



**PSYCHOSOCIAL SKILLS AND MARITAL SATISFACTION AMONG SENIOR
SECONDARY SCHOOL TEACHERS IN AHOADA WEST LOCAL
GOVERNMENT AREA OF RIVERS STATE: COUNSELLING PERSPECTIVE**

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Abstract

This study examined psychosocial skills and marital satisfaction among teachers in Ahoada West Local Government Area of Rivers State. Correlational research design was adopted for the study. Three research questions and three hypotheses guided the study. The population of the study consisted of all the married senior secondary school teachers in Ahoada West local government areas of Rivers State. The population estimated at 262. The sample consisted of 200 public secondary school teachers using the simple random sampling technique. Two instruments for data collection for the study was developed titled “Teachers’ Psychosocial Skills Inventory” (TPSI) and “Teachers’ Marital Satisfaction Inventory” (TMSI)”. The instruments were validated and tested for reliability, with reliability indices of TPSI ($r=0.70$) and TMSI ($r=0.74$) determined through test-retest. Pearson Product Moment Correlation was used to answer all the research questions and also used to test all the hypotheses at the 0.05 level of significance. The findings of the study showed that; there was significant strong positive relationship between effective communication and marital satisfaction, there was a strong significant relationship between social intelligence and marital satisfaction and there was a strong significant relationship between self-assertiveness and marital satisfaction among senior secondary school teachers in Ahoada West Local Government Area of Rivers State. Based on these findings, the researcher made some recommendations such as; couples

should maintain an effective communication lifestyle to create room for openness and mutual understanding and trust, partners should demonstrate self-assertiveness in such a way that will promote love and marital satisfaction.

Key Words: Psychosocial Skills, Marital Satisfaction, Social Intelligence, Self-Assertiveness

Introduction

Marriage is something profoundly exciting, the biggest event in the average human being's life (Pathan, 2015). It is a process by which two people make their relationship public, official, and permanent. Marriage is defined differently, and by different entities, based on cultural, religious and personal factors. The purpose of marriage include: companionship, enjoyment, completeness, fruitfulness, protection. If both parties perceptively accusatively and understand clearly their concept of marriage, things go smoothly and good understanding takes place but when there are difference in their concepts and perceptions, problems are likely to occur (Amadi & Amadi, 2014;).

Conflict in marriage is inevitable, whenever two people get together, eventually some of the belief system and personal habits of one will annoy the other regardless of the degree of love. In healthy relationships, couples learn to accept and resolve conflict. The following are some of the causes of marital instability: social incompatibility of marriage partners, sexual incompatibility, extended family affairs/issues or parental relations influence, extreme sexual desire, poor marital communication, unwholesome social behaviour, impotency on either of the spouses, poverty and economic problem, Lack of trust and personal lapses.

(Pathan, 2015).

Marital satisfaction is a condition in which a married couple feels happy and satisfied with each other. Yung in Ibe (2021) mentioned some components of marital satisfaction such as understanding the goals of life, spouse's moral attitude, having a relationship with each other, appreciating and supporting one another. Stanley, Markman and Whitton (2012) believed that the couples who have a strong sense of belonging and

dependency are more acquired with marital satisfaction. They concluded that the highest amount of satisfaction is among the spouses who are compatible with each other concerning philosophy of life, their perceptions of sexual satisfaction, the amount of time they spent with each other and how they spend leisure time with each other.

Social skills can be effectively utilized in solving marital problems. Effective communication between spouses, which reveals the level of interaction between spouses makes it possible for them to express their views freely, eliminate fear of the unknown and destroy suspicion of the spouse. Stanley et al. (2012) is of the opinion that communication in marital relationship regulates the extent to which each person's interaction can yield his or her own objectives for the sake of another. Forgiveness as a social skill help couples to handle negative emotive emotions. Lack of forgiveness can lead to many health issues such as high blood pressure, heath attack, anxiety and depression. It can equally lead to marital dissatisfaction. Forgiveness is an essential component of successful marital relationship. Finally, social intelligence which is the ability and capacity to learn from the success and failures of other couples within ones social settings and apply greater measures to build a satisfactory marital relationship. The couples endeavor to know their strengths, weaknesses and seek to avoid unnecessary mistakes that may lead to marital problem (Stanley et al., 2012).

Conceptual Clarification/Review

Psychosocial Skills

Psychosocial skills are psychological and social skills that can be applied in marriage to achieve marital satisfaction. The improper use of these skills can also lead to marital crises.

Self-Assertiveness: This is an adaptive style of communication in which individuals express their feelings and needs directly, but maintaining respect for others. Gresham in Ibe (2021) argued that self-assertiveness are observable behaviours that meets social norms in both intrapersonal and interpersonal relationship that help a person to create adequate interaction with oneself and with social environment such as marriage institution. Lepaite (2013) asserted that self-assertiveness means being

honest about your feelings, your opinions or even your rights. But not being aggressive in which your partner may feel threatened or disrespected. Being aggressive may result in feeling like a bully and losing important relationships. He argued further that being self-assertive also does not mean being passive in which you are too intimidated to say what you want. Such scenero in marriage will often lead to marital dissatisfaction. Lepaite (2013) believed that positive self-assertiveness is a social competence which produced ability to apply social skills of personal relationship, communication, cooperation in building a successful marriage.

Ways to Increase Self-Assertiveness Skills

1. Practice open expression of your feelings to your partner.
2. Communicate your views honestly to your partner.
3. Demonstrate self-control and respect for the other partner.
4. Keep your rights in mind while respecting the views of your partner.
5. Be specific in your statements.
6. Try to go through the source of conflict or misunderstanding.
7. Use "I" statements to take responsibility for your own feelings.

Social Intelligence

Jovaisa (2013) defined social intelligence as the capacity to know oneself and to know others. Social intelligence is the capacity to communicate and form relationship with empathy and assertiveness. It comes from knowing yourself and exercising proper emotional management. Jovaisa (2013) maintained that social intelligence is a social skill which requires perfect way of relationship performance based on knowledge, abilities and masterful application of communication skills in different situations and maintaining peaceful relationship.

Social intelligence in marriage when beautifully fashioned with emotional intelligence leads to marital satisfaction (Saeedifard, Hajrezael & Jahanbazi, 2015). Social intelligence skills should kick in along emotional intelligence in every interaction which covers tasks like expression, dialogue, listening, reconciliation, and learning through communication with your partner.

Marital Satisfaction

Marriage is a universally accepted practice. Its understanding varies in every context based on the social and religious practice of the society. Marriage is the relationship between two people who are married or who have been joined together as husband and wife according to the law, custom, or church demand. Marriage historically is God's idea and an institution ordained by God. Suleyiman and Zewdu (2018) noted that the union of a man and woman in marriage is a mystery because it conceals, as in a parable, a truth about Christ and the Church.

Tramilton in Ibe (2021), marital satisfaction is the degree to which an individual's needs, expectations, and desires are being satisfied in their marriage; a subjective condition which can only be described by the individual spouse; an individual's personal evaluation of their marriage overall, not a quality of a relationship, a measurement of a relationship, or predictive of a relationship success. Saeedifard et al. (2015) defined marital satisfaction as a correspondence between existing and expected situation. According to this definition, marital satisfaction will be established when the existing situation in marital relationship is in agreement with the partner's expected situation. Marital satisfaction is tangible feelings of happiness, experienced satisfaction and pleasure by either partner considering all aspects of their marriage. Marital satisfaction is defined as a blooming mental emotion of mutual satisfaction and experienced enjoyment. Marital satisfaction is, in fact, a positive attitude and emotion for wife and husband.

Statement of the Problem

The union called marriage was designed for happiness, satisfaction, stability, procreation, continuity, fulfillment and other possible expectations. Indeed marriage is meant to be attractive, intimate, exciting and a rewarding relationship, however, some of these expectations are realistic only in some marriages due to marital breakdown. In many instances marriage has turned out to be, an institution full of disagreements, quarrels and lacking of trust, etc; which leads to high rate of marital desertion, separations, single parenting or even divorce. Marital conflict leads to depressive symptom, "self-silencing" whereby, husband

and wife withdrawal from each other, lack of love/intimacy and low state of marital satisfaction. This is contrary to the main objective of marriage, which is to live as man and woman until death separates each other.

The question is what can be done to maintain marital satisfaction and stability? The adoption of certain psychosocial skills could create better marital relationship. It is based on this that the study seeks to investigate the relationship between psychosocial skills and marital satisfaction among senior secondary school teachers in Ahoada West Local Government Area of Rivers State.

Aim and Objectives of the Study

The study investigated psychosocial skills and marital satisfaction among married senior secondary school teachers in Ahoada Local Government Area of Rivers State. Specifically, the objectives of the study are as follows:

1. Examine the relationship between effective communication and marital satisfaction among married senior secondary school teachers in Ahoada West Local Government Area of Rivers State.
2. Investigate the relationship between self-assertiveness and marital satisfaction among married senior secondary school teachers in Ahoada West Local Government Area of Rivers State.
3. Find out the relationship between social intelligence and marital satisfaction among married senior secondary school teachers in Ahoada West Local Government Area of Rivers State.

Research Questions

The following research questions guided the study:

1. To what extent does effective communication relate to marital satisfaction among married senior secondary school teachers in Ahoada West Local Government Area of Rivers State?
2. To what extent does self-assertiveness relate to marital satisfaction among married senior secondary school teachers in Ahoada West Local Government Area of Rivers State?
3. To what extent does social intelligence relate to marital satisfaction among married teachers in Ahoada West Local Government Area of Rivers State?

Hypotheses

The following hypotheses testable at 0.5 level of significance guided the study:

- Ho₁: There is no significant relationship between effective communication and marital satisfaction among senior secondary school teachers in Ahoada West Local Government Area of Rivers State.
- Ho₂: There is no significant relationship between self-assertiveness and marital satisfaction among senior secondary school teachers in Ahoada West Local Government Area of Rivers State.
- Ho₃: There is no significant relationship between social intelligence and marital satisfaction among senior secondary school teachers in Ahoada West Local Government Area of Ahoada State.

Methodology

The study adopted the correlational research design. This is because the researcher is interested in finding out the relationship between psychosocial skills and marital satisfaction among senior secondary school teachers in Ahoada Local Government Area of Rivers State. Onunkwo in Ogidi (2018) defined correlation as that statistical tool used to determine the level of relationship between two variables, and among three or more variables.

The population of the study consisted of all the married senior secondary school teachers in Ahoada Local Government Area of Rivers State. The population is estimated at 262 (Source: Post Primary School Board, Port Harcourt, 2022).

A sample size of 200 (80 men and 120 women) married teachers was used for the study. The purposive sampling technique was used to select the sample size. The simple random sampling was used because it provided equal opportunity for all participants in the group to be selected. There are 10 public secondary schools (5 from Engenni and 5 from Ekpeye), and from each school twenty teachers was selected giving us a total of 200 respondents.

The instrument titled "Psychosocial Skills and Marital Satisfaction Inventory" (PSMSI) was used to collect data. It consisted of two sections; A

and B. Section A comprised personal information such as age, length of marriage, number of children and type of occupation. Section B is further divided into two (2) “Teachers’ Psychosocial Skill Inventory” (TPSI) and “Teachers’ Marital Satisfaction Inventory” (TMSI). TPSI and TMSI contained 20 items each designed to elicit responses on psychosocial skills and marital satisfaction among senior secondary school teachers in Ahoada West Local Government Area of Rivers State. PSMSI was responded on a four (4) point Likert modified type scale of Strongly Agree (SA) = 4, Agree (A) = 3, Disagree (D) = 2, and Strongly Disagree (SD) = 1.

The instrument was tested for reliability through a test-retest method, with a reliability indices of TPSI ($r=0.70$) and TMSI ($r=0.74$), ascertained through the Pearson Product Moment Correlation (PPMC) statistic.

The copies of the questionnaire were administered to the teachers and retrieved from the respondents at their various schools across the 10 selected schools used for the study. The total of 200 copies of the questionnaire administered and 200 copies retrieved were properly filled, and thus used for further analysis.

The Pearson Product Moment Correlation was used to answer all the research questions as well as testing all the hypotheses. The analysis of the hypotheses was tested for statistical significance at 0.05 alpha level.

Results

Research Question One

To what extent does effective communication relate to marital satisfaction among married teachers in Ahoada West Local Government Area of Rivers State?

Hypothesis One

There is no significant relationship between effective communication and marital satisfaction among married senior secondary school teachers in Ahoada West Local Government Area of Rivers State.

Table 1: PPMC Analysis (r) of the Relationship between Effective Communication and Marital Satisfaction among Married Senior Secondary School Teachers in Ahoada West Local Government Area of Rivers State

Descriptive Statistics

A	Mean	Std. Deviation	N
Effective Communication	3.4533	.46579	200
Marital Satisfaction	3.1270	.73892	200

Correlations

B		Effective Communication	Marital Satisfaction
Effective Communication	Pearson Correlation	1	.676**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	200	200
Marital Satisfaction	Pearson Correlation	.676**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	200	200
**Significant at P < 0.05, df = 198, r-crit = 0.138			

Table 1A showed the summary of mean and standard deviation on the extent to which effective communication relate with marital satisfaction among married senior secondary school teachers in Ahoada West Local Government Area of Rivers State. The grand mean for effective communication was 3.45(SD=0.47) approximately and that of marital satisfaction was 3.13(SD=0.74) respectively which indicate a high extent to which effective communication relate with marital satisfaction among married senior secondary school teachers in Ahoada West Local Government Area of Rivers State.

Table 1B introduced results on the examined speculation as measured by way of PPMC (r-value) to test the value or in any other case of the relationship between effective communication and marital satisfaction among married senior secondary school teachers in Ahoada West Local

Government Area of Rivers State. The result showed the value of the calculated coefficient of $r = 0.676$ with degree of freedom of 198 which is higher than the critical r -value of 0.138 at 0.05 level of significance. Thus, the null hypothesis (H_{01}) is rejected. The educational implication of this analysis is that there is a strong and positive significant relationship between effective communication and marital satisfaction among married senior secondary school teachers in Ahoada West Local Government Area of Rivers State.

Research Question Two

To what extent does self-assertiveness relate to marital satisfaction among married senior secondary school teachers in Ahoada West Local Government Area of Rivers State?

Hypothesis Two

There is no significant relationship between self-assertiveness and marital satisfaction among married senior secondary school teachers in Ahoada West Local Government Area of River State.

Table 4.5: PPMC Analysis (r) of the Relationship between Self-assertiveness and Marital Satisfaction among Married Senior Secondary School Teachers in Ahoada West Local Government Area of Rivers State

Descriptive Statistics

A	Mean	Std. Deviation	N
Self-assertiveness	3.0483	.57942	200
Marital Satisfaction	3.1270	.73892	200

Correlations

		Self-assertiveness	Marital Satisfaction
Self-assertiveness	Pearson Correlation	1	.475**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000

	N	200	200
Marital Satisfaction	Pearson Correlation	.475**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	200	200
* Significant at $P < 0.05$, $df = 198$, $r\text{-crit} = 0.138$			

Table 2A showed the summary of mean and standard deviation on the extent to which self-assertiveness relate to marital satisfaction among married senior secondary school teachers in Ahoada West Local Government Area of Rivers State. The grand mean for self-assertiveness is 3.05(SD=0.58) approximately and that of marital satisfaction is 3.13(SD=0.74) respectively which indicated a high extent self-assertiveness relate with marital satisfaction.

Table 2B introduced results on the examined speculation as measured by way of PPMC (r-value) to test the value or in any other case of the relationship between self-assertiveness and marital satisfaction among married senior secondary school teachers in Ahoada West Local Government Area of Rivers State. The result showed the value of the calculated coefficient of $r = 0.475$ with degree of freedom of 198 which is higher than the critical r-value of 0.138 at 0.05 level of significance. Thus, the null hypothesis (H_0) is rejected. The educational implication of this analysis is that there is a moderate and positive significant relationship between self-assertiveness and marital satisfaction among married senior secondary school teachers in Ahoada West Local Government Area of Rivers State.

Research Question Three

To what extent does social intelligence relate to marital satisfaction among married senior secondary school teachers in Ahoada West Local Government Area of Rivers State?

Hypothesis Three

There is no significant relationship between social intelligence and marital satisfaction among married senior secondary school teachers Ahoada West Local Government Area of Rivers State.

Table 3: PPMC Analysis (r) of the Relationship between Social Intelligence and Marital Satisfaction among Married Senior Secondary School Teachers in Ahoada West Local Government Area of Rivers State

Descriptive Statistics

A	Mean	Std. Deviation	N
Social Intelligence	3.3850	.49857	200
Marital Satisfaction	3.1270	.73892	200

Correlations

		Social Intelligence	Marital Satisfaction
Social Intelligence	Pearson Correlation	1	.636**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	200	200
Marital Satisfaction	Pearson Correlation	.636**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	200	200

* Significant at P < 0.05, df = 198, r-crit = 0.138

Table 3A showed the summary of mean and standard deviation on the extent to which social intelligence relate to marital satisfaction among married teachers in Ahoada West Local Government Area of Rivers State. The grand mean for social intelligence was 3.39(SD=0.499) approximately and that of marital satisfaction was 3.13(SD=0.74) respectively which indicate a high extent to which social intelligence relate with marital satisfaction.

Table 3B showed the results on the examined speculation as measured by way of PPMC (r-value) to test the value or in any other case of the relationship between social intelligence and marital satisfaction among married senior secondary school teachers in Ahoada Local Government

Area of Rivers State. The result showed the value of the calculated coefficient of $r = 0.636$ with degree of freedom of 198 which is higher than the critical r -value of 0.138 at 0.05 level of significance. Thus, the null hypothesis (H_{04}) was rejected. The educational implication of this analysis is that there is a strong and positive significant relationship between social intelligence and marital satisfaction among married senior secondary school teachers Ahoada West Local Government Area of Rivers State.

Discussion of Findings

Effective Communication and Marital Satisfaction among Married Senior Secondary School Teachers in Ahoada West Local Government Area of Rivers State

The purpose of this study is to examine the above. This was verified by research question one and tested with hypothesis one. Items 1-5 on the B part of the questionnaire were carefully constructed to answer this question. The grand mean for effective communication and marital satisfaction stood at [3.45(SD=0.47) & 3.13(SD=0.74)] from table 4.4A. The result from table 4.4B shows that the relationship between effective communication and marital satisfaction ($r(198) = 0.676$; critical r -value = 0.138; $p < .001$) is positively strong and not significant at .05 alpha level rather, is significant at .01 alpha level. The null hypothesis (H_{01}) was rejected at .05 alpha level. This implies that there is a positively strong and significant relationship between effective communication and marital satisfaction among married senior secondary school teachers in Ahoada West Local Government Area of Rivers State.

This study finding is in agreement with the finding of Esere, Yusuf and Omotosho (2015) that investigated the influence of spousal communication on marital stability: implications for conducive home environment. Their finding revealed that there was significant difference in the perception of married adults on the influence of spousal communication on marital stability on the basis of gender and length of years in marriage. This present finding is also in line with the finding of Sarwatay and Divatia (2016) that couples who had strong interpersonal communication had better understanding on the use of

control pills and planned parenthood decisions than those with poor interpersonal communication.

Self-assertiveness and Marital Satisfaction among Married Senior Secondary School Teachers Ahoada Local Government Area of Rivers State

This concept was verified by research question two and tested with hypothesis two. Items 6-10 on the B part of the questionnaire were carefully constructed to answer this question. The grand mean for self-assertiveness and marital satisfaction stood at [3.05(SD=0.58) & 3.13(SD=0.74)] from table 4.5A. The result from table 4.5B shows that the relationship between self-assertiveness and marital satisfaction ($r(198) = 0.475$; critical r -value = 0.138; $p < .001$) is positively strong and not significant at .05 alpha level rather, is significant at .01 alpha level. The null hypothesis (H_{02}) was rejected at .05 alpha level. This implies that there is a positively moderate and significant relationship between self-assertiveness and marital satisfaction among married senior secondary school teachers in Ahoada Local Government Area of Rivers State.

This study finding is in agreement with the finding of Animasahum and Fatile (2012) that investigated the effects of assertiveness training and marital communication skills in enhancing marital satisfaction among Baptist couples in Lagos State, Nigeria. The study revealed that there was a significant main effect of treatment on marital satisfaction. The finding of this present study is also in line with the finding of Villa and Del-Prette (2013) that self-assertiveness was more strongly correlated to husbands' marital satisfaction followed by assertive conversation and expressiveness/empathy. This study finding is equally in accord with the finding of Moss et al (2021) that there was a significant relationship between self-assertiveness and marital satisfaction.

Social Intelligence and Marital Satisfaction among Married Senior Secondary School Teachers Ahoada West Local Government Area of River State

This concept was verified by research question four and tested with hypothesis four. Items 11-16 on the B part of the questionnaire were

carefully constructed to answer this question. The grand mean for social intelligence and marital satisfaction stood at [3.39(SD=0.499) & 3.13(SD=0.74)] from table 4.7A. The result from table 4.7B shows that the relationship between social intelligence and marital satisfaction ($r(198) = 0.636$; critical r -value = 0.138; $p < .001$) is positively strong and not significant at .05 alpha level rather, is significant at .01 alpha level. The null hypothesis (H_{04}) was rejected at .05 alpha level. This implies that there is a positively strong and significant relationship between social intelligence and marital satisfaction among married senior secondary school teachers in Ahoada West Local Government Area of Rivers State.

This study finding is in line with the finding of Mirzadah and Fallahchai (2012) that examined the relationship between social intelligence and marital satisfaction. The finding of the study revealed that there was a significant positive relationship between marital satisfaction and social intelligence. The finding of this current study is also in line with the finding of Fincham and Beach in Okolo (2021) that there is a significant relationship between social intelligence and marital satisfaction. This study finding is again in agreement with the finding of Bean in Okolo (2021) that marital instability was positively correlated with spouses' or partners negative social behaviours.

Conclusion

The study investigated psychosocial skills and marital satisfaction among married senior secondary school teachers in Ahoada West Local Government Area of Rivers State. However, the findings of the study indicated that among the psychosocial variables studied; effective communication, self-assertiveness and social intelligence was revealed to have very strong correlation with marital satisfaction among married teachers (men and women) in Orsu Local Government Area of Imo State. These results could be tied to the fact that marital satisfaction and the foregoing psychosocial skills are prominent and more prevalent with family and marriage related issues. As such, steps ought to be taken to mitigate the prevalent nature of the psychosocial skills under review. Furthermore, from the result of the study, it was deduced that effective communication and social intelligence have a strong relationship with

marital satisfaction. These results could be attributed to the fact that the psychosocial skills, though prominent among married couple but not prevalent. This could be because the variables are more of behavioural tendencies than psychological in nature, and hence, are shaped by individual difference.

Lastly, the result of the study indicated that self-assertiveness has a moderate correlation with marital satisfaction which could lead to marital crisis. These results could both be attributed to the impact self-assertiveness among senior secondary school male and female teachers, in Ahoada West Local Government Area of Rivers State.

Based on the findings of this study, it can be concluded that marital satisfaction is a joint efforts of both the husband and the wife which leads to happiness and created a conducive environment for the husband, wife, and the children.

Implication for Counselling

1. Marriage counsellors should organize seminars, workshop and lectures on the negative implications of marital crisis on the family and society at large while emphasizing on the gains of marital satisfaction.
2. Marriage counsellors should teach married couples on management intervention strategies (skills that could be employed by married couples to reduce marital crisis) such as increase friendship and closeness, forgiveness, adequate communication and love.
3. Counsellors should engage in advocacy with the government to seek ways of reducing the work related tasks that are assigned to married couples especially married women.

Recommendations

Considering the findings, discussion and conclusions of this study, the following recommendations are made:

1. Couples should maintain a very good communication lifestyle to create room for openness and mutual understanding to avoid marital crisis and maintain marital satisfaction.

2. Partners should demonstrate self-assertiveness in such a way that should promote love and marital satisfaction. Partners should have honest views of each other that would ignite the emotions that first brought them together to be married.
3. Married couples should learn to have self-management and display rational behaviours that could avoid marital crisis.
4. Couple should always display great social intelligence of their partner. This will create strong bound and successful marriage because it prevents the insurgence of marital conflict.

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