

MARITAL ADJUSTMENT AND COMMUNICATION ON MARITAL SATISFACTION OF PUBLIC SECONDARY SCHOOL TEACHERS IN OGUN STATE, NIGERIA

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Abstract

The study focused on marital adjustment and communication on marital satisfaction of public secondary school teachers in Ogun State. The population comprised 1056 married public secondary school teachers, selected through multi-stage random sampling technique. Data were collected using Demographic Data Inventory (DDI), Locke-Wallace Short Marital Adjusted Test (LWSMAT), Marital Communication Inventory (MCI) and Marital and Relationship Question (MARQR). Descriptive statistics of frequency distribution (percentage, mean, and standard deviation) were used to analyse the research questions, while inferential statistics (Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient and Multiple Regression) were used to analyze the hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance. Findings revealed that marital adjustment and marital communication were significant in the prediction of marital satisfaction ($Adj R^2 = .282$; $F(3, 892) = 118.273$; $P < .05$). They predicted 28.2% of marital satisfaction of married teachers in public secondary school in Ogun State. Marital adjustment ($\beta = .449$; $t = 14.284$; $p < .05$) was the most potent predictor, followed by marital communication ($B = -.128$; $t = -4.069$; $p < .05$). Marital Satisfaction of female teachers was ($Adj R^2 = .056$; $F(3, 918) = 19.119$; $p < .05$), male ($Adj R^2 = .293$; $F(3, 891) = 93.670$; $p < .05$). Length of marriage of teachers with less than 10 years ($Adj R^2 = .324$; $F(3, 815) = 99.168$; $p < .05$), those with 10 years and above ($Adj R^2 = .338$; $F(3, 108.394)$; $p < .05$). The study concluded among others, that teachers' marital satisfaction, marital adjustment and marital communication are interdependent. It was recommended that government, public secondary school administrators and counselling psychologists should prioritize programmes on marital concerns. Also, positive marital behavioural therapy is encouraged among teachers to improve their attitude to teaching and ameliorate the problems of marital dissatisfaction consequently influencing students' behavioural changes and assimilation.

Keywords: Marital Adjustment, Communication, Marital Satisfaction.

Introduction

Human beings are social beings and cannot live in isolation, thus they seek companionship in order to live fulfilled lives. Marriage is a sacred union between a man and a woman, and it is expected to be lifelong relationship between married couples since marriage is better or worse right from the beginning (Onovo, 2016). Marriage is the integration of a matured man and a woman coming from different backgrounds and different psychological, spiritual, physical, emotional, sexual, financial, social and socio-economical dimensions (Sotonade, 2012). Marriage is an important feature of social institution with aim of companionship and procreation among others. Marriage is a universal institution with divergence of forms and it is regarded as the nucleus or the pivot of the society with functions that cannot be replicated by any other institution.

Marriage can be described as a pleasing bond, Mohammadimehr and Ayatollah (2017) opined that there is no perfect marriage, as more than half of the marriages in recent times are likely to lead to disappointment and separation. So, as more married people complained of lack of satisfaction and some seek for dissolution of their marriages, the concern of scholars has led to many research efforts (Lavalekar et al. 2010; Ofovwe1 et al. 2013), which was geared towards figuring out the elements that influence the level of satisfaction and persistency in marital interpersonal relationships. Lavalekar, et al. (2010) and Ofovwe1, et al. (2013) focused on observable inter and intrapersonal factors in everyday communication of married people that are happy with each other. Mohammadimehr and Ayatollah (2017) propounded that satisfactory marriage is a shield against mental pressures and negative life events, while unstable and stressful marriages have negative consequences for physical and mental health. This research evidence thus indicated that some of the marital encounters and problems are related to inability for maintaining sincere relationship and

misunderstanding between married people; as well as other factors such as economic, cultural, and social factors which tend to provide inappropriate and bad effects in their common life. Furthermore, when there is no problem in a marital life, people would likely report a high level of marital satisfaction. Marital satisfaction can be viewed as an individual's positive assessment of his/her marital relations with his /her spouse. It is a state of satisfaction in marriages which is defined by the intra personal or interpersonal perception. Marital Satisfaction according to Omage (2013) is a shield against mental pressures and negative life events, while unstable and unsatisfactory marriages have negative consequences for both physical and mental health. Thus, healthy marriages need to be composed of a cordial relationship that could lead to marital satisfaction.

According to (Bafrani et al. 2024), marital satisfaction can lead to fulfillment of many physical and psychological needs. Hence, it is seen as a measure that shows how much a persons' feeling and needs are met (Jafarzadeh, 2011). Moreover, in the context of this study, marital satisfaction: refer to an individual's positive assessment of his/her contentment with marital relations in terms of how much the individual's feelings and needs are being met. A number of determinants seem to be associated with marital satisfaction among which are; compatibility of personality, income level, level of education, age at marriage, age of marriage, marital adjustment, spiritual wellbeing and marital communication. Hampton, [2007] in a phenomenal study of African American couples and their perceptions of marital longevity found that couples who had remained married for 25 years or more claimed that marital longevity was based on several themes, which include: God is the foundation of marriage, joint religious rituals and activities to promote intimacy, companionship/friendship, common goals and values, example for others, commitment to marriage, trust in the other person, impact of family history, satisfaction in the marriage and so on. Therefore, one can easily say that marital satisfaction involves a lot of effort for its sustenance from each of the couple involved.

Heterosexual marriage is often considered as one of the ways through which human beings could procreate as part of the Creators mandate. It is also away through which emotional and sexual satisfaction could be achieved. Thus, every normal human being is expected to have feelings and desire for marriage for a particular reason ranging from companionship, sexual satisfaction and procreation; for any of these reasons marital satisfaction is expected by any human being. Marital Satisfaction takes place when married people consciously adapt personally to marital situations, understand the partner, develop an effective marital communication style, adjust bad characters/habits, intentionally become sensitive to partner's needs, exhibit selfless attitudes, spiritually balance and being there for one another during marital trials, challenges and other bitter life experiences. Marital satisfaction and its influences are an area of research interest due to its wide range implications to persons involved as well as society at large.

Marital dissatisfaction is as a result of unrealized marital expectations; which usually bring dissatisfaction, misunderstandings, quarrel, argument, stone-walling, killing of one partner, separation and divorce; which is increasing daily within our society today. Every human being needs satisfaction in every aspect of their life in which marriage is included in order to enjoy and be fulfilled in life; in accordance with Mohammadimehr and Ayatollah (2017) who noted that satisfactory marriage is a shield against mental pressures and negative life events, while unstable and stressful marriages have negative consequences for physical and mental health and public secondary school teachers are prone to this as well as other human being. A teacher that is under mental pressure and negative life events due to marital dissatisfaction will not be able to concentrate in the class which will end up affecting dissemination or transfer of knowledge, learning and there will be no change in behaviour which is the main aim of education. In similar way, when there is no problem in a marital life, people would likely experience a high level of marital satisfaction. Though other researchers had worked on some factors that influenced marital satisfaction still some individuals as well as teachers are still experiencing marital dissatisfaction which means factors influencing marital satisfaction are yet to be exhausted and there are more factors which can also influence marital satisfaction.

Marital satisfaction is generally associated with positive outcomes for adults and children. Satisfaction occurs when couples are aware of the effects of one's attitudes and behaviour on one's spouse to remain together, being able to stand stony marital experience and yet endure all forms of tribulations. Although getting married is no longer a requirement for social acceptance, most people do marry in their life time, and couples across the socio-economic spectrum wish their marriages to be satisfying and long lasting. When a teacher is not experiencing marital satisfaction that he or she tend to lose focus at work place because teaching needs concentration and once one's mind is not settle due to home issues arising from marital dissatisfaction learning or impartation of knowledge will not take place easily and it may even lead to transfer of aggression by such teachers to the students. However, each marriage has its own unique

challenges and problems. The question is not whether they will arise but how to face them when they do. Unfortunately, when these challenges occur, marriages become destabilized. Sotonade (1999) opined that the current trend in marital relationship in Nigeria makes many to fear and doubt if couple can still experience joy and satisfaction in their marriage. Abekhale (2016) noted that the contemporary Nigerian society is apparently witnessing serious marital dissatisfaction as some marriages have been dissolved while some are at the verge of total collapse. Ermer et al. (2022) emphasized that many marriages are associated with negative wellbeing outcomes, including mortality. But contrary to this assertion marital satisfaction could bring a lot of great positive effect on the immediate environment and the society at large. Delatorre et al. (2022) opines that dyadic relationship with a partner influences marital satisfaction. Therefore; the researchers try to look at some factors that can influence marital satisfaction of married public secondary school teachers in Ogun State so as to improve transfer of learning and to increase teachers input to teaching and learning activities in schools. Some of these factors are marital adjustment, spiritual wellbeing and marital communication. The researcher will also carry out research on the influence of length of marriage and gender on these factors or variables.

Marital Adjustment can be considered a type of self-regulation resource, which is perceived to be a kind of strength that allows control over self and is important in helping individuals adjust to a new environment. Thus, marital adjustment can promote positive outcomes. For example, there is a positive correlation between marital adjustment and spiritual wellbeing (Maggiori *et al.* 2013). Appropriate marital adjustment indicates some degree of fit between the behaviours demanded by the environment or marital life and those produced by the individual such that the individual is able to achieve valued goals. Another determinant of marriage satisfaction is marital communication. Marital communication refers to the verbal and nonverbal exchange of information between spouses. It is the process of sending and receiving messages between husband and wife as they interact in the marriage relationship (Nnadozie, 2014). It helps the partners to know, share and understand a lot of things in common which includes: their thoughts, emotions, past experiences and weaknesses within and outside their relationship. Nnadozie (2014) believes that effective marital communication; is the live-wire that links husband and wife together, strengthens the bond of relationship and so propels all activities in the family.

Marital communication has been studied most widely in the context of heterosexual relationships. Most frequently with comparisons being made in communication behaviors associated with relationship satisfaction between the communications behaviors of satisfied and dissatisfied couples. Having a good marital communication skill relationship is the ability to talk, especially about the problems which considered by behaviours to be the most important feature of healthy relationships. The dimensions and connectedness in couples' communication skill is an aspect of intimate relationships that is shaped by a complex of general social values and qualities. Error in communication is one of the most important aspects of marital dissatisfaction that must be taking into consideration in any marital relationship. Good marital communication skill increases the rewards and pleasures of relating by leading to effective stimulus control over behaviour. Marital Communication in marriage is the oil that greases the affair from being degraded. Lack of effective marital communication makes the marriage to collapse; hence it is regarded as the major framework of every marital relationship or any other social relationship (Esere, 2006). It has medicinal value to heal wounds of many marital relationships.

Statement of the Problem

Many teacher's marriages and families by extension in contemporary times in Nigeria are experiencing dissatisfaction as revealed from literature. This has resulted in cases of infidelity, dishonest, distrust, spousal separation, and poor academic performance of the children, exposures of children to social vices due to parental conflicts or even total divorce in marriage, which is affecting their job effectiveness and change in behaviour of the students due to lack of concentration of the teachers that supposed to teach and mould them; and this will hinder the students in making right decision. This study however will be carried out in Ogun State, so as to give better clarification on the influence of marital adjustment and communication on marital satisfaction of married public secondary school teachers in Ogun State.

Marital Adjustment and communication can influence marital satisfaction and as a result of this help to improve teacher's impartation of knowledge, effectiveness and transfer of learning which will result to positive change in behaviour of the students. Hence, in the absence of marital satisfaction, marital adjustment and effective communication a free exchange of ideas and family cohesion will be lacking, unified action will not be possible between the husband and wife, offspring in such a family which can lead to abnormal behaviour and ineffectiveness of teachers in the class. And the secondary school is the stage where the students have to make future decision both academically and carrier wise.

Hypotheses

H₀₁: There will be no composite contributions of marital adjustment, and communication on marital satisfaction of public secondary school teachers in Ogun, State, Nigeria.

H₀₂: There will be no significant relative contributions of marital adjustment and communication to the marital satisfaction of married public secondary school teachers in Ogun State, Nigeria.

Research Design

This is a descriptive design of the predictive type because the independent variables are not manipulated rather observed from the responses of respondents. This design was used because the independent variables had already occurred and the researcher only measured their level of influences and the relationships on the dependent variables.

This design is assumed suitable for this type of study because the study did not control the variables; it only measures their influences as they existed and determined the extent to which the independent variables (marital adjustment and marital communication) influence the dependent variable (marital satisfaction) among public secondary school teachers in Ogun State. It measured and determined the relationship of the independent variables on the dependent variable as well as the moderating influences of gender and length of marriage on the contribution of the independent variables to the dependent variable.

The population for this research work consisted of all the married teachers in public secondary schools in the three (3) Senatorial Districts in Ogun State. Available at the Ministry of Education, Ogun State indicated that there were 7,754 teachers in both public senior and junior secondary schools in Ogun State (Ministry of Education, Ogun State, 2024).

Sample and Sampling Techniques

A sample of one thousand and fifty-six (1056) married teachers which was 13.6% of the population of teachers from both public senior and junior secondary schools in Ogun State, Nigeria from the three (3) Senatorial Districts selected through multi-stage sampling technique, participated in this study.

At the first stage, four (4) Local Government Areas were selected through simple random sample technique from each of the three Senatorial Districts in Ogun State (Ogun Central, Ogun East and Ogun West) making twelve (12) Local Government Areas out of the twenty (20) Local Government Areas in Ogun, State.

At the second stage, four (4) public senior secondary schools from each of the twelve (12) local government areas were selected through stratified random sampling technique (two from the senior secondary and two from the junior secondary).

At the third stage, twenty-two (22) married public secondary school teachers were selected from each of the public secondary school for this study through disproportional random sampling technique. However, out of the One thousand and fifty-six (1,056) questionnaires distributed, only Nine hundred and sixty (960) were recovered and used in the analysis of data, which implies that 9.1% mortality was recorded.

Research Instrumentation

The measuring instruments used by the researcher in the study were questionnaires since it is descriptive research. Marital Adjustment Scale (MAT) by Locke and Wallace (1959) was adopted to assess the respondent's marital adjustment. It is a 15-item scale that was initially used to differentiate well-adjusted couples from distressed (unsatisfied) couples. The 15 items asked respondents to answer questions related to their marriage. Sample items include: If you had your life to live over, do you think you would marry your spouse? Do you confide in your mate? Do you ever wish you had not married? Do you and your mate engage in outside interests together? The items are positively worded. The scores for all 15 items were added up together, higher scores indicated greater satisfaction. The authors reported that internal construct was estimated using the Spearman-Brown formula and it has correlation of 0.90. For the purpose of this study, test-retest reliability index of $r = 0.77$ was recorded using Pearson Product Moment Correlation (PPMC). Ofole (2013) used this Marital Adjustment Scale to determine marital adjustment in a study titled Determinant of marital satisfaction among young couples in Lagos State, Nigeria.

The Marital Communication Inventory is a 46-item scale developed by Bienvenu, (1970) to measure the process of communication as an element of marital interaction. Asa et.al. (2018) used this inventory in their study on spousal communication and contraceptive use among married couples in rural areas of Akwa Ibom State, Nigeria. Enamudu (2023) also used it to determine marital communication among soldiers in

Lagos State, Nigeria. It will be adopted to measure the process of communication as an element of marital interaction. MCI is concerned with the patterns, characteristics and styles of communication. MCI explores a couple's ability to listen, to understand each other, to express oneself and the manner of saying things. According to the developer, the Content Validity of the forty-six (46) items was formulated with the help of colleagues, literatures, personal and professional experience and from the examination of existing instruments dealing with marital interaction. Items were viewed by sociologists, social workers and psychologists. Consensus was received on the 46 items relevance to marital communication.

The MCI was tested on 172 married couples in 1969 in two North Carolina communities. Ages varied from 18 to 60. Forty-five (45) of the forty-six (46) items discriminated between the upper and lower quartiles of the experimental groups at the $p < .01$ level of confidence with one degree of freedom using the chi-square test for item analysis. For cross validation of the items, the mean score of 105.78 earned by this experimental group of 344 subjects was compared to a comparable group of 60 subjects whose mean score was 105.68 thus suggesting strong across validation for the inventory was obtained from a study of two groups of 23 subjects each. Using the Mann-Whitney U test, a significant difference in marital communication was found in favour of the group with no apparent problems. One reliability study is reported by Bienvenu (1970). A split half correlation coefficient was computed using the Spearman-Brown formula, on the scores of 60 respondents on the odd numbered and even numbered statements are suited coefficient of .93 was revealed after correction.

Method of Data Analysis

The demographic data of the respondents were analyzed using descriptive statistical techniques of frequency distribution, percentages, mean and standard deviation. The formulated hypotheses were tested using Multiple Regression Analysis. This statistical technique was appropriate due to the fact that it is an extension of simple linear regression and it is used when one wants to predict the value of a variable based on the value of two or more variables. The test was conducted at 0.05, level of significance. All statistical analyses were executed with the aid of IBM SPSS version 26 software.

General Distribution of Data

A total of 1,056 copies of the questionnaire were administered out of which 960 copies were retrieved in usable form. This represents a response rate of 90.9%. The responses from the respondents were collated and analyzed using the simple percentage procedure and histogram chart.

Table 1: Gender of Respondents

		Frequency	Percent	ValidPercent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Male	433	45.1	45.1	45.1
	Female	527	54.9	54.9	100.0
	Total	960	100.0	100.0	

Source: Field Survey, 2024

The table 1 above shows that 45.1% of the respondents are male and 54.9% are female.

The survey results indicate that out of the total respondents of 960; 433(45.1%) are male and 527(54.9%) are female.

Hypothesis One: There will be no significant composite contributions of marital adjustment and communication on marital satisfaction of public secondary school teachers in Ogun State, Nigeria.

Table 2: Model Summary for the Combined effect of Marital Adjustment, communication to the prediction of Marital Satisfaction of Married Public Secondary School Teachers in Ogun State.

Model Summary									
Model	R	R ²	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Change Statistics				
					R Square Change	F Change	df1	df2	Sig. F Change
1	.533 ^a	.285	.282	.44010	.285	118.273	3	892	.000

a. Predictors: (Constant), Marital Adjustment and Marital Communication

Table 3: ANOVA^a

Model		Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	68.724	3	22.908	118.27	.00
	Residual	172.768	892	.194	3	0 ^b
	Total	241.492	895			

- i. Dependent Variable: Marital Satisfaction
- ii. Predictors:(Constant), Marital Communication and Marital Adjustment

The results in Table 3 indicated that with the predicting variables (marital adjustment and communication) entered into the regression model at once, there was a significant prediction of marital satisfaction among married public secondary school teachers in Ogun State, Nigeria ($R=.533$; $R^2=.285$; $AdjR^2=.282$; $F(3,892) = 118.273$; $p < .05$). This shows that the composite contribution of marital adjustment and communication were indeed significant in predicting marital satisfaction of married public secondary school teachers in Ogun State, Nigeria

Hypothesis Two: There is no significant relative contributions of marital adjustment and communication to the marital satisfaction of married public secondary school teachers in Ogun State, Nigeria.

Table 4: Coefficients of the Multiple Regression Analysis for the Relative Effect of Marital Adjustment and Communication to the Prediction of Marital Satisfaction of Married Public Secondary School Teachers in Ogun State.

		Coefficients			T	Sig.
Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients		
		B	Std. Error	B		
	(Constant)	1.939	.283		6.845	.000
	Marital Adjustment	.434	.030	.449	14.284	.000
	Marital Communication	-.242	.060	-.128	-4.069	.000

- **Dependent Variable: Marital Satisfaction**

The table 4 revealed that marital adjustment ($\beta = .449$; $t = 14.284$; $p < .05$) is the most potent predictor variable that has relative contribution to marital satisfaction of married public secondary school teachers in Ogun State, Nigeria followed by marital communication ($\beta = -.128$; $t = -4.069$; $p < .05$).

Discussion of Findings

The first hypothesis which states that there will be no significant composite contributions of marital adjustment and communication on marital satisfaction of public secondary school teachers in Ogun State, Nigeria was rejected. The analysis of the findings revealed significant composite contributions of the two independent variables on the dependent variable the marital satisfaction of public secondary school teachers in Ogun, State. The result is in-line with Mukhaira et al. (2021) that marital satisfaction is a subjective experience, strong sentiment, and behaviour which are based on intra-individual factors that influence the sensible quality; some of these factors that could influence marital satisfaction according to this study are marital adjustment and communication. They further explained that the indicator to measure marital satisfaction focus only on the quality of relationships in marital condition rather than analyzing each spouses' personalities, sense of positivity, attention and happiness one to another through their marriage. They believe marital satisfaction may only be achieved if these conditions are fulfilled. Aseka et. al. (2021) emphasized that there exists high rate of marital dissatisfaction due to marital conflicts. This can be reduced or eradicated with help of marital adjustment and communication since they can influence marital satisfaction of married public secondary school teachers in Ogun State, Nigeria. The second evidence rejects the null hypothesis, indicating that marital adjustment and communication each make significant contributions to marital satisfaction of married public secondary school teachers in Ogun State, Nigeria. It is, consequently concluded that there is significant relative effect of marital adjustment and communication to the prediction of marital satisfaction of married public secondary school teachers in Ogun State. The findings of this study corroborate (Khurana & Joshi, 2017; Beyranvand et al, 2016; Dan Khakpour et al.

2018) in their opinion that the importance of the spiritual aspect has also been acknowledged by most researchers who previously conducted studies on human wellbeing, including marital relationship. Also, the findings are in line with the study of Okorodudu (2010) who propounded that marital communication enhances the understanding, clears up those doubts that have already occurred, promotes the decision-making process in the home and as well offers mental and creative expressions by the couples over the performance of their domestic responsibilities and duties. As well as Sasa (2018) that says sustaining marriage and achieving a happy family is beyond true love, honesty and trust as communication in marriage.

Conclusion

The mean satisfaction level among teachers is moderate; the negative skew suggests a slight tendency toward higher satisfaction, with most teachers showing similar satisfaction levels overall. The low standard deviation and standard error indicates consistency and reliability in this satisfaction assessment.

Based on the findings; the researcher concluded that marital satisfaction is very important in the marital life of every public secondary school teacher to be able to carry out his/her duty effectively and efficiently could be influenced by some variables which are; marital adjustment and communication.

Recommendations

Based on the findings and conclusion of this study, the following recommendations were made: The School Administrative Officers and School Counselors; should be organizing periodic marital education workshop and counseling with emphasis laid on impact of marital satisfaction on teaching since the research review a positive and strong relation exist between marital adjustment and communication and marital satisfaction. Teachers should be encouraged more on these variables and their influence on marital satisfaction and similarly, test on this variable should be conducted for married teachers with the aims of improving their marital satisfaction for effective teaching.

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