Influence Of Perceived Marital Quality And Communication Pattern On Psychological Well-Being Of Married Couples In Ibadan-North Local Government Area Of Oyo State

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ABSTRACT

The relationship between certain psychological factors as predictors of psychological well-being among married couples seemed to have enjoyed little research from scholars; there is paucity of data on this issue. *The study therefore, investigated the influence of perceived marital quality and communication pattern on psychological well-being of married couples in Ibadan- North Local Government Area of Oyo state. The study was Cross-sectional survey research, and ex-post facto design was adopted. Five hundred and thirty-six (536) married persons participated through purposive sampling technique. Generated hypotheses were tested using multiple regressions analysis and t-test of independent samples at a 0.05 level of significance. Findings revealed that more of the respondents 387 (72.2%) were females, while the other 149 (27.8%) were males. Age of respondents ranged between 29 years and 58 years old, with average age being 36 years and 6 months (SD = 13.12). Married persons with high level of perceived marital quality reported higher psychological well-being than those with low level of perceived marital quality [t (534) = 5.03; p<.01]. Also, married persons with effective communication pattern reported significantly higher psychological well- being than those with ineffective communication pattern [t (534) = 3.16; p<.05]. Further, perceived marital quality and communication pattern jointly predicted 5% variance in psychological well-being (R = .23; R^2 = .05; F (2, 533) = 4.66; P<.01); only communication pattern (β = .48; t= 3.53; p<.05) independently predicted psychological well-being. Finally, when combined, socio-demographic factors (age and educational experience) predicted 20% variance in psychological well- being. Further analysis revealed that age (β = .28; t= 2.08; p<.05) and educational experience (β = .26; t= 3.58; p<.05) independently predicted psychological well- being. It was concluded that marital quality and communication pattern were significant factors associated with psychological well-being among married persons in Ibadan. It is therefore, recommended that factors should be giving considerable attention by marriage counselors and other stakeholders involved in handling marital issues, in order to maintain better and stable homes.*

Keywords: *Perceived Marital Quality, Psychological Well-Being, Communication Pattern*

Introduction

Psychological well-being according to Diener, Lucas, Schimmack, & Helliwell (2010) is a subjective evaluation of one's life that is categorized by affirmative emotions, engagement, and meaning. This definition encompasses a broad range of positive experiences, including happiness, satisfaction, and a sense of fulfilment. Similar to this, Seligman (2002) put out the idea of "positive psychology," which sees psychological well-being as a confluence of fulfilment and enjoyment. This definition acknowledges that happiness is characterized by positive emotions, pleasure, and a sense of meaning and purpose in life, rather than just the absence of unpleasant feelings or events. Psychological well-being is a broad and multifaceted construct that refers to an individual's overall experience of positive emotions, satisfaction with life, and sense of purpose. The study of psychological well-being has been an active area of research in psychology for several decades, with the goal of gaining a deeper understanding of the factors that contribute to its development and maintenance.

One of the earliest and most influential models of psychological well-being was proposed by Seligman and Csikszentmihalyi (2000), who defined it as the result of two dimensions: positive emotion and engagement in meaningful activities. According to this model, individuals who experience frequent positive emotions and are actively engaged in activities that are meaningful to them are likely to have higher levels of psychological well-being. Other researchers have expanded on this model by including additional dimensions of psychological well-being, such as positive relationships and experiences, Diener, et' al., (2010), personal growth (Linley & Joseph, 2004), and a sense of purpose (Ryff, 1989). Psychological well-being is often operationalized as a mood, affect, trait, or experience which may last few moments or a few days. In comparison with mood, psychological well-being consists of changeable components which could dynamically influence the actual mental state (Chida & Steptoe, 2008).

Akin (2008) cites various terms such as happiness, mood, affect, subjective well-being, quality of life, satisfaction with life, mental health, emotional health and well-being - all being used interchangeably with psychological well-being. No doubt, psychological well-being is an internal state; it is affected by external factors. Some influential factors include: perceived marital quality, communication pattern and other social and environmental factors.

Perceived marital quality is a mental state that reflects the perceived benefits and costs of marriage to a particular person and has been identified as one of the factors that may influence Psychological well-being. Perceived marital quality refers to an individual's subjective experience of the marriage. Individuals usually perceived higher level of marital quality, when their needs are being met, and when the individual's expectations and desires are being satisfied (Fowers & Owenz, 2010)

A perceived marital quality is a subjective condition, which can only be described by the individual spouse. An individuals' personal evaluation of their marriage overall and the most similar to the concept of marital happiness, because only the individuals are able to say how happy or satisfied they are. Perceived marital quality is not; a quality of the relationship, a measurement of the relationship and predictive of relationship success (i.e., stability).

According to Schoen, Astone., Rothert, Standish, & Kim, (2002), perceived marital quality is a global evaluation of the state of one's marriage and a reflection of marital happiness and functioning. From an evolutionary perspective, perceived marital quality can be viewed as a personality state of regulated mechanisms that monitor the benefits and costs of marriage to a particular person (Shackelford and Buse, 2000). Perceived marital quality can be evaluated from the perspectives of both husbands' and wives' point of view. Several factors are said to influence

wives' perceived marital quality. These factors include: level of intimacy, the ability to personality- disclose with their spouses and perceiving their partners as responsible, Park & Peterson (2006). Other factors include: husbands' expression of affection and amount of time spent together, as well as communication styles. On the other hand, factors associated with perceived marital quality from the husbands' point of view include: satisfaction with sexual relationship, division of household tasks or view of gender roles and the extent of input they perceive they get in the relationship.

Another factor considered in this study is communication pattern. Communication is our link to humanity. In its broadest sense, it is a process involving the deliberate or accidental transfer of meaning. In another way, communication can be defined as the formal as well as informal sharing of meaningful and timely information (Larson, Chastain, Hoyt, & Ayzenberg, 2015). Thus, anytime an individual communicates with another person, whether a spouse, friend, parent, co-worker, or employer, interpersonal communication is taking place. Communication patterns are behaviors consisting of interactions and actions or multiple combinations of these collective activities implemented in an appropriate way to enable an informal and formal conversation with certain objectives (Fisher & Ellis, 1980). These behaviors help to establish bonds between individuals' actions in an organization and to engage them in communication designs (Schneider, Bell, Sun, & Avery, 2013). In particular, there is an emphasis on the importance of information seeking and the communication of information (Qi Yang, Jianyuan Huang, 2020).

Statement of problem

In 1996, legislation was passed establishing the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families programme (TANF). This programme had four "family formation" goals: "to provide assistance to needy families, to end dependence of needy parents on government benefits by promoting job preparation, work, and marriage, to prevent

and reduce the incidence of out-of-wedlock pregnancies, and to encourage the formation and maintenance of two parent families" (Ooms, 2002). A focus on marriage was introduced, which introduced incentives for states to focus attention and funds on promoting marriage and subsequent psychological well-being among families (Sarath, and Dhanabhakyam, 2022). This marriage promotion legislation is intended to lower the poverty rate and reduce dependence on federal assistance by increasing the number of marriages, enhancing existing marriages, decreasing the divorce rate and subsequently increased psychological wellbeing (Qi Yang, Jianyuan Huang, 2020).

Ooms (2019) suggested that the marriage promotion movements ignoring the needs and circumstances of the population group that is most in need of help, the low income couples. Along with knowledge about the outcomes of marriage promotion for financially unstable and rural people, little is known about the link between marriage and psychological well-being. Additional exploration of the psychological determinants of psychological wellbeing among married couples will be an advantage to body of research (Ooms, 2019). This study, therefore, examines the influence of perceived marital quality and communication pattern on psychological well-being among married couples in Ibadan. The following research questions will be answered at the end of the study;

Will perceived marital quality have significant influence on psychological well-being among married couples in Ibadan metropolis? Will communication pattern have significant influence on psychological well-being among married couples in Ibadan metropolis? Will marital quality and communication pattern have significant joint and independent influence on psychological well-being among married couples in Ibadan metropolis? Will gender have significant influence on psychological well-being among married couples in Ibadan metropolis?

The broad objective of this study is to investigate the influence of perceived marital quality and communication pattern on psychological well-being among married couples in Ibadan metropolis. The following specific objectives will be achieved at the end of the study. To determine whether perceived marital quality will have significant influence on psychological well-being among married couples in Ibadan metropolis. To investigate whether communication pattern will have significant influence on psychological well-being among married couples in Ibadan metropolis. To examine whether perceived marital quality and communication pattern will have significant joint and independent influence on psychological well-being among married couples in Ibadan metropolis. To understand whether gender will have significant influence on psychological well-being among married couples.

Methods

Design

This study was a cross-sectional survey, ex-post facto design was adopted. A well-structured and validated questionnaire was used for the data collection. The independent variables for the study were perceived marital quality and communication pattern, while the dependent variable is psychological well-being. The researcher did not manipulate any of the independent variables in the study.

Population and Sampling Techniques

This study utilized married couples in Ibadan-North Local Government Area. The following settings were utilized: state secretariat and Ibadan-North secretariat, both located in Ibadan metropolis. For inclusion criteria, participants must be married persons, while the study excluded those who are not married. Participants were selected through purposive sampling technique.

Participants

All participants are couples; Five hundred and thirty-six (536) participated in the study. More of the respondents 387 (72.2%) were females, while the other 149

(27.8%) were males. Age of respondents ranged between 29 years and 58 years old, with average age being 36 years and 6 months (SD = 13.12).

Instruments

The instrument used in the study consists of psychological tests inventory for data collection. The tests were divided into four sections; A, B, C & D.

Section A: Socio-demographic information

It consists of items measuring socio-demographic information of the participants, such as: age, working experience, educational qualification, number of children, etc.

Section B: Psychological Well-Being Scale

Psychological Well-Being scale (PWB) developed by Ryff and Keyes, (1995) consists of eight (18**)** items describing important aspects of human functioning ranging from positive relationships, to feelings of competence, to having meaning and purpose in life. Each item is answered on a 1–7 scale that ranges from strong disagreement to strong agreement. All items are phrased in a positive direction. High scores signify that respondents view themselves in very positive terms in diverse areas of functioning. The PWB correlated very strongly with the total scores for the other psychological well-being scales, at 0.80 and 0.69.

Section C: Perceived Marital Communication Questionnaire

Communication pattern in this study was measured using Inventory of Kerkstra (1985) that assesses the way couples perceived each other's pattern of communication in marriage. The scale consists of 15 items with 5-point Likert response format, which ranged from strongly agree to strongly disagree. The scale developer reported internal consistencies (Cronbach's alpha) of .66.

Section D: ENRICH Marital Satisfaction Scale

Perceived Marital Quality was measured using ENRICH Marital Satisfaction Scale: developed by Blaine, Fowers and DavidOlson (1993). The EMS Scale is a

15-item scale comprising the Idealistic Distortion (5 items) and Marital Satisfaction scales (10 items). Each of the 10 Marital Satisfaction items represents one of the areas of the marital relationship assessed by the full-length ENRICH Inventory (e.g. communication or sexual relationship). Items 1, 4, 6, 9, and 13 constitute the Idealistic Distortion scale. The remaining items are in the Marital Satisfaction scale. The EMS Scale was evaluated for internal consistency and test-retest reliability. The Cronbach's alpha revealed an internal reliability of .86. The reliability coefficient over time was .86 and it is a 5-point rating scale, ranging from strongly disagree to strongly agree. Items 2, 5, 8, 9, 12 and 14 are reversed items. The higher the score above the sample mean score on each subscale, the higher the individual on such sub-scale vice – versa.

Procedure

A letter of introduction and request to conduct the research at the setting, from University of Ibadan, through the Department of Psychology approval was collected and submitted to the settings for the research. A request for permission from each of the settings involved was also made and approval received. The researchers were introduced to the potential participants. A brief introduction to what the study entails was done, after which the researchers administered the instrument. The researchers engaged Research Assistants (RAs) in data gathering/copy of instrument distribution. A total of six hundred (600) copies of questionnaire was distributed, only five hundred and sixty-five (565) were retrieved and were used for data analysis.

Data Analysis

The gathered data were analyzed using appropriate statistical tool through SPSS version 22.0. Hypotheses one and two were tested using t-test for independent samples, while hypothesis three and four were tested using multiple regressions analysis.

Results

Table 1: Zero-Order Correlation Showing the Relationship between Perceived Marital Quality, Communication Pattern and Psychological Well-Being

SN	Variable	1	2	3	Mean	SD
1	Psychological well-being	-	.43**	.09	39.32	12.09
2	Perceived Marital Quality		-	.11*	22.29	9.23
3	Communication pattern			-	33.21	11.18

**** Significant at 0.01**
*** Significant at 0.05**

Table 1 presents results on the relationship between psychological well-being, perceived marital quality and communication pattern among married persons in Ibadan metropolis. It is presented that there exists significant positive relationship between psychological well-being and perceived marital quality (r = .43; P<.01); this implies that the higher the marital quality, the higher the psychological well- being. However, there was no significant relationship between psychological well-being and perceived marital quality (P>.05).

Hypothesis One: Married persons with high level of perceived marital quality will report significantly higher level of psychological well-being than those with low level of perceived marital quality. This was tested using T-test for independent samples and the result is presented on Table 2;

Table 2: T-test Summary Table showing perceived marital quality differences in psychological well-being

Dependent variable	Perceived marital quality	N	Mean	SD	df	t	p
Psychological well- being	Low	335	19.19	5.86	534	5.03	<.01

High	201	39.20	2.44

Table 2 presents perceived marital quality differences psychological well-being among married persons in Ibadan metropolis. The results revealed that perceived marital quality had significant influence on psychological well-being among

Married persons [t (534) = 5.03; p<.01]. Married persons with high level of perceived marital quality reported higher psychological well-being (Mean = 39.20; SD = 2.44) than those with low level of perceived marital quality (Mean = 19.19; SD = 5.86). This confirms the stated hypothesis and was thus accepted.

Hypothesis Two: Married persons with effective communication pattern will significantly report higher psychological well-being than those with ineffective communication pattern. This was tested using T-test for independent samples and the result is presented on Table 2;

Table 3: T-test Summary Table showing communication pattern differences in psychological well-being

Dependent Variable	Communication pattern	N	Mean	SD	df	t	p
PWB	Ineffective	223	18.04		234	3.16	<.05
	Effective	313	20.01	3.62			

Table 3 presents communication pattern differences in psychological well-being among married persons in Ibadan metropolis. From Table 4.2, it is shown that there exist significant communication pattern differences in psychological well- being among married persons [t (534) = 3.16; p<.05]. Married persons with effective communication pattern reported significantly higher psychological well- being (Mean = 20.01: SD = 4.67) than those with ineffective communication pattern (Mean = 18.04: SD = 3.62). This confirms the stated hypothesis, and was therefore, accepted.

Hypothesis Three: Perceived marital quality and communication pattern will jointly and independently predict psychological well-being among married persons in Ibadan metropolis.

Table 4: Multiple regression summary table showing perceived marital quality and communication pattern as predictors of psychological well-being

Variables	R	R^2	F	p	B	t	Sig.
Perceived marital quality	.32	.05	4.66	<.05	-.19	-1.22	.23
Communication pattern					.48	3.53	.00

Table 4 presents perceived marital quality and communication pattern as predictors of psychological well-being among married persons in Ibadan metropolis. The result revealed that perceived marital quality and communication pattern had significant joint influence on psychological well-being ($R = .23$; $R^2 = .05$; $F (2, 533) = 4.66$; $P<.01$). Collectively, perceived marital quality and communication pattern predicted 5% variance in psychological well-being. Further analysis revealed that only communication pattern ($\beta = .48$; $t= 3.53$; $p<.05$) independently predicted psychological well-being among married persons in Ibadan metropolis. There were two hypotheses combined as one in this analysis. The joint effect was fully confirmed; while the other was partially confirmed as only one variable that had independent effect.

Hypothesis Four: Age and educational qualification will jointly and independently predict psychological well-being among married persons in Ibadan metropolis. This was tested using multiple regression analysis and the result is presented on Table 4.4;

Table 5: Multiple regression summary table showing socio-demographic variables as predictors of psychological well-being

Variables	R	R^2	F	p	B	t	Sig.
Age					.28	2.08	.04
Educational experience	.45	.20	15.64	<.05	.26	3.58	.00

Table 5 presents socio-demographic factors (age and educational experience) as predictors of psychological well-being among married persons in Ibadan. From Table 5, it is shown that socio-demographic factors (age and educational experience) had significant joint influence on psychological well-being ($R = .45$; $R^2 = .20$; $F (2, 532) = 15.64$; $p<.01$). Collectively, socio-demographic factors (age and educational experience) predicted 20% variance in psychological well-being.

Further analysis revealed that age ($\beta = .28$; $t= 2.08$; $p<.05$) and educational experience ($\beta = .26$; $t= 3.58$; $p<.05$) independently predicted psychological well- being among the married persons. This confirms the stated hypothesis, hence, it will be retained in this study.

Discussions

The hypothesis that predicted married persons with high level of perceived marital quality will report significantly higher level of psychological well-being than those with low level of perceived marital quality was confirmed. It was found that perceived marital quality had significant influence on psychological well-being among married persons. Married persons with high level of perceived marital quality reported higher psychological well-being than those with low level of perceived marital quality. It is expected that, if the quality of marital life is high, the consequence(s) would be a better psychological well-being on all stakeholders, including the children in the marriage (Shek, 2000). It is like having no conflict of interest (Approach- Approach) as observed by Shek (2000), and this is rewarding in itself. Though the present study found a correlation between quality of marriage and psychological well-being, Wahyuningsih, Kusumaningrum and Novitasari (2020) claimed in their study that consistency was lacking in the conclusion of this claim. This is so because, marital quality is seen as a continuum and it is this nature that is responsible for the lack of consistency in previous studies. So, the present study, while confirming this relationship has further increased the debate on this relationship.

In relation to the findings, Sanders and Morgan (2011), in a study found a significant positive relationship between marital quality and psychological well-being. This was also corroborated by a study conducted by Smith, Oliver and Innocenti (2011), perceived marital

quality had significant influence on mental well- being of married persons.

The second hypothesis stated that married persons with effective communication pattern will significantly report higher psychological well-being than those with ineffective communication pattern and this was confirmed. We, therefore, affirm that where there is communication, effective one for that matter, it would reflect in the satisfaction that would be experienced by the couples. This view was equally shared by Arzeen, Arzeen, & Muhammad (2023) and consequently affects both marital quality, as well as psychological well-being of the two. This view is equally shared by APA (2020) where it was stated that "Communication is a key piece of a healthy relationship. Healthy couples make time to check in with one another on a regular basis.". Happiness radiates all over in the home and possibly rob off on the children as well. This study found that Married persons with effective communication pattern reported significantly higher psychological well-being than those with ineffective communication pattern. Similarly, Larson and Chastain, (2009) investigated the relationship between communication pattern and psychological well-being among married persons in Ireland. It was found that communication pattern had significant positive relationship with psychological well-being among high school students. Further, Larson, Chastain, Hoyt, and Ayzenberg, (2015) also discovered that communication pattern had significant influence on psychological well-being among married persons.

From the on-going discussion, it is expected that there should be a joint influence of both marital quality and effective communication on psychological well-being of couples. Hence, the third hypothesis predicted that perceived marital quality and communication pattern will jointly predict psychological well-being among married persons in Ibadan metropolis. This was confirmed in the present study, where it was revealed that perceived marital quality and communication pattern had significant joint influence on psychological well-being. Collectively, perceived marital quality and communication pattern predicted 5% variance in psychological well-being. Though the percentage contribution was perceived by the authors to be low, and this could be attributable to other intervening/mediating or moderating variable(s), the fact is clear that there is a joint effect of the two variables predicted. This was a further confirmation of Wahyuningsih, Kusumaningrum, and Novitasari (2020) study about the effect of these variables and happiness in marriage.

Also, McCubbin and Patterson (2010) investigated the influence perceived marital quality on psychological well-being among married couples in Germany. It was discovered that perceived marital quality had significant influence on psychological well-being among couples. Further, Baker, Blacher, Crnic and Edelbrock (2013) unraveled those psychosocial predictors such as social support, locus of control, and perceived marital quality had significant influence on psychological well-being.

Hypothesis four stated that age and educational qualification will jointly and independently predict psychological well-being among married persons in Ibadan metropolis. This was tested using multiple regression analysis and it was discovered that socio-demographic factors (age and educational experience) had significant joint influence on psychological well-being. Collectively, socio- demographic factors (age and educational experience) predicted 20% variance in psychological well-being. Further analysis revealed that age and educational experience independently predicted psychological well-being among the married persons. This confirms the stated hypothesis; hence, it will be retained in this study. In relation to the findings of this study, Johnson, Wood, Gooding, Taylor, and Tarrier, (2011) found in their study that there existed significant relationship between communication pattern and psychological well-being among the Married persons. Also, Van Orden, Witte, and James (2008) discovered that communication pattern had significant influence on psychological well-being among the married persons.

Conclusion

The following conclusions were drawn based on the research findings; Firstly, this study concludes that perceived marital quality was significant predictors of psychological well-being among married persons in Ibadan metropolis; married persons with high level of perceived marital quality reported higher psychological well-being than those with low perceived marital quality. The study also concludes that communication pattern was significant determinant of psychological well-being among married persons in Ibadan metropolis; those with effective communication pattern reported higher psychological

well-being than those with ineffective communication pattern

In addition, the study concludes that perceived marital quality and communication pattern were significant joint determinants of psychological well- being among married persons in Ibadan metropolis; however, only communication pattern had independent influence on psychological well-being among the married persons.

Finally, this study concludes that certain socio-demographic factors (age and educational qualification) jointly predicted psychological well-being among married persons in Ibadan metropolis. However, only educational experience had independent influence on psychological well-being among married persons.

Recommendations

This study, therefore, examines the influence of perceived marital quality ad communication pattern on psychological well-being among married couples in Ibadan. From the findings, therefore, the following recommendations were made:

Firstly, this study found that perceived marital quality was a significant determinant of psychological well-being among married persons in Ibadan. Specifically, psychological well-being is higher in married persons with high perceived marital quality than those with low perceived marital quality. It is therefore, recommended that marriage counselors with deep knowledge of psychology assist in this regard to ensure that marital quality is boosted in marriages. This will lead to a win-win condition, where the husband and the wife will be in a positive position.

The study also found that communication pattern was a significant determinant of psychological well-being among married persons. Specifically, those with effective communication pattern reported higher psychological well- being than those with ineffective communication pattern. It was therefore, recommended that married persons develop to become best of friends, before any other thing, in order to make their communication pattern worthy of appreciating their marriage.

Stability in marriage and marital satisfaction can be enhanced by a combination of other factors/variables apart from financial comfortability, especially among rural and

semi-urban people, thus from the findings of this study, it is recommended that psychological variables like communication and psychological well-being should be considered along with others factors. The study further recommends that apart from the two variables examined in this study, many other variables should be considered, as well as this study cannot lay claim to the fact that only the variables considered here were exhaustive.

Similarly, the study should be expanded to cover more areas, not only in Ibadan, but throughout Nigeria and other countries of similar characteristics as Ibadan in particular and Nigeria in general. Additional exploration of the psychological determinants of psychological well-being among married couples will be an advantage to body of research.

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