

Emotional Intelligence as Correlates of Marital Stability among Married Teachers in Sokoto Metropolis, Sokoto State, Nigeria

***¹Ramatu Muhammad Arzika, ²N. A. Katami and ³H.S. Abubakar**

^{*1,2&3}Department of Counselling Psychology, Faculty of Education, Sokoto State University, Sokoto, Nigeria **Email:**

^{*1,2&3}Department of Educational Management, Faculty of Education, Sokoto State University, Sokoto, Nigeria **Email:**

^{*1,2&3}Department of Educational Foundations, Usmanu Danfodiyo University Sokoto, Sokoto, Nigeria **Email:**

Abstract

This study examined Emotional Intelligence as correlates of marital stability among married teachers in Sokoto State. Two research questions corresponding with two objectives and two hypotheses were raised. The design adapted for the study was Descriptive research design. A sample size of three hundred and thirty-three (333) participants was drawn from a population of 2372 married teachers. The instrument used for data collection was adapted questionnaire by Tambawal (2021) titled: Emotional Intelligence, Self-esteem, Communication Style and Marital Success Questionnaire (EISECMSQ). The hypothesis was tested using Pearson Product Moment Correlation, the result obtained shows that there was significant high positive relationship between Empathy and Marital Stability among married teachers in senior secondary schools in Sokoto metropolis. Also, there was significant moderate positive relationship between Social Skills and Marital Stability among married teachers in senior secondary schools in Sokoto metropolis. The study recommended that, Schools and counselling services should provide emotional intelligence training to help married teachers develop self-awareness, empathy, and effective communication skills.

Keywords: Emotional Intelligence & Marital Stability

Introduction

Marriage is a multiplex convention that plays very important role in people's lives, which impact their happiness and overall wellbeing. Marriage is a social and legal union between two people or more that is man and woman or women

which is regulated by customs, law and rules which describe the rules and regulations of partners. On normal circumstances, marital affairs bring unity and love until death or divorce separates them. According to Tambawal (2021) when marriage is taken seriously there is every tendency of saving the world from hatred and cruel as well as reducing the number of physically or mentally patients.

From the above pieces and definitions however, maintaining a successful and fulfilling marital relationship can be challenging, particularly in demanding professions such as teaching. The ability to navigate the complexities of a marital relationship requires various personal attributes, including emotional intelligence.

Emotional Intelligence comprises of interpersonal and intrapersonal skills. Interpersonal skills consist of the ability to understand the feelings of others emphasize, maintain develop social responsibility in other words, intrapersonal skills consist of the ability to understand one's emotion. Therefore, it plays a vantage role in determining life success including marriage. Some of the attributes of emotional intelligence are empathy and social skill.

Empathy the ability to identify and understand the feelings of other people. Emotionally intelligent people can walk in other people's shoes. Knowing what someone is going through help to understand them better. Empathetic people are usually good in managing relationship and associating with others. They avoid jumping into conclusion and they are honest and open minded. (Tambawal, 2021).

Social skill Comfortable interaction is another element of EI. Social skills offer means of interacting with other that help boost productivity, improve relationships and increase one's general quality of life. People with social skill can manage disputes, they are excellent communicators and masters in building and maintain relationship (Ibrahim 2016). Rather than focusing on their own success first, they help other people to develop and shine.

Marital stability According to Tambawal (2021) a healthy and successful marriage is a relationship that makes each partner feels valued, it is the one place that feel the safest in the world. A successful marriage will encourage each partner to grow and become a better person in the relationship. For marriage relationship to be successful there need to be self-respect (Sharon,

2013). She stated that self-respect allows the marriage to hold a basic framework and it is the bedrock of any successful marriage. If one of the partners is lacking self-respect, then possibilities are that there would be no partnership but a dictatorship. Self-respect prevents married couples from finding themselves in a marital relationship of unfaithful behavior and limiting how the couples communicate to each other.

Davis and Oathout (2021), conducted a study in Benue State, Nigeria, to examine the influence of empathy on marital stability among secondary school teachers. The study adopted a descriptive survey design, with a sample of 210 married teachers selected through stratified random sampling. Data were collected using a standardized emotional intelligence scale and a marital stability questionnaire. Findings revealed a significant positive relationship between empathy and marital stability, indicating that teachers with higher empathic tendencies were more likely to maintain harmonious and enduring marriages.

Okeke and Nwankwo (2022) carried out research in Ilorin, Kwara State, to investigate the relationship between empathy and marital harmony among married civil servants. Using a correlational design, the study sampled 250 respondents through simple random sampling. The results showed that empathy strongly predicted marital stability, as individuals with higher empathic concern were better at conflict resolution, communication, and emotional support within marriage. The authors concluded that empathy plays a crucial role in enhancing marital satisfaction and preventing divorce.

Adeoye and Fashola (2021) examined the influence of social skills on marital quality among married civil servants in Enugu State, Nigeria. The study adopted a correlational design with a sample of 230 participants obtained through purposive sampling. Using structured questionnaires, data analysis revealed a significant positive relationship between social skills and marital satisfaction. The findings highlighted that couples with better communication and problem-solving abilities were more capable of sustaining stable marriages.

Abiola and Bello (2022) examined the relationship between social skills and marital stability among married teachers in Sokoto metropolis. The study employed a correlational design with 250 participants selected through stratified random sampling. Findings revealed a significant relationship, as respondents with higher social skills were better at managing marital

challenges and sustaining stable unions. The study concluded that social intelligence is a key factor in achieving marital harmony. Every scholar has his own way of describing the term emotional intelligence that is why there is no one general accepted definition of emotional intelligence. Emotional intelligence having being one of the variables of researcher's interest has been viewed and discussed by different educationists, psychologist, researchers as well as scholars in different ways. It is based on their perceptions of emotional intelligence that brought about different models of the concept. The early theory of emotional intelligence which was described by Salovey & Mayer 1990 explained emotional intelligence as component of Gardner's perspective of social intelligence similar to the so called 'personal' intelligence, emotional intelligence was said to include an awareness of others (Salovey & Mayer 1990). There are basically three models of emotional intelligence (Aliyu, 2018).

Statement of the Problem

Several couples started their marital life very romantic and enjoyable but with time it fades gradually, some may even decide to separate or divorce. Issues like unfaithfulness, intolerance, quarrelling, and abusing each other may arise during the marriage life which make some people became afraid of getting married and doubt if there is any pleasure driven from it. There is an indication that in today's Nigeria, Sokoto in particular, partners are facing many challenges in setting up and maintaining a friendly relationship as well as understanding their partner's feelings. It is perceptible that deficiencies in couple's moral and mental qualities would have negative effect on marital life.

The case of one Yar Buga Shehu of Kanwuri Sokoto South local Government sued her husband to Kanwuri lower Sharia Court with case number CV/2020 demanding for marriage termination due to beating and denial of food because the wife refuse to surrender to his interest of marrying another wife. Also reports from media houses such as the Nation 14 September, 2020 in Tambawal (2021) reported the case of a woman who killed her husband because the man wanted to add another wife due to low emotional intelligence. A case of a woman who appears in a video clip been seriously beating by her husband who happens to be a barrister, the woman was running nicked but the man kept kicking and hitting her, blood all over her face. The woman narrating the story was a civil servant working with the Federal Ministry of Women Affairs. She said the incidence happen on Sunday 17th

December 2023 and he has been doing that for over a year. These plus many cases of marriage dissolution in Sokoto Metropolis are cases of worry and distress to stakeholders.

Research has shown that some married teachers of secondary school with low emotional intelligence finds it very difficult to adjust with this current situation. For example, those that use to have three square meals a day finds it difficult to switch to two times a day because of the economic situation. They easily get annoyed or frustrated because they don't know how to adjust with the life challenges.

The main thrust of the present study, therefore, is to examine emotional intelligence as correlate of marital stability among secondary school teachers in Sokoto Metropolis.

Objectives of the study

This study is set to achieve the following objectives: To find out if relationship exists between:

1. Empathy and marital stability among married secondary school teachers in Sokoto metropolis.
2. Social Skill and marital stability among married secondary school teachers in Sokoto Metropolis.

Research Questions

The study seeks to answer the following research questions:

1. What is the relationship between empathy and marital stability among married secondary school teachers in Sokoto Metropolis?
2. What is the relationship between social skill and marital stability among married secondary school teachers in Sokoto Metropolis?

Research Hypotheses

The following null hypotheses were formulated to guide the study and will be tested at 0.05 level of significance.

1. There is no significant relationship between empathy and marital stability among married secondary school teachers in Sokoto Metropolis.
2. There is no significant relationship between social skill and marital stability among married secondary school teachers in Sokoto Metropolis.

Methodology

Descriptive research design of correlational type was adopted for this study. The population of this study is all married secondary school teachers in Sokoto metropolis. According to Teachers Service Board, Sokoto 2024 there are 2372 married teachers from sixty-nine (69) secondary schools in Sokoto metropolis. The Research Advisors (2006), Table for determining sample size from a giving population was employed and arrived at three hundred and thirty-three (333) samples of participants. The instrument for data collection is adapted from Tambawal (2021) *titled* Emotional Intelligence, Self-esteem, Communication Style and Marital Success Questionnaire (EISECMSQ). To ensure that the instrument: Emotional Intelligence, Self-esteem, Communication Style and Marital Success Questionnaire (EISECMSQ) was validated by three experts in the field of guidance and counselling, their comments and feedbacks were used to produce the final copy of the instrument. However, the instrument was used as a pilot test by the researcher through a test-retest method to obtain the reliability index of 0.75, confirming the instrument reliable enough to generate information for the study. Data collection was personally carried out by the researcher through the help of two research assistance who help in facilitating the process. For data analysis, inferential statistics Pearson Product Moment Correlation (PPMC) was employed to test the two research hypotheses formulated for the study.

Results

Pearson Product Moment Correlation was used to test the formulated hypotheses. Likewise, summary and discussion of the findings will be highlighted under this section.

Hypotheses Testing

This section presented statistical analysis of all the null hypotheses formulated for this study and the null hypotheses were tested one after the other at 0.05 level of significance presented as follows:

Null Hypothesis One: There is no significant relationship between Empathy and Marital Stability among married teachers in senior secondary schools in Sokoto metropolis

In testing null hypothesis one, the responses on Empathy and Marital Stability collected from the selected 333 married teachers in senior secondary schools in Sokoto metropolis, Nigeria were sorted and correlated electronically on SPSS version 23.0 using Pearson Product Moment Correlation (PPMC) and the results are presented in Table 1

Table 1: Pearson's Correlation Coefficient for Relationship between Empathy and Marital Stability of Married Teachers in Senior Secondary Schools in Sokoto metropolis

Variable	N	Mean	Std. Dev	Df	r-Cal	p-Value	Decision
Empathy	333	3.1134	0.8893	331	0.767**	0.001	H ₀₁
Marital Stability	333	3.1989	0.2088				Rejected

Source: Fieldwork work (2025)

Table 1 presents a summary of Pearson correlation performed to establish the degree of relationship between Empathy and Marital Stability of Married Teachers in senior secondary schools in Sokoto metropolis. The results of the analysis $r(331) = 0.767$, $p < 0.05$ revealed that there was significant high positive relationship between Empathy and Marital Stability of Married Teachers in senior secondary schools in Sokoto metropolis. However, since the p -Value of 0.001 is less than 0.05 level of significance, the null hypothesis one (H₀₁) was therefore rejected. This implies that higher levels of Empathy are associated with higher levels of Marital Stability.

Null Hypothesis Two: There is no significant relationship between Social Skills and Marital Stability among married teachers in senior secondary schools in Sokoto metropolis

In testing null hypothesis two, the responses on Social Skills and Marital Stability collected from the selected 333 married teachers in senior secondary schools in Sokoto metropolis, Sokoto metropolis, Nigeria were sorted and

correlated electronically on SPSS version 23.0 using Pearson Product Moment Correlation (PPMC) and the results are presented in Table 2

Table 2: Pearson's Correlation Coefficient for Relationship between Social Skills and Marital Stability of Married Teachers in Senior Secondary Schools in Sokoto metropolis

Variable	N	Mean	Std. Dev	df	r-Cal	p-Value	Decision
Social Skills	333	3.2297	0.5520	331	0.528**	0.001	H ₀₂
Marital Stability	333	3.1989	0.2088				Rejected

Source: Fieldwork work (2025)

Table 2 presents a summary of Pearson correlation performed to establish the degree of relationship between Social Skills and Marital Stability of Married Teachers in senior secondary schools in Sokoto metropolis. The results of the analysis $r(331) = 0.528$, $p < 0.05$ revealed that there was significant moderate positive relationship between Social Skills and Marital Stability of married teachers in senior secondary schools in Sokoto metropolis. However, since the p -Value of 0.001 is less than 0.05 level of significance, the null hypothesis two (H₀₂) was also rejected. This implies that higher levels of Social Skills are associated with moderate level of Marital Stability. In this study, the participating teachers found with higher levels of Social Skills reported moderate level of marital stability which implies that they are considerate, demonstrated moderate communication skills, emotional connections and conflicts resolution skills resulting to stability in their marriage with moderately low risks of marital failure.

Summary of Findings

This study investigated emotional intelligence as correlates of Marital Stability among married teachers in senior secondary schools in Sokoto metropolis. However, 2 research questions were answered and 2 corresponding null hypotheses were tested at 0.05 level of significance and the study found that:

1. There was significant high positive relationship between Empathy and Marital Stability among married teachers in senior secondary schools in Sokoto metropolis.
2. There was significant moderate positive relationship between Social Skills and Marital Stability among married teachers in senior secondary schools in Sokoto metropolis.

Discussion

The findings of the study revealed a significant positive relationship between empathy and marital stability among married teachers in senior secondary schools in Sokoto metropolis. This suggests that teachers who demonstrate higher levels of empathy are more likely to experience harmonious and lasting marriages. Empathy allows couples to recognize, understand, and respond to their partner's emotions, which strengthens communication and conflict resolution. This aligns with Davis and Oathout (2021), who revealed that a significant positive relationship between empathy and marital stability, indicating that teachers with higher empathic tendencies were more likely to maintain harmonious and enduring marriages. Similarly, Okeke and Nwankwo (2022) found that empathy strongly predicted marital stability, as individuals with higher empathic concern were better at conflict resolution, communication, and emotional support within marriage.

The results indicated a significant relationship between social skills and marital stability. This implies that teachers who possess strong interpersonal and communication skills are better equipped to sustain stable marital relationships. Social skills such as active listening, negotiation, and cooperation enable couples to navigate challenges and strengthen mutual respect. This finding is supported by Adeoye and Fashola (2021), who highlighted that couples with better communication and problem-solving abilities were more capable of sustaining stable marriages. Similarly, Abiola and Bello (2022) found that respondents with higher social skills were better at managing marital challenges and sustaining stable unions.

Conclusion

Based on the findings of the study, the conclusion drawn is that the more empathy the couples poses, the higher the stability their marriage will be. Likewise, the higher the social skill, the higher the stability in marriage.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of this study, the following recommendations are made:

1. Schools should integrate emotional intelligence training into pre-marital and marital counselling sessions. Focus particularly on building empathy among teachers.

2. Government should formulate policies that support family-friendly work environments for teachers, such as flexible working hours where possible, to reduce role conflict and promote social harmony.

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