

Marital Satisfaction: An Assessment Of Its Fundamental Factors In Nigerian

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Abstract: In this research we studied the act of couples towards marital relationships. Questionnaire measures of these variables were completed by a broad sample of 120 married couples, living in Nigeria. We evaluated the quality of their current marital satisfaction and they were asked to fulfil the Marriage and Relationship Questionnaire (MARQ), result and findings shows that Problems with the Partner, Personal Problems were more significant in the life of our Nigeria couples, family ties is considered the most important factor for marital satisfaction. The correlation between scores by men and women are partially negatively correlated such as partnership, family ties, conciliation and personal problems while others scales are positively correlated.

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1. Introduction

Marital satisfaction is conceptualized as the extent to which an individual has a positive attitude about, or positive feelings toward, the marriage partner and relationship. Although it may be based upon objective criteria (e.g., how frequently the partner says, "I love you"), marital satisfaction is a subjective evaluation of the partner and relationship (Sabatelli, 1988). Marital satisfaction is a mental state that reflects the perceived benefits and costs of marriage to a particular person (Ammar and Saim 2018). According to Schoen, Astone, Rothert, Standish, and Kim (2008) marital satisfaction is a global evaluation of the state of one's marriage and a reflection of marital happiness and functioning.

Marital satisfaction is the phenomenon that is strictly supposed to be related with trust among couples. Broadly, the topic is trust in couple relationships, particularly marital relationships (Ammar and Saim 2018). It is a complex and multidimensional phenomenon (Mosmann *et al* 2007), which has been extensively explored by the most diverse scientific fields. Social and behavioral scientists have been concerned with relations between the work and family, as the rate of female employment continues to rise affecting an ever increasing proportion of married women. A link between employment outside the home and marital happiness of married working women has long been suspected. Since two decades, research has focused on the relation between work and family experiences.

Therefore, the satisfaction of a spouse depends, to some extent, on how well his or her marriage responds to the expectations and duties imposed by the

cultural and social spheres. In Western industrialized cultures, the criteria of satisfaction are related to goals of self-gratification or to the ideals of happiness established between spouses. In countries with a more collectivist background, on the other hand, the criteria of satisfaction relate to the way relatives of the spouses are treated, as happens in China.

The spouses estimate the marital satisfaction by keeping track of its costs and benefits, based upon their life's history. That's why the sociocultural context is of great importance in interpersonal relations, acting as a force of ecological adaptability for the individuals, especially in more intimate relationship, as is the case in a marital relationship.

Beyond the intercultural differences in the way marital relationship are evaluated, there are also difference within the same culture that may bring spouses to adopt different criteria for marital satisfaction, influenced by the sociopolitical and cultural context of the countries they live in (Lucas *et al.*, 2008) and probably related to the culturally established sexual roles.

Consequently, we conducted 13 general classes of meta-analyses: personality marital satisfaction, personality-life satisfaction, personality-social satisfaction, personality-health satisfaction, marital satisfaction-job satisfaction, marital satisfaction health satisfaction, marital satisfaction-social satisfaction, marital satisfaction-life satisfaction, job satisfaction-social satisfaction, job satisfaction-health satisfaction, social satisfaction-life satisfaction, health satisfaction-life satisfaction and health satisfaction social satisfaction.

2. Review

Ammar and Saim (2018) examined the role of trust in marital satisfaction in a sample of 50 couples. He used Multiple regression analysis to demonstrate trust as significant predictor of marital satisfaction for single career couples, dual-career couples and for the whole sample respectively. Significant gender differences were found in trust for both single and dual-career couples.

Bianca, Arthur, Fisher and Lucy (2012) the study explored the neural correlates of marital satisfaction to investigate the physiological markers. potentially mediating these health effects. These findings highlight key neural sites that may mediate the link between relationship quality with psychological and physical well-being and health.

Buss (1994) he suggested that theory of human sexual strategies accounts for the observation that people worldwide are attracted to the same qualities in the opposite sex. The result of his work and that of others provide strong evidence that the traditional assumptions about mate preferences, that are arbitrary and culture-bound are simply wrong. A woman's appearance is more significant her intelligence, level of education in determine the mate she will marry. Buss *et al* (2008) Mate retention tactics range from vigilance to violence, and are linked to variables such as marital satisfaction and relationship aggression. They conclude that the MRI-SF is sufficiently reliable and valid that it can be used in basic and applied research in place of the MRI long-form for most purposes. Carter (1998) she reviewed existing behavioral and neuroendocrine perspectives on social attachment and love. Social interactions and attachment involve endocrine systems capable of decreasing HPA reactivity and modulating the autonomic nervous system, perhaps accounting for health benefits that are attributed to loving relationships. Feeney (1999) extends previous research into the relations among attachment style, emotional experience, and emotional control. Emotional control added to the prediction of marital satisfaction, after controlling for attachment dimensions; the most robust links with satisfaction were inverse relations with own control of positive emotion and with partner's control of negative emotion. Gottman (1993) investigated seventy-three couples at 2 time points 4 years apart. A typology of 5 groups of couples is proposed on the basis of observational data of Time 1 resolution of conflict, specific affects, and affect sequences. A balance theory of marriage is proposed, which explores the idea that 3 distinct adaptations exist for having a stable marriage.

Kaighobadi *et al* (2010) examined the function of mate retention tactics is to prevent a long-term partner from defecting from the relationship and to ward off

potential mate poachers. The research offered speculations on the stability and change found in mate retention performance, suggests potential correlates of mate retention performance, and addresses limitations of this research. Kaufman (2011) he examine the relationship between personality and marital satisfaction and partner pairing. Results indicate that there is no relationship between personality similarities /differences and marital satisfaction, and that individuals are 66% more likely to pair with someone with a different personality than their own. Martin and Wilson (1996) the study concerns one particular source of conflict between women and men in marital or marital-like relationships, namely the existence or presence of children from prior unions. Their argument was predicated on a more general account of the nature of the marital relationship from the perspective of evolutionary biology, which in turn is predicated on a still more general evolutionary understanding of the nature of sociality and of the male-female phenomenon. Keila *et al* (2014) they aimed to study how couple perceived their marital relationship. More specifically, their goal was to ascertain the way middle class couples living in Brazil evaluate the quality of their current marital relationship. Shackelford and Buss (2000) they tested the hypothesis that marital satisfaction is a psychological state regulated by evolved mechanisms that monitor spousal cost-infliction and benefits. The discussion evaluates the utility of an evolutionary perspective on marital satisfaction and spousal cost-infliction. Weisfeld, Dillon, Nowak, Koyonne, Glenn, Olcay, Butovskaya and Shenwe (2011) they examined the patterns of sex differences in men and women married to each other in five cultures (China, Russia, Turkey, UK, and the U.S.) to look for universal patterns in behavioral dimorphisms and for cultural variability in those patterns. Significant sex differences ($p < .05$, two-tailed) emerged in all six areas examined, although cultural differences were also seen in the patterns. Vaijayanthimala *et al* (2004) they studied an attempt has been made to study the association between some of the socio-economic heterogamous variables and marital satisfaction of working women. The results suggested that marital dissatisfaction is high among couples with heterogamous age and education.

3. Methodology

3.1 Participants

One hundred and twenty heterosexual couples will take part in this study, our coverage will be on married (69.5%), or engaged in an enduring relationship (30.5%), all living in the city of Akure, southwest of Nigeria. The selection criteria were: older than 18 years; living together for at least 3 years,

the average duration of the marriages being 10.56 years ($N = 182$, $SD = 7.352$). The average age of the men was 42.56 years while that of the women was 38.12 years. All the participants had a high school education ($N = 164$) while (54.3%) had completed college and (10.6%) were postgraduates.

Ninety three percent of the couples ($N = 186$) declared themselves to be religious, of which 21.5% were Catholics and 68.2% Pentecostal while the remaining 10.3 were pagans. The average income of the couples was N52, 250. 00, starting from N18, 000. 00 up to N450, 000. 00. With regard to the socio-economic status, the average of the sample was 43.22 points ($N = 120$, $SD = 25,556$).

3.2 Procedure

Participants will be selected randomly on the campus of Federal University of Technology Akure, southwest of Nigeria. We will be picking out individuals using wedding rings and subsequently by snowball sampling. We will obliged them to responded anonymously to the questionnaires, in locations chosen by them, either in the presence of the researcher or by taking the questionnaires home and returning them in up to one week later at the same location where they were handed to them.

3.3. Instruments

For the socio-demographic characterization we will be employing the Adapted Scale of Socio Economic Status Assessment (Hollingshead, 1975), which consists of a questionnaire that aims to identify the socioeconomic status of the couples by means of the following factors: gender, marital status, education level and occupational prestige. The second instrument will be, the Marriage and Relationships Questionnaire—MARQ (Russell & Wells, 1993), widely tested with couples in various countries (Lucas *et al.*, 2008). The MARQ is a Likert-type scale, with five choices of answers, for the greater part of its 168 questions, containing 12 subscales (12 factors) that assess the marital satisfaction of the participants by comparing their answers to the twelve scales that make up the instrument. The answers can score 1 to 5

points, where 1 stands for extremely dissatisfied and 5 for extremely satisfied. The scores of husbands and wives were first summed up then divided by 2, in order to obtain the average of the couples for each factor.

3.4 Statistical Analysis Method

The data was statistically analyzed by means of the R Program. We run descriptive analyses (frequency, averages and standard deviations); Student's t-test in order to obtain independent samples for the comparison between the averages of the spouses; Spearman's correlation test, in order to show the degree of relationship between the variable Gender in the answers to the satisfaction scale.

4. Result and Discussion

4.1 Result

Marital satisfaction with regards to the general level, 75% of the couples were considered satisfied, 20% very satisfied and 5% dissatisfied. The major raw scores of couples were seen on the sexual jealousy scale ($M = 2.54$, $SD = 1.25$), followed by the partnership scale ($M = 2.8$, $SD = 2.05$) and on a love scale ($M = 3.12$, $SD = 2.12$), thereby pinpointing the most important factors for marital satisfaction. These result show that the couples perceive and evaluate satisfaction in the relationship in a similar fashion.

According to Student's t-tests for independent measures, only love, personal problems and problems with the partner are significant while others factors (scale) are not significant. We obtain the difference by comparing the averages of the answers of the men and women to the factors of the MARQ scale as seen in the Table 4.1.

The correlation between scores by men and women are partially negatively correlated such as partnership, family ties, conciliation and personal problems while others scales are positively correlated in Table 4.2. In other words, the score of the men to women are higher simultaneously while they are lower on the other hand.

Table 4.1: Description of the levels of Statistic significance

Scale	Values of t and r	p
Love	t = 1.325, r = 0.0832	0.0245
Partnership	t = -0.283, r = 0.0182	0.7801
Sexual Jealousy	t = 0.424, r = 0.0112	0.6012
Roles	t = 1.523, r = 0.0844	0.0623
Problems with the relationship	t = 0.213, r = 0.0455	0.4325
Personal Problems	t = 1.124, r = 0.0562	0.0254
Attractiveness	t = -1.962, r = 0.0156	0.5680
Values	t = 0.000, r = 0.0000	1.0000
Family Ties	t = 0.152, r = 0.0122	0.7882
Circumstantial Problems	t = 0.000, r = 0.0000	1.0000
Problems with the Partner	t = 0.325, r = 0.0632	0.0417
Conciliation	t = -0.014, r = 0.0922	0.6320

Table 4.2: Spearman's rank correlation test between men and women's scales

Scale	Rho	p	r ²
Love	0.689	0.05	0.4747
Partnership	-0.877	0.05	0.7691
Sexual Jealousy	1.000	0.05	1.0000
Roles	0.942	0.05	0.8874
Problems with the relationship	0.538	0.05	0.2894
Personal Problems	0.292	0.05	0.0853
Attractiveness	0.774	0.05	0.5991
Values	0.692	0.05	0.4789
Family Ties	-0.499	0.05	0.2490
Circumstantial Problems	1.000	0.05	1.0000
Problems with the Partner	0.663	0.05	0.4396
Conciliation	-0.871	0.05	0.7586

4.2 Discussion

The study reveals that Nigerian couples were satisfied with their marital relationship and family ties is considered the most important factor for marital satisfaction. The homogamous couples were the most satisfied couples. The multidimensionality of the factors involved in marital satisfaction was taking into consideration, it was realized following a threefold perspective: the perception of one's own satisfaction, the perception of the partner's satisfaction and the partner's perception of the relationship itself. This was possible because of the instrument used to measure the satisfaction, the MARQ scale, employed for the second time in Nigeria and still unmatched by any other instrument, in terms of efficiency.

The result shows that classifying satisfaction is a good predictor of stability in the couples' relationship, emphasis were laid that they have been together for about 10.56 years on average, which is time enough evaluating the characteristics of the partner and measure the degree of investment made by both.

In culture context of Nigeria, family ties has been given more importance than the other dimensions. It brings forward some uniqueness of the Nigerian culture when compared to other countries where MARQ has already been tested. We also investigated if the couples that had more similar traits (homogamous) are more satisfied than those who had less similar traits. The results of the MARQ regarding this question are positive, if we look at the indexes of satisfaction between the couple in Table 4.1. However, we were not able to prove that similarity will increase over time (Wilson & Cousins, 2003), since this would need a longitudinal research later on to prove this: a research that can take place, given that the participations are all anonymous.

5. Conclusion

The result show cases that family ties has been given more importance than the other dimensions. It brings forward some uniqueness of the Nigerian culture when compared to other countries where MARQ has already been tested. There is perfect and strong relationship sexual jealousy and circumstantial problems. Even though thousands of years have passed, our behavior in modern society is still being directed by these same ancient mechanisms. In spite of the fact that we think we are rational beings, aware of our choices, these are all influenced by our subconscious mechanisms.

Therefore we come to recommend that,

a) We suggest that the scales (factors) problem with the partner and personal problem should be considered first in the marital satisfaction among Nigeria's couples and be seriously dealt with.

This manuscript reveals that shows that Problems with the Partner, Personal Problems were more significant in the life of our Nigeria couples, family ties is considered the most important factor for marital satisfaction. The correlation between scores by men and women are partially negatively correlated such as partnership, family ties, conciliation and personal problems while others scales are positively correlated.

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