
EFFECT OF CONFLICT RESOLUTION AMONG MARRIED LECTURERS OF TERTIARY INSTITUTIONS IN SOKOTO METROPOLIS: IMPLICATIONS FOR MARITAL COUNSELLING

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Abstract:

The study was designed to investigate effect of marital conflict among married academic lecturers of tertiary institutions in Sokoto metropolis; implications for marital counseling. To guide the study, two research questions and two null hypotheses were formulated to establish the degree of effectiveness of marital conflict. Researcher constructed questionnaire titled “Marital conflict resolution strategy inventory” (MCRSI) with a reliability index of 0.87 was the research instrument used for data collection. Quasi experimental research design was used with treatment and control groups; with total population of 345 married academic staff of tertiary institutions for Sokoto Metropolis. Sample size of sixty respondents (30 case group and 30 control group) were used as representative sample. The data were analyzed using mean, standard deviation and independent t-test to answer and test the research questions and hypothesis respectively. The hypothesis was tested at 0.05 level of significance. Based on the findings, it was concluded that parents should reflect on the effects of divorce, their children and society, depending on the conflict at hand in resolving marital conflict and not to stereotype on single strategy. Among the recommendations made was that marriage counseling and counseling centers should be established that will help reduce the escalating rate of divorce in our society.

Keywords: Conflict Resolution, Married Lecturers, Tertiary Institution, Metropolis

Introduction:

The origin of marriage can be traced back to the period of creation. Marriage is the foundation of family and social institutions whose nature, consequences and incident are governed by law and stipulation. Marriage is assumed to be enacted when two people usually a man and a woman decide on their own and in the presence of at least two witness to exchange the formal consent to live a life of love, understanding and concern for each other for the purpose of promoting mutual growth in their journey together throughout their life. Marriage has been variously defined by different scholars, Akinade (1997) sees marriage as a socially, legally, culturally, or religiously approved intimate relationship between a male and female in most cases. In it, two unrelated people come to live, grow and develop together. It is contract for union and cohabitation between one or two males and females for the establishment of their families. Kehinde (1999) defined marriage as a sacred and permanent contract between a man and a woman who have consented to live a life of vocation, love and sharing for each other for the purpose of promoting their mutual growth and welfare as persons in their journey through life. This implies that marital relationship is meant to be a lifelong one until the death of a partner.

Statement of the Problem

In Nigeria, particularly in Sokoto state, in most families, there are strains in marriage interactions between couples living together. Marital disharmonies which lead to marriage instability are great concern to the society.

Marital counselors and therapist often use strategies such as improved communication, problem solving techniques, assertiveness training, effective negotiation skills and couple's relationship skills training to assist spouses (Akinade, 2015). It is therefore, necessary that marital conflict resolutions strategies among couples be investigated with a view to assisting couples adopt useful procedures.

Against this background, the study seeks to investigate the effect of conflict resolution among married lecturers of tertiary institutions in Sokoto Metropolis.

Objective of the Study

The study sought to found out:

1. The difference in the level of marital conflict between married lecturers in treatment group compared to control group.

Research Question

The following research question was raised and guided the study

- (1) What is the difference in the level of marital conflict between married lecturers in treatment group compared to control group?

Research Hypothesis

The following null hypothesis was generated and guided the conduct of the study:

H_{01} : There is no significant effect of accommodation strategy on marital conflict among married lecturers of tertiary institutions in Sokoto Metropolis.

Significance of the Study

The findings of this study will provide empirical information that relates to effectiveness of marital conflict resolution strategies. Such information will enable researchers, marriage counsellors, therapists and social workers to have a better understanding and conceptualization of marriage conflicts, causes and different resolution strategies and their effectiveness and how they will impact on lecturers of tertiary institution of Sokoto. Marriage counselling will help reduce the escalating rate of divorce in our society. When parents reflect on the effects of divorce on couples, their children and society, they will prefer to adopt strategies to resolve conflicts. The findings of this study will further the application of the Role Theory Model propounded by Mangus, Social Learning Theory of Albert Bandura and Marital Communication Theory Model of Weakland on which this work is anchored. Based on this, the theories applicability as they relate to marital conflict resolution will be of immense benefit to scholars in the field of family and marriage. Further researchers could fall back on the result of the present study. The result will be made available to scholars and researchers in the field through conference publications, workshops, seminars and talks. Practically the findings of the study will be of great significance to lecturers, family, counsellors, couples and intending couples considering getting married as well as Non-governmental organizations.

Research Design

The research design employed is quasi experimental design to find out the effect of conflict resolution strategies on marital stability with experimental and control group in a pre-test and post-test research design. Quasi experimental design involves the manipulation of one or more independent variables but there is no random assignment of subject groups.

Population of the Study

The population for this study comprised of the two state government owned tertiary institutions within Sokoto metropolis with a total population of three hundred and forty five (345) from academic staff of Umaru Ali Shinkafi Polytechnic Sokoto and School of Nursing & Midwifery Sciences, Sokoto.

Table 1: Population of the Study Area

S/N	NAMES OF TERTIARY INSTITUTIONS	NO. OF MARRIED MALE LECTURERS	NO. OF MARRIED FEMALE LECTURERS	TOTAL
1	S.S.C.O.E Sokoto.	444	149	593
2	Sokoto State University	158	89	247
3	Umaru Ali Shinkafi Polytechnic, Sokoto.	140	78	218
4	School of Nursing and Midwifery Sciences, Sokoto.	66	61	127
	TOTAL	808	377	1185

Source: Record office of the Institutions as at April, 2017.

Sample and Sampling Technique

Two tertiary institutions were used with an appropriate sample of 60 respondents (30 control group & 30 experimental group) selected as representative sample from the population of 345, because of the nature of the study that do not require much sample. Purposive sampling technique was used to select the sample, the direct and deliberate selection is what Fox (1969) called deliberate selection.

Table 2: Distribution of sample respondents

S/N	NAMES OF TERTIARY INSTITUTIONS	NO. OF MARRIED MALE LECTURERS	NO. OF MARRIED FEMALE LECTURERS	TOTAL	REP SAMPLE
1	Umaru Ali Shinkafi Polytechnic, Sokoto.	140	78	218	30
2	School of Nursing and Midwifery Sciences, Sokoto.	66	61	127	30
	TOTAL	206	139	345	60

Source: Record office of the Institutions as at April, 2017.

Instrument for Data Collection

The research instrument that was used for data collection in this study is a questionnaire titled: “Marital Conflict Resolution Strategy Inventory” (MCRSI) designed by the researcher. A questionnaire is a research instrument consisting of series of questions and other prompts for the purpose of gathering information from respondents.

Validity of the Instrument

To determine the validity of the instrument, the instrument was given to the supervisors and some Lecturers in the Faculty of Education and Extension Services, Usmanu Danfodiyo University Sokoto to vet for content validity. The experts were allowed free hands to either remove any item they considered irrelevant or add any other item they considered relevant. Based on their comments and suggestions, some items were modified and in some cases, entirely new ones incorporated.

Reliability of the Instrument

To determine the reliability of the instrument, it was administered to a randomly selected 20 married teachers. This sample was chosen because they were outside the proposed final sample of the study. Although the sample selected for the trial testing was outside the geographical spread of the study area it was considered to have similar characteristics with the area of study.

Method of Data Analysis

The data collected using the instruments was analyzed so as to enable the researcher to answer the research questions and test hypotheses. The data analysis was carried out using

statistical package for social science (SPSS). The research questions posed in this study were descriptively analyzed using means and standard deviations. The hypothesis formulated was tested at 0.05 level of significance using independent t-test statistics.

Answers to Research Questions

Table 3: Effect of Accommodation Strategy on Marital Conflict

Strategy	Groups	Mean		Difference of Means
		Pre – test	Post - test	
Accommodation Strategy	Treatment	11.27	17.67	6.40
	Control	13.43	13.43	0.00

Source: Field Survey, 2017 & SPSS Output.

Table 3 shows the pre and post – test mean scores on the effect of accommodation strategy on marital conflict. From the table the difference of means in pre and post – test mean scores on treatment group shows effectiveness of accommodation strategy in resolving marital conflict due to the increase in mean score from 11.27 in pre – test to 17.67 in post – test for treatment group. The strategy is not effective in resolving marital conflict within the control group because the mean scores for both pre and post – tests were constant (13.43).

Table 4: Difference in the Level of Marital Conflict between Married Lecturers in Treatment Group compared to Control Group

Groups	Pre – test		Post - test	
	M	SD	M	SD
Treatment	33.47	3.22	51.47	3.02
Control	39.23	4.35	39.23	4.35

Source: Field Survey, 2017 & SPSS Output.

According to table 4, before intervention there was no any significant difference between the two groups (Treatment has 33.47, while control group has 39.23). However, the difference became significant after the training; the pre-test and post-test mean scores of the treatment group demonstrated a significant advance showing the effectiveness of conflict resolution strategies (discussion, mediation and accommodation) training in treatment group in comparison to control group. That is, the post-test mean score increased to 51.47 for treatment group against 33.47 in the pre-test.

Hypothesis Testing

Table 5: Effect of Accommodation Strategy in Resolving Marital Conflict

Strategy	Groups	Mean		Diff of Means	Std error	DF	T - cal	P - value	Decision
		Pre-test	Post-test						
Accommodation Strategy	Treatment	11.27	17.67	6.40	0.366	58	17.487	0.000	Rejected
	Control	13.43	13.43	0.00	0.47	58	0.00	1.000	Accepted

Source: Field Survey, 2017 & SPSS Output.

Table 5 showed that there exists significant effect of accommodation strategy on marital conflict resolution among married lecturers of tertiary institutions in Sokoto Metropolis because the p – value of 0.000 which is less than the significance level of 0.05 for the treatment group. Therefore, Hypothesis one which states that “there is no significant effect of accommodation strategy on marital conflict resolution among married lecturers of tertiary institutions in Sokoto Metropolis” is rejected for treatment group.

Summary of Findings

The following are the major findings of the study:

1. There is significance effect of accommodation strategy on marital conflict resolution of married lecturers in tertiary institutions in Sokoto Metropolis. In the sense that Accommodation Strategy helped in resolving marital conflict among married lecturers of tertiary institutions in Sokoto metropolis.
2. Participants who attended the training gained significantly more than those who did not among the married lecturers of tertiary institutions in Sokoto Metropolis.

Conclusion

Based on the findings of the study, the following conclusions were made:

Marriage is the basis of good family living, which introduces a healthy society. Parental harmony is quite important for the inculcation of required and acceptable behaviour of the individual child, as a virtue of cordial living therefore, healthy marital conflict resolution strategies must be employed by married couples in order to save their children and the society at large from the harmful effect associated with marital conflict.

Recommendation of the Study

The following recommendations are made based on the findings and conclusions of this study.

1. Accommodation strategy should be employed by couples to be able to endure each other’s behavior because no individual is faultless. Like your spouse and acknowledge their positive qualities.
2. Couples must be encouraged to attend to regular consultative meetings to facilitate unity and harmony among marriages.

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