



Intelligence and Self-Esteem as Correlates of Marital Success Among Married Couples in Sokoto Metropolis: Implications for Counselling

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Abstract

The main thrust of the study was to find out the relationship among emotional intelligence, self-esteem communication styles and marital success among couples in Sokoto Metropolis with a view to identifying its implications for counselling. The study was a correlational type and has a total population of 884656 married individuals and a sample of 384 as determined by research advisors (2006) table for determining sample size from a given population. The study adopted random sampling technique in selecting the target participants at the field. Questionnaire developed by Tambawal (2021) titled “Emotional Intelligence, Self-esteem and Marital Success Questionnaire” was used (EISECSMSQ) with construct and content validity as ascertained by experts in management evaluation. The reliability of 0.72 which was obtained through test, re-test method of estimating reliability index of the instrument. Two null hypotheses were formulated and tested using Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient Formula for hypotheses. Results showed that there was significant relationship between Emotional Intelligence and Marital Success; Self-Esteem and Marital Success. However, Emotional Intelligence was found to be a better predictor of marital success among the independent variables. The study therefore, concludes that there was significant positive relationship between emotional intelligence and marital success; self-esteem and marital success. Among recommendations offered were married couples should be exposed to emotional intelligence components and skills during pre-marital and marital counselling sessions.

Keywords: *Emotional Intelligence; Self-esteem and Marital Success*

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Introduction

Marriage is an institution through which man sustains the continuity of his race and attain satisfaction in a socially recognized manner. It is an important event in human life irrespective of ethnic group, society, religious affiliation and belief. As such social behaviour and outlook are consistently the reflection of the state of families that make up a society. Marriage has been acknowledged as one of the fundamental tools of building a healthy society where harmony and love, security, unity and peaceful co-existence among people exist. It is a means by which physiological, procreation, social, emotional and security needs are satisfied (Ibrahim, 2011). Marriage is human behaviour that involves a man and a woman or women, who agree to be united and live in an intimate and intense relationship and develop together. Such a union may form the nucleus of a family. Marriage union is solemnized and last till death separate the spouses or when there is divorce. Marriage may be long or brief; successful or not. Quality of each marriage depends on what each partner brings into it, and what they make of it once they are together (Akinade, 2015).

Habeeb in Tambawal (2021) defined marriage as a relationship involving two or more persons of the opposite sex, whose relationship is expected to endure over time. To Akinade (2015) marriage is a socially, legally, culturally or religiously approved intimate relationship between a male and female. It is a contract for union and cohabitation between one male and a female or more females for the establishment of their families. It is an open adventure book with several pages that involves two or more different individuals. It is a great natural thing in which partners make emotional and legal commitments with the help of ability to carry out marital duties. Marriage is enacted where ever two persons (a man and woman or women) agree with each other to live and spend their lives together. Both parties are full of expectations from each other to achieve one goal which is success (Akinbodunde in Tambawal 2021). According to Adesogun in Tambawal (2021) when marriage is taken seriously there is likelihood of saving the world from hatred and brutality as well as reducing the number of psychiatric and aggressive patients.

From the above definitions, in the opinion of the researchers, marriage can thus be seen as an act of worship to Allah and permanent bond which is authorized when a man and a woman decide on their own harmonious mutual understanding and in the presence of witnesses to exchange the formal sanction to live and love for the purpose of promoting their mutual growth and welfare together till death. However, while most people pray for a happy marital life, it has been observed that continuity and stability of marriage depends on each of the partner's effort and capability to make a success of it as a matter of fact due to marital conflicts being witnessed here and there many have wondered why marriages no longer work out.

Emotional Intelligence (EI) is the art of handling feelings which involve the ability to stay focused under or within conflict, handle criticism, diffuse anger and manage other forms of confrontations that can create or harm a relationship. Akinboye in Tambawal (2021) postulated that emotional intelligence is the ability to organize emotion driven perception, intuition and thought processes plus the ability to express such emotion laden behaviour as well as build trust, honesty, fairness, human dignity and integrity in life. Emotional intelligence is an umbrella term that captures a broad collection of interpersonal and intrapersonal skills. Interpersonal skills consist of the ability to understand the feelings of others, emphasize, maintain and develop social responsibility in other words, intrapersonal skills consist of the ability to understand one's emotion. Emotional intelligence plays a vantage function in determining life success which marriage is inclusive. Emotional Intelligence includes good character, integrity, empathy, honesty, maturity, impulse control, emotional self-awareness, human dignity, flexibility, reality testing, trust, mood management and proactive which are all competences that require skills in introducing feelings, paying attention to feelings, given significance to feelings, thinking about feeling and taking account in deciding how to act in life, at work, with the spouse and entire family members (Ayebeami & Tonbra in Tambuwal 2023). Emotional Intelligence is very necessary to resolve and

determine marital success because both the husband and wife have different personalities, wants, needs including ways of showing emotions.

Self-esteem refers to the effective or emotional aspect of self and generally signifies how one feels about or how values him or herself (one's worth). Self-esteem is something that an individual know about him-self, it is person's general attitude towards him-self and is mostly measured on a scale from positive to negative (Tambawal, 2021). Self -esteem is typically based on whether one thinks he is successful, a good person, smart and so on. It can vary depending on the situation and what have been going on lately and any feed-back an individual have gotten recently from his environment and people around him. In addition, self-esteem is how one feels about those things he knows. Self-esteem is a psychological construct which refers to the evaluation persons make in relation to themselves and indicate the extent to which they see themselves capable and worthy (Cooper & Smith in Tambawal, 2023). Self-esteem is the subjective emotional response that individual has towards him or herself. Such as the feeling 'I am valued', 'I am rejected' among others. Psychologists usually regarded self-esteem as an enduring personality characteristic, through normal, short -term variations occur. Self-esteem is a concept of personality for it to grow one need to have self- worth and this self-worth will be sought from embarrassing challenges that result in the showing of success. Self-esteem is the belief one has about him or herself and healthy self-esteem exist when one is valued, competent, worthy and accepted and unhealthy self -esteem exist when one belief him or herself to be incompetent, rejected, unworthy, unloved and lacking value to other people who feel good about themselves leave behind their conflict easily and stand up against negative pressures and they can enjoy life well. Self-esteem is the major determinants in forming emotional pattern and to indicate individual attitudes towards him or herself (Judge & Bono in Tambawal 2023). Studies revealed that people with high self-esteem have features such as mental maturity, stability, comfort, high ability to tolerate frustration and failure. While people with low self-esteem causes many psychological problems including depression, anxiety and apathy (Judge & Bono in Tambawal 2023).

The breakdown of marital relationship has no respect for religion, economic status, or ethnic group. Adeniran (2015) found that marital failure is more endemic in Africa and Asia than in Austria and Europe. High rate of divorce in Africa was traced to westernization, urbanization, industrialization and globalization. The extended family that used to resolve dispute between husband and wife is no longer active like in the past because of the shift towards nuclear family system distinguished by less involvement in the resolution of marital conflicts. High rate of divorce in Africa was traced to westernization, urbanization, industrialization and globalization. The extended family that used to resolve dispute between husband and wife is no longer active like in the past because of the shift towards nuclear family system distinguished by less involvement in the resolution of marital conflicts. According to Philip in Tambawal (2021) divorce rated in the United State and United Kingdom stands at 4.95% and 3.08% per 1000 marriages respectively. In Asia, Japan divorce rate stood at 10.4% and Korea 10.3% per 1,000 respectively (Premchand in Tambawal, 2012). In Africa, South Africa recorded the highest rate of divorce in Africa with 1 out of 4 marriages contracted ending in divorce (Awodele in Tambawal, 2021). According to Omosola (2024) in Nigeria divorce rate stood at 2.9% per 1000 people in 2023 based on available data on mirage and divorce. The case of one Sa'adatu Umaru Danhili of Sokoto North local Government sued her husband to Tudun Wada lower Sharia Court with case number CV/29/2023 demanding for marriage dissolution due to denial of food and beating just because she refused to succumb to his interest of marrying another wife these plus many cases of marriage dissolution in Sokoto Metropolis are cases of grief worry and distress to many stakeholders. The main thrust of this study, therefore, was to examine emotional intelligence and self-esteem as correlates of marital success among couples in Sokoto Metropolis.

Research Questions

The following research questions were raised and guided the study:

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1. What is the relationship between Emotional Intelligence (EI) and Marital Success (MS) of married couples in Sokoto Metropolis?
2. What is the relationship between Self –esteem and Marital Success of married couples in Sokoto Metropolis?

Objectives of the Study

The following objectives were formulated to find out if a relationship exists between:

1. emotional Intelligence and Marital success of married couples in Sokoto Metropolis,
2. self-esteem and Marital success of married couples in Sokoto Metropolis,

Research Hypotheses

Based on the research questions and objectives raised, the following research hypotheses were formulated and tested:

1. H01: There is no significant relationship between Emotional Intelligence (EI) and Marital Success of married couples in Sokoto Metropolis.
2. H02: There is no significant relationship between self-esteem and Marital Success of couples in Sokoto Metropolis

Literature Review

On empirical studies reviewed, the researcher was to inter-relate both independent and dependent variables where the findings were generated from difference researchers such as Roya, Nooraini, Azlina and Afsareh (2011) who worked relationship between emotional intelligent and forgiveness with marital satisfaction, a sample of 286 couples sample in Makurdi, Abuja and Jos Ebenuwa-Okah (2008) conducted a research on personality variable as correlated of marital success among married persons in Delta State of Nigeria in his research 1 question 1 hypothesis was formulated to guide the research and 2561 married person were selected through the use of purposive sampling techniques to participate. Esere, Yusuf & Omotosho (2011) carried out a study on influence of spousal communication on marital stability implications for conducive environment of married couples in Kwara State. The sample of the study was 600 stratified randomly selected married adults in Ilorin metropolis T. test and ANOVA statistics were used to compare the perception of married adult on the basis of gender and length of years in marriage among others.

This study is unique from the other empirical studies reviewed in terms of population, samples size, sampling techniques, geographical location, statistics and instrumentation. This study is unique or different from other works so far consulted, in the previous works most of them were carried out in places like Europe, Malaysia, Pakistan, kwara, Lagos, Makurdi, Jos, Ilorin and Abuja which are entirely different from the place where the current study was conducted. Similarly, the study is different from other studies in terms of the population involve in it. In the previous researches reviewed most them used female teachers, married women or married men only among others and samples in them were fewer than the sample used in the present study using different sampling techniques; purposive, proportionate and random against random sampling that most of works reviewed used. However, the present study is unique from the previous works reviewed in terms of instrument used in the data collection. The present study used an adapted version of “Emotional Intelligence, Communication Styles and Marital Success Questionnaire” with content and construct validity while the previous researches used adopted version with only content validity.

In terms of statistics used in analysing the data, the present study used both descriptive and inferential statistics while the previous researches used only either descriptive or inferential statistics. Likewise, the present study in the findings of the study, the present study found much relationship among emotional intelligence, communication styles and marital success of married couples in Sokoto State as against what was obtainable in the previous researches consulted.

Method

Descriptive research design of correlational type was adopted for this study. According to Bichi in Ibrahim (2016) descriptive research design of correctional type is concerned with the present and it provides data on the current situations of things. Sydney in Tambawal (2021) defined population as the entire group of persons, objects, or events whose characteristics are being studied. The population of this study was all married individuals living in Sokoto Metropolis. According to 2023 projected population and housing census of Federal Republic of Nigeria there are 884656 married people in the metropolis (N.P.C. Sokoto, 2023). The research advisors (2006), Table for determining sample size from a given population was employed and arrived at 384 participants as sample of the study. The researcher employed simple random sampling technique in selecting the target participants at the field with a view of giving the subjects equal chance of participation. . The researcher used a randomization method of Picking participants without bias at different locations. This ensured that selection was not influenced by personal judgment or preference. At the field level, participants were approached randomly across different areas of the metropolis until the required sample size of 384 respondents was reached This is because of the assertion of Otaha, (2015) random sampling is a procedure of giving every subject in the population from which the sample will be drawn an equal chance of being selected.

Result and Discussion

Result

Table 1: Mean and Standard Deviation of Married Couples' Emotional Intelligence, Self-esteem, and their Marital Success in Sokoto Metropolis.

Variables	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Mean Difference	R ² Change
Emotional Intelligence	384	58.69	13.33	1.48	0.425
Self-esteem	384	58.35	14.80	1.82	0.226
Marital Success	384	60.17	9.78		

Table 1 is a summary of mean, standard deviation and R² change in the regression model summary computed to establish the relationship and predictive power of each independent variable (emotional intelligence and self-esteem) on the dependent variable (marital success) among married couples in Sokoto Metropolis. The data analysis revealed the predictive capacity of the independent variables as follows: emotional intelligence contributed 42.5%; self-esteem contributed 22.6%; total variance in marital success of married couples in Sokoto metropolis. Therefore, emotional intelligence has the best predictive validity to marital success among married couples in Sokoto Metropolis, than self-esteem on marital success among married couples in Sokoto Metropolis.

Hypotheses Testing

All the null hypotheses formulated and tested 0.05 level of significance

H₀₁ There is no significant relationship between Emotional Intelligence (EI) and Marital Success of married couples in Sokoto Metropolis.

In testing this null hypothesis, the emotional intelligence scores and marital success scores obtained from the 384 selected couples whose emotional intelligence and marital success were measured via emotional intelligence questionnaires and marital success questionnaire respectively

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were sorted and correlated electronically using Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient (PPMC) on SPSS version 20.0 and the result is presented in Table 2

Table 2: Summary of Pearson's Correlation Coefficient between Emotional Intelligence and Marital Success among Married couples in Sokoto Metropolis.

Variables	N	Mean	SD	df	r-Cal	p-Value	Decision
Emotional Intel	384	48.69	13.33	382	0.903**	0.001	Sig.
Marital Success	384	60.17	9.78				

** Correlation is significant at 0.05 level (2-tailed)

Table 2 is a summary of Pearson correlation coefficient computed to establish the degree of relationship between emotional intelligence and marital success among couples in Sokoto Metropolis. The analysis revealed a calculated Pearson correlation coefficient r -Cal of 0.903 at 382 degrees of freedom and a p-Value of 0.001 at 0.05 level of significance (i.e. r -Cal = 0.903; df = 382; p = 0.001 & α = 0.05). Therefore, since the value of r -Cal is statistically very high and p-Value of 0.001 is less than 0.05 level of significant (i.e. $p < 0.05$), the null hypothesis one which states that "There no significant relationship between emotional intelligence and marital success among couples in Sokoto Metropolis" was rejected. Therefore, there is statistically significant very strong positive relationship between couples' level of emotional intelligence and their marital success in Sokoto Metropolis. This means that couples with high level of emotional intelligence have high level of marital success and those with low level of emotional intelligence have low level of marital success in Sokoto Metropolis.

H₀₂ There is no significant relationship between self-esteem and Marital Success of couples in Sokoto Metropolis

In testing this null hypothesis, the self-esteem scores and marital success scores obtained from the 384 selected couples whose self-esteem and marital success were measured via self-esteem questionnaire and marital success inventory respectively were sorted and correlated electronically using Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient (PPMC) on SPSS version 20.0 and the result is presented in Table 2

Table 3: Summary of Pearson's Correlation Coefficient between Self-esteem and Marital Success among Couples in Sokoto Metropolis.

Variables	N	Mean	SD	Df	r-Cal	p-Value	Decision
Self-esteem	384	58.4	14.8	382	0.819**	0.001	Sig.
Marital Success	384	60.2	9.78				

** Correlation is significant at 0.05 level (2-tailed)

Table 3 is a summary of Pearson correlation coefficient computed to establish the degree of relationship between self-esteem and marital success among couples in Sokoto Metropolis. The analysis revealed a calculated Pearson correlation coefficient of r -Cal of 0.819 at 382 degrees of freedom and a p-Value of 0.001 at 0.05 level of significance. (i.e. r -Cal = 0.819; df = 382; p = 0.001 & α = 0.05) Therefore, since the value of r -Cal = 0.819 is statistically very high and the p-Value is less than 0.05 level of significant (i.e. $p < 0.05$), the null hypothesis which states that "There no significant relationship between self-esteem and marital success among couples in Sokoto Metropolis" was also rejected. Therefore, there was statistically significant very strong positive correlation between self-esteem and marital success among couples in Sokoto Metropolis. This

means that couples with high level of self-esteem have high level of marital success and those with low level of self-esteem have low level of marital success in Sokoto Metropolis.

Discussion

The findings revealed that there was significant relationship among emotional intelligence, self-esteem and marital success among married couples in Sokoto Metropolis;

The analysis revealed a very strong positive and significant relationship was found between emotional intelligence and marital success of married couples in Sokoto Metropolis. The analysis revealed a Pearson's correlation index of $r=0.903$ with $p=0.001$ which was highly positive and statistically significant. These could be attributed to the fact that emotional intelligence serves as a tool of success in marital relationship. This finding corroborates the findings of Goleman (1998) who stated that emotional intelligence is paramount factor in adjustment of life in general. He attributed marital success to the level of couples' level of emotional intelligence which serves as a vital and most sensitive tool for success in marital relationship. The finding was also in line with the findings of Fitness in Tambawal (2021) who revealed that emotional forces between husband and wife are much more important than other factors affecting marital quality. It also agrees with the findings of Ayebami and Tonbra (2014) who posited that an emotionally intelligent person possess good character, integrity, empathy, maturity, impulse control, emotional self-awareness, human dignity, flexibility, trust, mood management and pro-activity. Their findings revealed that learning to put emotion under control known as mood management, contributes to success in marriage. The finding also corroborates the findings of Ortse, peter & Saawu in Ibrahim (2016) that excessive anger is one of the major sources of marital failure. This is in line with the model of emotional intelligence developed by Goleman (1995) where he believed that people are born with a general emotional intelligence that determines their potentials for learning emotional competences. He added that Emotional intelligence is subsequently and gradually learnt by individuals.

A high statistically significant positive correlation was found between Self-esteem and marital success among couples in Sokoto Metropolis. The analysis revealed a calculated Pearson's correlation coefficient of $r=0.819$; $p=0.001$. Therefore, there is high statistically significant positive relationship which means that couples' with high level of self-esteem record high level of marital success in Sokoto Metropolis. This finding is in line with Coopersmith in Tambawal (2023) who postulated that Self-esteem has generally been investigated in three ways, each of which has been treated almost independently of the others. First, self-esteem has been investigated as an outcome. These scholars have focused on processes that produce or inhibit self-esteem. Second self-esteem has been investigated as self-motive that is the tendency for people to behave in ways that maintain or increase positive evaluation of the self, finally self-esteem has been investigated as a better for the self-providing protection from experience that are harmful. Gesca and Rosenberg in Tambawal (2023) believed that self-esteem refers to an individual's overall positive evaluation of the self. It is comprised of two distinct dimensions: competence and worth. The competence dimension (efficacy based self-esteem) refers to the degree to which people see themselves as capable and efficacious. The worth dimension (worth based dimension) refers to the degree to which individuals feel they are persons of value which are of important in strengthening intimate relationships.

Conclusion

This study examined the relationship among independent variables (Emotional intelligence, Self-esteem and Marital Success of married couples in Sokoto State. It discovered a large percentage of married couples in Sokoto State are emotionally intelligent. The analysis of the R^2 Change statistics

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of the regression model revealed that emotional intelligence accounted for 54.2% of the total variance in marital success of married couples in Sokoto state which is an indication that there was significant positive relationship between emotional intelligence and marital success of the respondents in the study. This led to the conclusion that emotional intelligence has a vantage role in all human endeavour marital relationship inclusive; it needs to be cultured among married couples in Sokoto State and Nigeria at large with sole aim of having healthy families. In other words healthy families in societies indicate existence of peace, security and success among couples in the study area and Nigeria at large.

Self-esteem accounted for 24.6% of the total variance in marital success among couples in Sokoto State was found to be the second most significant factor that contributed significantly to marital success among couples in Sokoto State. This influenced the conclusion of the study that individuals should be made to understand that positive self-esteem is an important and indispensable factor for good and healthy relationships.

Suggestion

Based on the findings of this study, the following recommendations were put forward for married couples, pre – married couples, marital counsellors, guidance counsellors, parents, religious leaders, entire state and the nation at large.

Married couples should be exposed to emotional intelligence components and skills during marriage advice sessions and ceremonies by parents, elders, friends, marital counsellors and religious leaders in order to promote healthy marital relationship.

Married couples should believe in themselves and know that they are great addition to their marital relationship and avoid any thing that can lead to feeling bad about self that is feeling unloved, awkward or incompetent since there was significant positive between self-esteem and marital success.

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