31.5	193 50.3	1.90	1.217
14.	Religious groups' prioritization of these soft skills may come at the expense of academic performance.	2 0.5	7 1.8	6 1.6	293 76.3	76 19.6	1.30	.645
15.	Non-religious children generally have diminished performance when compared with youngsters raised in religious homes.	14 3.6	44 11.5	32 8.3	49 12.8	245 63.8	1.78	1.210

Table 1 shows the responses of the respondents to whether religion determines male child parenting among married adults in Ilorin metropolis of Kwara State. The study reveals that religious rituals and ceremonies are significant life transitions for married adults in Ilorin metropolis, Kwara State. However, the majority of respondents disagree that religion provides a moral framework for parenting, influencing values and principles passed on to male children. They also disagree that religion can focus on nurturing spiritual growth and development and that religion can be closely tied to cultural heritage. The majority also disagree that parents' religious beliefs and practices can serve as a model for male children and that religious communities can provide support networks and role models. They also disagree that religious education and values can influence male children's worldviews and behaviour and that religious beliefs can shape discipline methods and authority structures within the family. The majority of respondents disagree that religion influences parenting and parenting behaviours and that religious groups may prioritize soft skills over academic performance. Despite these disagreements, the study highlights the importance of considering religious influences on male child parenting in the context of married adults in Ilorin metropolis.

Research Hypothesis

HO1: Religion has no significant relationship with male child parenting in Kwara Central.

Table 2. Regression of Relationship between Religion and Male Child Parenting

ANOVA ^a						
Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	29.429	1	29.429	5.323	.022 ^b
	Residual	2112.069	382	5.529		
	Total	2141.497	383			

a. Dependent Variable: Male Child Parenting

b. Predictors: (Constant), Religion

Table 2 shows that F. calculated is 5.32. The significant value is 0.022 at 0.05. The significant value (.022) is greater than the 0.05 level of significance (F.cal.=5.32, p>0.05). This implies that religion has no significant relationship with male-child parenting.

HO2: Religion has no significant relative contribution to male child parenting among married adults.

Table 3. Relative Contribution on Male Child Parenting among Married Adults

Model	Unstandardised Coefficients		Standardised Coefficients		Sig.	95.0% Confidence Interval for B		Correlations		
	B	Std. Error	Beta	t		Lower Bound	Upper Bound	Zero-order	Partial	Part
1 (Constant)	15.439	.793		19.468	.000	13.880	16.998			
Religion	.078	.034	.117	2.307	.022	.012	.145	.117	.117	.117

a. Dependent Variable: Male Child Parenting

Table 3 shows the contribution of religion to male-child parenting. The result indicates that t. calculated is 19.47. The significant value for religion is .022. The Beta value is .117 which suggests that religion only explains about 11.7% contribution to male child parenting.

Discussion

The study shows that there is no significant relationship between religion and male child parenting in Kwara Central. Religion has no strong relationship with male-child parenting. This result is linked to the fact that parenting of male children cuts across religious divides and that religion does not only affect changes on only male children but female children too. The reason for this result is that religion is only explained for about 11.7% of male child parenting. This is in line with the result of King (2003) who showed that greater involvement of religious fathers is explained only in part by demographic factors and the mediating influences of traditional attitudes and marital quality. This is corroborated by the findings of Omorogiuwa and Igun (2023) and Amadi-Nche (2022) who show that parents' religious convictions have some degree of effect on how well the girl child is educated. This is evident in the response of the married adults to the research instrument which indicates that that religious rituals and ceremonies mark important life transitions, such as birth, coming of age, and marriage strongly agreed (67.7%). This is supported by King et al. (2010) who show that adult children who attended religious services more frequently were significantly more likely to assist parents. The majority (85.2%) and (60.2%) of the respondents strongly disagreed that religion provides a moral framework for parenting, influencing values and principles passed on to male children and that religious communities can socialise male children to adopt specific values, norms, and behaviours. In agreement with this result of Amadi-Nche (2022) the upbringing of youth to abate societal vices lies primarily on parents.

Similarly, (58.3%) disagreed that religion can focus on nurturing male children's spiritual growth and development, while (88.3%) disagreed that religion can be closely tied to cultural heritage, influencing parenting practices and traditions. (58.3%) of the respondents disagreed that parents' religious beliefs and practices can serve as a model for male children. Furthermore, (93.2%) strongly disagreed that religious communities can provide support networks and role models for male children. (69.3%) strongly disagreed that religious education and values can be passed on to male children, influencing their worldview and behaviour. (79.9%) of them strongly disagreed that religious beliefs can shape discipline methods and authority structures within the family. (46.9%) disagreed that the religious inclination of the couple determines the kind of children to be brought up and (83.3%) of respondents disagreed that religious beliefs and practices have the potential to profoundly influence many aspects of life, including approaches to parenting. This finding correlated with Myers (2004) who showed that religion has a mostly negative effect among divorced parents and adult children. Moreover, (69.5%) strongly disagreed that religion has been found to influence parenting and parenting behaviours, while (50.3%) strongly disagreed that religion emphasises moral codes designed to instil values such as self-control and social competence. (76.3%) agreed that religious groups' prioritization of these soft skills may come at the expense of academic performance and (63.8%) of the respondents strongly disagreed that non-religious children generally have diminished performance when compared with youngsters raised in religious homes. Overall, it is religion has not significantly determined male child parenting in Ilorin, Kwara State.

CONCLUSION

Religion plays a significant role in shaping male child parenting among married adults in Kwara State, Nigeria. This research provides critical insights for policymakers, educators, and community leaders to formulate effective strategies aimed at enhancing child development and family well-being. The study highlights the profound impact of religious beliefs on parenting roles and expectations, as parents who adhere to stringent religious teachings tend to adopt more traditional parenting styles, which can influence their children's values, behaviour, and overall development. Recognizing this connection is crucial for stakeholders involved in family welfare initiatives, as they can tailor their programs to be more culturally sensitive and effective. Incorporating religious perspectives into child development programs is essential, as religious belief systems often shape moral and ethical frameworks within families. Educational materials and parenting workshops incorporating religious teachings can resonate more effectively with parents, fostering greater engagement and adherence to positive parenting practices. This integration enriches the educational content and bridges the gap between secular and religious parenting ideologies, promoting a holistic approach to child development. Policymakers must recognize the role of religion in shaping family structures and parenting practices, engaging with the religious beliefs of the communities they serve. By involving religious leaders as partners, policymakers can facilitate discussions that lead to a shared understanding of parenting challenges and solutions. Community engagement is also crucial in promoting positive parenting practices influenced by religious beliefs. Communities can organize

forums and workshops that unite parents, religious leaders, and child development experts to share knowledge and experiences, empowering parents with the tools they need to nurture their children while respecting their religious values.

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