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The Influence of Psychosocial Factors on Marital Satisfaction Among Public Servants in Cross River State

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Abstract- The purpose of this study was to investigate the correlate of psychosocial factors on marital satisfaction among public servant in Cross River State, Nigeria. To achieve the aim of this study psychosocial factors was formed in a lack of affection which lead to depression and low sexual activities or conflict between couples; affecting their marital relationship in the lack of communication, time spent together and on issues of child-rearing. Base on this two null hypotheses were formulated – whether psychological factors (depression, affection and sexual activities) has any relationship to marital satisfaction and if there is any significant relationship between social factors (number of children, communication and time spent together) and marital satisfaction. Literature review was carried out accordingly. Ex-post facto research was adopted for the study. The selection was done through the stratified and simple random sampling techniques. Questionnaire was the main instrument for data collection.

Keywords: internet, professional development,EFL.

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The Influence of Psychosocial Factors on Marital Satisfaction Among Public Servants in Cross River State

Ada P. Adigeb [α] & Anake P. Mbua [σ]

Abstract- The purpose of this study was to investigate the correlate of psychosocial factors on marital satisfaction among public servant in Cross River State, Nigeria. To achieve the aim of this study psychosocial factors was formed in a lack of affection which lead to depression and low sexual activities or conflict between couples; affecting their marital relationship in the lack of communication, time spent together and on issues of child-rearing. Base on this two null hypotheses were formulated – whether psychological factors (depression, affection and sexual activities) has any relationship to marital satisfaction and if there is any significant relationship between social factors (number of children, communication and time spent together) and marital satisfaction. Literature review was carried out accordingly. Ex-post facto research was adopted for the study. The selection was done through the stratified and simple random sampling techniques. Questionnaire was the main instrument for data collection. Pearson product moment correlation analysis was adopted to test the hypotheses under study at 0.05 level of significance. The results revealed that marital satisfaction among public servants was significantly high. Hence, there was a significant relationship between psychological and social factors on marital satisfaction. Based on the results it was recommended that marriage seminars, workshops and conferences should be organized for public servants on marriage issues and marital life.

Keywords: influence, psychosocial factors, marital satisfaction, public servants.

I. Introduction

Marriage, an institution as old as creation itself, is an important and fundamental human relationship because it provides ten primary structure for establishing a family and rearing children. Biblically, it stared as soon as man was created and posted in the Garden of Eden (Genesis 4:1-3). Adam and Eve being the first two (man and woman) desired themselves so much that they ended up in procreation. While marriage as a union of man and women abound, emerging literatures in present days, indicates that marital satisfaction is not easily achieved (Bruker & Kimberly, 1993). This suggests that a greater proportion of marriage are associated with uncertainty and instability.

The danger of uncertainty associated with the problem of dissatisfaction in marriage has therefore created serious challenges to marriage therapists. To this Owuamanam and Osankinta, 2005) ascertain that some marriage even breakdown before their first anniversaries. If marriage is healthy and stable, and the couples are satisfied the society in which the family is the foundation would be strongly built.

One of the major tasks of modern marriages is to achieve a state of marital satisfaction in the home. Marital satisfaction therefore can be referred to as individual's subjective experience of marriage in terms of when their needs are met, and when the individual's expectations and desires are being satisfied. Factors which contribute to marital satisfaction include, the way and manner of communication between couples at home, presence of children, influence of in-law, marriage relationship, satisfaction of sexual desires and occupational differences. Others are financial misunderstanding, physical violence, lack of love and moral commitment (Target, 1980).

The phenomenon has also created psychological and social instabilities among public servants in Cross River State which have resulted in lack of concentration in their places of work, absolutes break-up, rise in children's anti-social behaviour, increase in prostitution among married women and men and irresponsible behaviour by both married men and women. Neff and Karney (2002) have it that when couples have children, there is a decrease in satisfaction regarding the division of household. Marital dissatisfaction is expected as the marriage progress, as disillusion causes the initial feelings and optimism and happiness to fade. It is the disillusionment not the emergency of distress that seems to predict divorce and marital satisfaction.

Similarly Wenger (2005) suggested that the demand/withdrawal pattern's effect on marital satisfaction may be mediated by the perception of self-verification (feeling understood) in both husbands and wives. They feel less understood withdrawn by partners in time of conflict. Uebelacken, Courtange and Whisman (2003) affirmed that marital satisfaction as a function of depressive symptom, communication and "self-silencing" in women. They affirmed that depressive systems were associated with self-silencing and a pattern of communication characterized as wife-demand and husband withdraw. The negative correlation

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between depression symptoms and marital satisfaction was significant for women and not for men. However Ilive (2000) asserting Abraham Maslow's theory of human motivation and comparing it with psychological factors (depression, self-esteem, love/intimacy, power sharing and satisfaction) that bring about harmony in marriage home like truth, depression discourage wife and husband to work harmoniously together to achieve a better married life.

Based on this, the study was carried out to examined the influence of psychosocial factors and marital satisfaction among public servants in Cross River State with the view of providing empirical data that would guide couples, government of Nigeria and Cross River State, counsellors, social workers on appropriate measures and good conflict resolution strategies to adopt to handling contending issues in marriage.

II. Theoretical Background

Erikson (1963) psychosocial theory of human development, stress the unique psychological tasks of an individual development across the life span of man. He places more emphasis on the influence of sociological processes on the satisfaction of the individual; and had a closer look on the role of the family and the larger society in the development of the individual. The development process stretches through eight stages in life. He emphasizes that the passage through each stage necessitates resolution or crisis on conflict. Thus each of the stages represented by pairing of the most positive and most negative aspects of the crisis period. He then noted that the resolution of a crisis should be sufficiently made in order to equip the individual with skill needed for the next stage.

Apparently, this research is concerned with sixth and seventh stages of Erikson's psychosocial development theory. The sixth stage, intimacy versus isolation, emphasis the couples' social interaction which centres upon establishing reciprocal friendship, intimacy and familiar work relationships. Erikson hypothesized that the major problem facing man need couples is that of obtaining gratification from intimacy and solidarity with others rather than withdrawing from partnerships and becoming socially and personally isolated. Erikson (1987) claims that the resolution of this conflict has great significance in determining whether or not the adult's primary personal aim becomes that of bringing marital satisfaction and creating a shared household with divided labour. Hence, the adult who achieves gratification from reproducing and creating a satisfied home as well as helping others grow is equipped with the personal integrity necessary to face the final crisis of life.

Furthermore, psychological marriage relationship is also seen in the seventh stage; generativity versus self-absorption. Adult couples take active interest in guiding and taking care of family responsibilities. Hence, marital satisfaction can be achieved when couples show interest in family needs, take care of young ones and other related family functions.

The relevant of the theory to this work is on the basis that psychosocial development and marital satisfaction is seen by Erikson as an attempt to define, identify, by sharing intimate thoughts and feelings, the couples offer up their own identity, see it reflected in their love ones and better still able to clarify the self. In other words in marriage, individuals must develop the ability to form deep intimate relationship with each other in marital satisfaction centre on the ability to form deep emotional attachments, love and affection for one another for a successful marriage relationship.

III. Statement of The Problems

Family stability is crucial and important to every society and national development. The family experiences diverse issues of psychological distress, financial lack to care for the children, communication between parents and children and emotional problems and frustration; resulting in depression, health problem and unfulfilled marital life. Marriages or couples also experience similar frustrating experiences such as social assault from in-laws, absence of children in marriage and homes, that causes separation, lack of proper communication, and a breakdown in good marital relationship.

In Nigeria poor marital relationship is on the increase especially among workers including Cross River State public servants. All these constitute serious threat to social stability in the country. In Cross River State, where public servants are predominantly married men and women and the increasing conflict and crisis of related family issues extended to offices and working environment it becomes necessary to look on these issue and investigate possible ways to remedying the problem.

Hence, the core problem investigated in this study is to determine the relationship between factors of marriage stability in terms of psychological and social issues as they affect marital satisfaction among married public servants in Cross River State. Psychological factors were examine in it three dimensions of depression, affection and sexual activities. While social factors took the form of communication, time spent together and number of children.

a) Purpose of the study

The purpose of the study was to investigate the extent to which psychosocial factors influence marital satisfaction among public servants in Cross River State. Specifically the study is designed to determine: (a) the relationship between psychological factors (depression, affection and sexual activities) and marital satisfaction;

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also the relationship between social factors (communication, number of children, time spent together) on marital satisfaction among public servants in Cross River State.

b) Research hypotheses

The following hypotheses were tested at 0.05 level of significance (a) There is no significant relationship between psychological factors (depression, affection, sexual activities) and marital satisfaction among public servant. (b) Social factor (communication, number of children and time spent together) does not significantly relate to marital satisfaction.

c) Literature review

The literature review on the study was organized within the context of the main objectives.

IV. Psychological Factors and Marital Satisfaction

A lot of research have been carried out on depression and marital satisfaction (Beach, Katz, Kim & Brody, 2003); Beach & O'Leary, 1993; Whisman, 2001) in a longitudinal study on marital satisfaction and depressive symptoms found pre-marital relationship satisfaction was able to predict level of depressive symptoms after 15 months of marriage. They found that nearly 20% of the variance in depressive symptoms of 18 months marriage could be attributed to marital satisfaction. Whisman and Bruce (1999) found that the presence of marital dissatisfaction doubled the one year risk for major depression. Also, the dissatisfied spouses were nearly three time more likely than non dissatisfied spouse to develop a major depression episode. In fact, they estimated that if marital dissatisfaction could be eliminated 20-30% new occurrences of depression could be eliminated.

Similarly in a study carried out by Plechaty, Courturiers, Cote and Roy (1996) hypothesized that spouses' personality and living conditions as a couple, namely: intimacy, affection, would be the most frequent sources of satisfaction or dissatisfaction accounting for much relationship. Therefore, the major domain of spouses' personality and living issue is affection which also has major influence on marital satisfaction.

Accordingly, Donnely (1993) in a study analyzed sex with marriage more specifically. She interviewed 6,029 married people to determined which factors are related to sexual inactive marriage are less happy and satisfying than those with sexual activity. Sexual intercourse was not the only measure of sexual activity because she feels that couples can still be involved sexually without having intercourse. She measure nineteen independent variables including life satisfaction, religion fundamentalism, gender role traditionally, individualism, marital interaction variables and marital happiness. She found that marital happens and shared activity are inversely correlated with probability of separation and sexual inactivity. In other words the lower the marital happiness and shared activity, the greater the chance of sexual inactivity and separation.

Social factors and marital satisfaction on these couples in their early relationships often describe their ability to talk endlessly. But over time, communication involves much more than generating on interesting dialogue. Communication becomes a matter of listening to one another's thoughts, ideas, feelings and opinions. However, communication involves trust, a desire to confide, and an ability to express one's self without fear of harsh judgement. Hence Yamaguchi (2006) classified determinants of marital satisfaction, conducted a preliminary analysis concluding that for both employed wives and full time home makers, marital satisfaction was greatly affected by whether or not they consider main home activities – "relaxing, house work and child rearing, hobbies, recreation and sports on holidays, dining and relaxing on weekdays as valuable time spent with their husbands. He further, reported based on a statistical analysis of a panel survey in which data for 1,117 married women were correlated overtime, work life balance factors such as "main home activities spent with husband (the five activities mention above), amount of conversation between wife and husband on weekdays and proportion of the husband's share in child rearing, had a significant positive effect on marital satisfaction. On the other hand, factors such as duration of marriage, birth of the first child and husband's unemployment had a negative impact.

On the issue of number of children in a marriage, Castallo (1962) in Arah (2004) indicated procreation and child rearing are foundations of marriage in our society. Most parents agreed that the number of children they have provided many of the happiest and mood satisfying experiences in their life time. The same parents indicate that children are the central problems that create tension between a man and wife. Also in a study by Bray (1987) in Arah (2004) focused on marital satisfaction, family processes and parenting practices of couples in early marriages. Participants were 31 step father families and 33 non divorced families, all of which have children between 6-9 years. However, observation of marital adjustment indicated that step-family couples were more negative and coercive and exhibited poor communication skill than non divorced couples. Result indicated that better marital satisfaction is more likely to occur in step-families with small number of children, while the reverse was the case with non-divorced families. Also Akpan (2005) maintained that for communication to be effective in marriage home, the following hindrances to good marital communication must be avoided, fear of disagreement, lack of love, inappropriate method of

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initiating discussion, personal biases, poor listening habit, isolation and lack of trust. The extent to which husband and wife distrust each other affects the quality of decisions taken in the family.

V. Methodology

The researcher adopted ex-post facto design for this study. The target population of the study comprises all married couples in Nigeria. The accessible population consist of all married public servant in Cross River State. These include married secondary school teachers, primary school teachers, and workers in the various ministries, boards, commissions, agencies and higher institutions of learning. The stratified and simple random sampling techniques were adopted in the selection of subjects for the study. At the first stage the population was stratified into five strata – primary school teachers, secondary school teachers, workers in ministries, workers in commissions, boards and agencies, and staff in higher institutions of learning.

The research instrument which was the questionnaire comprises 20 items on psychosocial factors and 20 items on marital satisfaction. In terms of validity, five experts in educational measurement, research and evaluation affirmed that the instrument was suitable for measuring what it was purported to measure. Using the split-half, the reliability index of the instrument ranged from 0.88 to 0.94. Data was collected through the use of questionnaire from the sample public offices (ministry) through the assistance of four teachers and two (2) field research assistance employed. All the 1,300 copies of the questionnaire were retrieved and were all completed appropriately.

The independent variable was psychological factors with the dimensions while the dependent variable is marital satisfaction. The mean (x) and standard deviation (SD) of the major variables were calculated and presented as shown below in table one

Table 1 : Mean and standard deviation of variables

Variables	X	SD
Depression	4.37	.59
Affection	10.17	2.39
Sexual activities	9.83	2.11
Time spent together	10.46	3.36
Communication	10.40	2.37
Self-esteem	15.06	3.14
Love/intimacy	30.13	4.35
Power sharing	12.40	4.07
Total marital satisfaction	53.22	7.88

Table 1 shows the mean and standard deviation of the major variables of the study

Results

Hypothesis 1

There is no significant relationship between psychological factors (depression, affection and sexual activities) and marital satisfaction among public servants. The independent variable was psychological factors with three dimension, while the dependent variable is marital satisfaction. To test this hypothesis

scores on each of the categories of psychological factors were correlated with their scores on marital satisfaction using Pearson product moment correlation analysis. The result of the analysis is presented in Table 2.

Table 2 : Pearson product moment correlation analysis of the relationship between psychological factors and marital satisfaction among public servants (N = 1300)

Variables	∑x ∑y	∑y² ∑y	∑xy	r-value
Depression X_1	5681	16373		
Self-esteem y_1	19578	27534	104953	0.28*
Love/ intimacy y^2	39169	29747	105786	-0.45*
Power sharing y^3	16133	28648	105998	0.63*
Total satisfaction y^4	69186	85463	106125	-0,76*
Affection x_2	13221	15464		
Self-esteem y_1	19578	27534	135744	-0.36

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Love/ intimacy y_2	39169	29747	147946	-0.68
Power sharing y_3	16133	28648	147879	-0.11
Total satisfaction y_4	69186	85463	150125	-0.85*
Sexual activities X_3	12779	15393		
Self-esteem y_1	19578	27534	145756	-0.27
Love/ intimacy y_2	39169	29747	146698	-0.67
Power sharing y_3	16133	28648	146577	-0.087
Total satisfaction y_4	69186	85443	150992	-0.84*

**Significant at ,05 level, critical r= .062, df= 1298*

The result in Table 2 indicates that the calculated r-values for depression in terms of self-esteem (0.28), Love/intimacy (-0.45) power sharing (0.63), total satisfaction (-0.76); also for affection in terms of self- esteem (-0.36), Love/ intimacy (0.68) power sharing (-0.11), total satisfaction (-0.85) and sexual activities in terms of self- esteem (-0.27), Love/ intimacy (-0.67), power sharing (-0.087), total satisfaction (-0.84) are each higher than the critical r-value of .062 at .05 level of significance with 1298 degrees of freedom. With this result the null hypothesis was rejected. This result therefore implies that, psychological factors such as depression, affection and sexual activities significantly relate with marital satisfaction among civil servant in Cross River State. The negative correlation coefficient implies that the relationship between the variables is low. That is as the level of depression, affection and sexual activities increases, marital satisfaction decreases and vice verse.

Hypothesis 2

There is no significant relationship between social factors (communication, time spent together and number of children) and marital satisfaction among civil servant.

The independent variable involved in this hypothesis was "social factors" with three dimensions (No of children communication and time spend together); while the dependent variable was marital satisfaction. Pearson product moment correlation analysis was employed to test this hypothesis. The result of the analysis is presented in Table 3.

Table 3 : Pearson product moment correlation analysis of the relationship between social factors and marital satisfaction among public servants (N = 1300)

Variables	∑X ∑Y	∑Y² ∑Y	∑XY	r-value
Communication X_1	13520	28457		
Self-esteem y_1	19578	27534	153635	-0.29
Love/ intimacy y_2	39169	29747	167452	-0.67
Power sharing y_3	16133	28648	149857	-0.13
Total satisfaction y_4	69186	85463	163464	-0,87
Time spent together X_2	13598	28734		
Self-esteem y_1	19578	27534	154344	-0.29
Love/ intimacy y_2	39169	29747	166975	-0.67
Power sharing y_3	16133	28648	149757	-0.14
Total satisfaction y_4	69186	85463	168247	-0.87

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No of children X_3	5694	7694		
Self-esteem y_1	19578	27534	146768	0.90
Love/ intimacy y_2	39169	29747	147855	-0.17
Power sharing y_3	16133	28648	108478	0,70
Total satisfaction y_4	69186	85463	148472	-0.62

**Significant at .05 level, critical r = .062, df = 1298*

The result in Table 8 shows that the calculated r - values for communication in terms of self- esteem (-0.29), Love/ intimacy (-0.67), power sharing (-0,13), total satisfaction (-0.87); time spent together also in terms of self- esteem (-0.29), Love/ intimacy (-0.67), power sharing (-0,14), total satisfaction (-0.87); and number of children in terms of self-esteem (0.90), Love/ intimacy (-0.17), power sharing (0.70), total satisfaction (-0.62); are each higher than the critical r-value of .062 at .05 level of significance with 1298 degrees of freedom.

With this result the null hypothesis was rejected. This result therefore, means that, social factors such as communication, time spent, together and number of children significantly relate with marital satisfaction among civil servant in Cross River State. The negative correlation coefficient implies that the relationship between the variables is indirect. That is as the level of communication; time spent together and number of children increases, marital satisfaction decreases and vice verse.

VI. Discussion

The result of this hypothesis revealed that psychological factors such as depression, affection and sexual activities significantly relate to marital satisfaction among public servant. The findings was in line with the views of Beach, Katz, Kim & Brody, 2003; Beach & O'Leary, 1993; Whisman, 2001) they, after looking at marital satisfaction and depressive symptoms found that pre-marital relationship satisfaction was able to predict level of depressive symptom after 5 months of marriage. They found that nearly 20% of the variance in depressive symptoms of 18 months of marriage could be attributed to marital satisfaction. In the same line, Whisman and Bruce (1999) found that the presence of marital dissatisfaction doubled the one year risk for major depression. And that, dissatisfied spouses were nearly three times more likely than non dissatisfied spouses to develop a major depression episode. In fact they estimated that if marital dissatisfaction could be eliminated 20-30% new occurrences of depression could be eliminated. Thus depression as a psychological factor affect the love, affection and sex activities of the couples which in many cases had resulted to marital dissatisfaction among couples creating untold problems and disharmony in homes.

The result of the study on social factors and marital satisfaction was in line with the views of Yamaguchi (2006) posted that, marital satisfaction among employed wives and marital satisfaction was greatly affected by whether or not they considered their main home activities – relaxing, house work and child rearing, hobbies, recreation, and sports on holidays, dinning and relaxing on week days – as valuable time spent with their husbands. He further reported based on a statistical analysis of a panel survey in which data for 1,117 married women were correlated overtime, work life balance factors such as "main home activities spent with husband (the five activities mention above) amount of conversation between wife and husband on weekdays and proportion of husband share in child rearing had a significant positive effect on marital satisfaction. On the other hand factors such as duration of marriage, birth of first child and husband's unemployment had a negative impact. In line with this Arah (2004) seeking to answer the questions on how time spent together relate to marital satisfaction pointed out that time spent together by spouses bridges the gap for distrust. The more closer you are, the more you will love each other. couples should desire to be together always and avoid being closer to anyone else especially the opposite sex.

VII. Conclusion

Based on the findings and results of this study, it was concluded that psychological factors such as depression, affection and sexual activities significantly relate with marital satisfaction among public servants. The level of marital satisfaction among public servants in Cross River is significantly high. Social factors such as number of children, communication and time spent together significantly relate with marital satisfaction among public servant. In marriage couples are required to be careful in the way and manner they handle their marriage lives in order to satisfy each other in their relationship. Thus marital satisfaction can only be possible when these factors are adherently maintained. This therefore calls for the need for public servant awareness creation on the influence of these factors in marriages.

VIII. Recommendations

The following counselling recommendations were made base on the findings of the study, marriage counselling, workshops, symposia, conferences should

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be organized regularly for public servants on psychological factors on marital satisfaction.

More employment opportunities should be opened by government for married couples who lost their job. By doing, this, both will take active part in economic and social commitments of the family.

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