

CORRELATIONAL STUDY OF ASSERTIVENESS SKILLS AND MARITAL DISSATISFACTION AMONG MARRIED POSTGRADUATE STUDENTS OF AL-HIKMAH UNIVERSTIY

BY

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Abstract

This study examined the relationship between assertiveness skills and marital dissatisfaction among married postgraduate students of Al-Hikmah University Ilorin. The correlational research design was adopted for the study. The sample was 150 postgraduate students of Al-Hikmah University, Ilorin randomly selected for the study. Assertiveness Skills Questionnaire (ASQ) and Marital Dissatisfaction Scale (MDS) were used to collecting the necessary data. The data collected were analysed using PPMC and Multiple Regression Analysis. Three hypotheses were raised and tested at 0.05 critical region. The findings revealed that there was a significant negative relationship between boldness skill and marital dissatisfaction of married postgraduate students of Al-Hikmah University ($r=-0.00$, $df.148$, $p.<0.05$) there was a significant negative relationship between communication skill and marital dissatisfaction of married postgraduate students of Al-Hikmah University ($r=-0.26$, $df.148$, $p.<0.05$); there was a significant negative relationship between active listening skill and marital dissatisfaction of married postgraduate students of Al-Hikmah University, ($r=-0.29$, $df.148$, $p.<0.05$). Based on the findings, the study concluded that assertiveness skills (boldness skill, communication skills and listening skills) were strong correlates of marital dissatisfaction among married postgraduate students in Al-Hikmah University, Ilorin. Hence, the marital dissatisfaction of the the postgraduate students of Al-Hikmah University can be managed with assertiveness skills. Based on the conclusion, the study recommended that married postgraduate students should endeavour to improve their assertiveness skills so as to reduce their marital dissatisfaction and enhance their marital satisfaction.

Keywords: Assertiveness skills, marital dissatisfaction, boldness skill, communication skill, active listening skill

Introduction

Marriage is perceived as the legal union between husband and wife with an agreement to live as one entity till the death do them apart (Wise, 2011; Ariyo, 2015). It is important to have clear understanding that married is not by accident but what has been plan for in order to satisfy or achieve certain predetermine objectives. Marriage is well recognized in the society as approved sexual consent between two adults; the husband and wife (Phillips, 2017). It is sacred matrimony affirming and supporting a very unique sociological aspect of human cultural beliefs. In addition, it facilitated the generation of life through the fusion of sexes and also a promotion of the births to new set of human generation (Kling, 2010).

In the light of this, marriage unveiled friendship, socialization, acknowledged sex partners and promoting the birthright of siblings. Awe (2016) and Alberti (2017) showed that people considered love, sexual fidelity and ability to talk about feelings in marriage. However, a person's beliefs of how marital satisfaction was to be achieved might significantly affect one's expectations and readiness for marriage (Hess, 2018). Marriage is beyond attracting, unification and socialization but it also involved absolute committing, submitting self to one another and to be responsible to achieve mutual wellness in the relationships (Hammed, 2019). There were different meanings to marriage from one culture to the other and religion to religion. However, most people enter into the marital affairs with the high expectations of joy and happiness with the full sense of accomplishing the purpose for which marriage is established (Esere, 2012; Lazarus, 2011).

The phenomenon of marital problem is not limited to Nigeria alone but worldwide. Countries like Canada, England and Wales Greece, Netherlands, United States and Britain have more divorced (National Centre for Health, Marriage and Divorce, 2013). Similarly, divorce affects about a third of marriage in Japan, couples getting married have not more than 50-50 chance of staying together. Divorce ends about two out of every five marriages in Zimbabwe.

The situation is even worse in Nigeria where marital relationships are being broken on a daily basis. Some divorce cases in 2005 at Grade "A" customary court, Somolu Local Government Area, Lagos also showed that Five (5) of the eight (8) cases i.e. 62.5% ended up in divorce. One (1) of the eight (8) cases i.e. 12.5% did not end up in divorce while two (2) of the eight (8) cases i.e. 25% were yet to be decided. This shows that marital relationship is in a serious mess.

The researcher wonders why the joy of marriage could turn soar suddenly. Different factors such as poor boldness to navigate marital challenges, poor communication problems, and poor listening skills among others. The aforementioned challenges are abound in marriage but how to mitigate it is a serious concerns which lead marital dissatisfaction (Powell, 2015). Ariyo (2015) stressed that when these challenges occur; many marriages become disestablished because of inability to resolve challenges marital conflict. Active listening skills, communication skills and boldness skills reduces marital dissatisfaction among couples (Kılıçarslan & Parmaksız, 2023; Jafari et al., 2021; Zagefka and Bahil, 2020; Mada, 2016).

In order to find plausible solution to the high rate of divorce between husband and wife, it is expected that practice good assertive communication can help marriages grow to achieve marital satisfaction (Akinade, 2017). Assertive skills focus on the abilities of the spouses to pass across information or messages with confidence and also interpret the message with clear mind set. Lorr (2018) added that assertive skills like being confident, and empathized with one another

help to foster marital satisfaction. Assertiveness skills can be taught through training in order to prepare husband or wife to strike a balance between assertiveness and aggressiveness (Kutara, 2018).

To the best of the researcher's knowledge, assertiveness skills training have not been frequent used as techniques to enhance marital satisfaction among Nigeria couples. Marital satisfaction is an individual's subjective evaluation of the marital relationship (Kazdin, 2018). The effectiveness of this technique has been confirmed to reduced promiscuity, shyness obsessive compulsive disorder, antisocial behaviour, among adolescents (Asuzu, 2018; Wehr and Kaufman, 2017; Akinade, 2017; Oladele, 2016; Kling, 2010). Similarly, assertiveness skills training has increased self-esteem and interpersonal skills among divorced homes (Akponye, 2019; Hammed, 2019). The techniques also enhanced marital satisfaction (Lazarus (2011), Philips (2012), Kazdin (2018), Lorr (2018), Kutara (2018), Agali & Idowu, (2017). So assertiveness training was used in this study as part of intervention to enhance marital satisfaction.

Due to the researcher's experience and observation among postgraduate students of Al-Hikmah University, on how some newly wedded couples and those who have married long ago lack enough reasons why they should remain in the union, engaging in unresolved conflicts abandoning their matrimonial home, threat of divorce and eventual divorce, the resultant effects on the children rear in such home atmosphere and the negative impacts on the society and the entire world. The researcher therefore examined Assertiveness Skills in managing Marital Dissatisfaction among Postgraduate Students of Al-Hikmah University, Ilorin.

Purpose of the Study

The main purpose of this study is therefore to investigate the effect of smartphone addiction on marital relationship of married postgraduate students of Al-Hikmah University, Ilorin Kwara State. Specifically, the study is designed to achieve the following purposes:

1. To establish the relationship between boldness skill and marital dissatisfaction among married postgraduate students of Al-Hikmah University, Ilorin;
2. To investigate the relationship between communication skill and marital dissatisfaction among male married postgraduate students of Al-Hikmah University, Ilorin; and
3. To investigate the relationship between improved listening skill and marital dissatisfaction among female married postgraduate students of Al-Hikmah University, Ilorin.

Research Hypothesis

- H₀₁: There was no significant relationship between boldness skill and marital dissatisfaction of married postgraduate students of Al-Hikmah University.
- H₀₂: There was no significant relationship between communication skill and marital dissatisfaction of married postgraduate students of Al-Hikmah University.
- H₀₃: There was no significant relationship between improved listening skill and marital dissatisfaction among female married postgraduate students of Al-Hikmah University, Ilorin.

Methodology

The correlational research design was adopted for this study. The study intended to determine the degree of relationship between assertiveness skill and marital dissatisfaction of married postgraduate students of Al-Hikmah University, Ilorin. This design affords the researcher to collect different data from the same set of respondents and subject the collected data to appropriate correlational statistics. The population of this study consisted of all married postgraduate students of Al-Hikmah University Ilorin. Simple random sampling technique was used in this study. The participants for this study were 150 randomly selected post graduate students across postgraduate programmes.

Assertiveness skills were measured by Mental Health Worksheet (2017) Assertiveness Quiz Worksheet. This scale is designed to assess Mental Heath's (2017) assertiveness skills training. It consists of 30 items structured in five Likert response format. Each of the skills has 10 items. The minimum and maximum obtainable score are 10 and 50 on each sub-scale. The scale is used in Nigeria by Hammed (2019) which reported reliability coefficient of 0.75 for the scale. Marital dissatisfaction of the participants is determined by Kansas' (2019) Kansas Marital Dissatisfaction Scale (KMDS). This scale was constructed with the five Likert response format with response' options ranging from Strongly Agree to Strong Disagree. The items of the scale are 25 and the minimum and maximum obtainable scores are respectively 25 and 125. The scale was reported to have 0.82 reliability coefficient.

The instruments for this study were personally administered by the researchers on the respondents in the sample schools. Before the administration of the questionnaire, the researchers introduced themselves to the Dean of the selected schools and informed him about their missions in the schools. Upon obtaining the required permissions from the authority of the school, the researchers administered the instrument on the respondents. The completed questionnaire was collected from the respondents in each of the sample schools by the researchers.

Pearson Product Moment Correlation (PPMC) and Multiple Regressions Analysis were used to analyse the collected data. PPMC was used to determine the relationship between assertiveness skill and marital dissatisfaction of married postgraduate students of Al-Hikmah Univeristy, Ilorin Kwara State.

Result

Hypothesis One

There is no significant relationship between boldness skill and marital dissatisfaction of married postgraduate students of Al-Hikmah University.

Table 1

PPMC Table Showing the Relationship between boldness Skill and Marital Dissatisfaction among Married Postgraduate Students of Al-Hikmah University.

Variable	No	Mean	SD	df.	r.	p.
Boldness Skill	150	33.73	9.23	148	0.148	0.002
MS	150	78.21	12.34			

** (Significant at 0.05 critical region)

The table shows r. calculated of 0.148, p. value of 0.002 at 0.05 level of significance. The p. value of 0.002 is less than the p.value of 0.05 (r.-0.002, df.148, p.<0.05). The null hypothesis is rejected. Thus, there is a significant relationship and negative between boldness skill and marital dissatisfaction of married postgraduate students of Al-Hikmah University.

Hypothesis Two

There is no significant relationship between communication skill and marital dissatisfaction of married postgraduate students of Al-Hikmah University.

Table 2:

PPMC Table Showing the Relationship between Communication Skill and Marital Dissatisfaction of Married Postgraduate Students of Al-Hikmah University.

Variable	No	Mean	SD	df.	r.	p.
Communication Skill	150	35.13	10.21			
				148	-0.26	0.002
Marital Dissatisfaction	150	78.21	12.34			

** (Significant at 0.05 critical region)

From the table, r. calculated = -0.26, degree of freedom is 48 and p. critical is 0.002. Since r. calculated (0.002) is less than p. value of 0.05 level of significance (r.-0.26, df.148, p.<0.05). The null hypothesis is rejected. Thus, there is a significant negative relationship between communication skill and marital dissatisfaction of married postgraduate students of Al-Hikmah University, Ilorin.

Hypothesis Three

There is no significant relationship between active listening skill and marital dissatisfaction among married postgraduate students of Al-Hikmah University, Ilorin.

Table 3:

PPMC Table Showing the Relationship Between Active Listening Skill and Marital Dissatisfaction among Married Postgraduate Students of Al-Hikmah University, Ilorin.

Variable	No	Mean	SD	df.	r.	p.
Active Listening Skill	150	32.13	10.32			
				148	-0.29	0.004
Marital Dissatisfaction	150	78.21	12.34			

** (Significant at 0.05 critical region)

The table shows r . calculated of -0.29, r . critical is 0.004. Since the r . calculated (0.29) is less than p .value of 0.004 at 0.05 level of significance (r .-0.29, df .148, p .<0.05). Therefore, null hypothesis is rejected. Thus, there is a significant negative relationship active listening skill and marital dissatisfaction among married postgraduate students of Al-Hikmah University, Ilorin.

Discussion and Conclusion

The study revealed that there was significant negative relationship between boldness skill and marital dissatisfaction of married postgraduate students of Al-Hikmah University. The implication of this was that increase in the boldness of partners will reduce marital dissatisfaction of postgraduate students of Al-Hikmah University. This result supported Mada (2016) which showed that boldness skills reduces marital dissatisfaction among couples. Also, Zagefka and Bahil (2020) indicated that boldness belief minimises marital dissatisfaction among couples.

The study showed that there was a significant negative relationship between communication skill and marital dissatisfaction of married postgraduate students of Al-Hikmah University. Going by this result, it could be deduced that improved communication skill will significant decreases marital dissatisfaction among married postgraduates. The outcome of this finding should not be surprising as marital dissatisfaction as one of the spousal relationship problems drises from poor communication skills. The finding agreed with Jafari et al. (2021); Butter et al (2019); Baucon et al (2016) and Gordon et al (2009) who indicated that effective communication skills reduces marital dissatisfaction among couples.

The study shows that there is significant negative relationship between active listening skill and marital dissatisfaction among married postgraduate students of Al-Hikmah University, Ilorin. The implication of this is that, when husband and wife imbibe the use of listening very well before taking any actions against one another would reduce the marital dissatisfaction. Therefore, the higher the listening skill, the lower will be the marital dissatisfaction among couples. This finding agreed with Kılıçarslan and Parmaksız (2023); Fisher et al. (2012), Noller et al. (2011) and Fowler et al. (2015) who results showed the use of active listening skills decreases marital dissatisfaction among couples.

Conclusion

Based on the findings, the study concluded that boldness skill reduces marital dissatisfaction among married postgraduate students in Al-Hikmah University, Ilorin. It was also concluded that communication skills decreases marital dissatisfaction among. The study concluded that active listening reduces marital dissatisfaction married postgraduate students of Al-Hikmah University, Ilorin.

Recommendation

Based on the conclusion, the study recommended that married postgraduate students should endeavour to continue in using boldness skill with their partner. This would further reduce the marital dissatisfaction and improve satisfaction in the marital relationship. The study also recommended that postgraduate students should maintain the tempo of effective communication skill in their marriage. This would decrease the marital dissatisfaction and ensure the sustenance of marital satisfaction. The study recommended that postgraduate students should

continuously employ the use of active listening skill with their partners. This would reduce the conflict or disagreements that can lead to marital dissatisfaction between couple.

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