

# Influence of Effective Spousal Communication on Marital Stability as Expressed by Married Adults in Kwara State.

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## ABSTRACT

*In every community, marriage is considered imperative because it is the foundation upon which the society is found. The purpose of this study is to find out the influence of effective spousal communication on marital stability. The descriptive survey method were adopted for this study, self-developed questionnaire titled Influence of effective spousal communication on Marital Stability Questionnaire (IECOMSQ) was used to collect data for the study. The questionnaire was administered to 220 randomly selected married adults in Kwara State. The t-test and analysis of variance (ANOVA) statistics were used which was tested at 0.05 alpha level of significance. The findings shows that there is no significance difference on the influence of effective spousal communication on marital stability as expressed by married adults on the basis of age, gender, religion affiliation but there was a significance difference based on the number of children. Based on the findings of this study, it was recommended, amongst others, that marriage counselling clinics should be set up in all major establishments in Nigeria so as to educate married men and women of the need for effective spousal communication in marriage for a peaceful and conducive home environment.*

**KEY WORDS:** Effective spousal communication, Influence, Marital stability, Marriage Married Adult.

## 1.0 INTRODUCTION

In every community, marriage is considered imperative because it is the foundation upon which the society is found. Influence of effective spousal communication on marital stability as now being a concern among married adults.

Marriage is the socially acceptable union between a man and a woman. It means the coming together of two totally different individuals as husband and wife who agree to plan and set up their own family (Osarenren, Nwadinigwe & Anyama, 2013).



Marriage fosters the coming together of two individuals with totally different personality traits as husband and wife to plan their future and set up their own family (Esere, 2002).

Gbadebo (2003) expressed marriage as long life, sacred and highly solemnized human institution. It is the union of the mature men and women for the upbringing of children. Marriage as a sacred and permanent contract which is assumed to be enacted when two people come together (usually a man and a woman) decided of their own accord and in the presence of at least two witness to exchange the formal consent to live a life of vocation of love and sharing for each other for the purpose of promoting their mutual growth and welfare as partners in their journey together in life (Nwoye, 1991).

The influence of effective spousal communication on marital stability cannot

be over emphasized whenever the issue of marriage is discussed. Nadir (2003) opined that effective communication in marriage is the process whereby we convey ideas, opinions, feelings, sentiments, beliefs or impression among spouses. Effective spousal communication brings understanding that lead to unity and harmony in marriage. In every conversation in marriage, the couple should aspire to bargain to love and they should not aim at hurting each other no matter how enraged, disturbed, discourage and offended. They should adopt love when they speak and be transparent.

## 1.1 STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Ary-Donal (1997) opined that expressing and formulating a problem is one of the most important aspects of understanding research in any field. The issue of how

effective spousal communication influence marital stability are rarely common, a close examination of available research work reveal that there are few researches on the related topic. Some of the available research work considered factors influencing marital stability (Falunsi 1997). From the foregoing, it is the aim of this researcher to find out the influence of effective spousal communication on marital stability as expressed by married adult in Kwara State. Therefore, this research intends to fill the gap of knowledge that has not been giving specific attention.

## 1.2 RESEARCH QUESTIONS

In a bid to find out the influence of effective spousal communication on marital stability as expressed by married adults in Kwara State, some questions agitate the mind of the researcher such as:

1. What do married adults in Kwara State express as influence of effective spousal communication on marital stability?
2. Will respondents from different ethnic background express the influence of effective spousal communication on marital stability in different ways?
3. Will respondents on the basis of gender express the influence of effective spousal communication on marital stability differently?
4. Will respondents of different age express the influence of effective spousal communication on marital stability differently?
5. Will respondents with children and those without children express the influence of effective spousal

communication on marital stability in different ways?

### 1.3 RESEARCH HYPOTHESES

The following research hypotheses were tested in this study.

1. There is no significance difference in the expression of married adults on the influence of effective spousal communication on marital stability on the basis of gender?
2. There is no significance difference in the expression of married adults on the influence of effective spousal communication on marital stability on the basis of religious affiliation.
3. There is no significance difference expression of married adults on the influence of effective spousal communication on marital stability based on their age.

4. There is no significance difference on how married adults in Kwara State express influence of effective spousal communication on marital stability based on the number of children.

### 2.0 MATERIALS AND METHOD

This chapter gives information on the method that was used in eliciting information from the target population and how the research was carried out to get the data. It is concerned with the research design, sample & sampling procedure, instrumentation, psychometric properties, procedure for data collection, scoring and the method of data analysis used in this research.

The descriptive survey method was adopted for this study, questionnaire comprising of 18 items titled Influence of effective spousal communication on Marital Stability

Questionnaire (IECOMSQ) was used to elicit information from the respondents. The questionnaires were personally administered to randomly select 220 married adult comprising of females and males in Kwara State by the researcher and necessary explanations were given to facilitate the supply of information.

### 3.0 RESULT AND DISCUSSION

This chapter deals with the result and interpretation of the findings of the study.

#### 3.1 DEMOGRAPHIC DATA

**Table 1: Frequency Count and Percentage Distribution of Respondents on the Basis of Age**

| Age                | Frequency | Percentage |
|--------------------|-----------|------------|
| Below 30 years     | 109       | 49.5       |
| 30 years and above | 111       | 50.5       |
| Total              | 220       | 100.0      |

Table 1 shows the respondents based on their age distribution, essentially, 109 (49.5%) of the population fall within the age

The purpose of the study was to find out the influence of effective spousal communication on marital stability as expressed by married adults in Kwara State. The instrument for data collection was a questionnaire titled “Influence of Effective spousal communication on marital Stability Questionnaire” (IECMSQ). The results were presented in tables using frequency simple percentage, t-test and ANOVA.

bracket of below 30 years while second category of respondents fall between 31 years and above i.e. (50.5%).

**Table 2: Frequency Count and Percentage Distribution of Respondents on the basis of Gender**

| Gender | Frequency | Percentage |
|--------|-----------|------------|
| Male   | 115       | 52.3       |
| Female | 105       | 47.7       |
| Total  | 220       | 100.0      |

Table two shows that 115 (52.3%) of the respondents were males while 105 (47.7%) are females respectively.

**Table 3: Frequency Count and Percentage Distribution of Respondents on the Basis of Number of Children**

| Number of children | Frequency | Percentage |
|--------------------|-----------|------------|
| 1- 4               | 129       | 58.6       |
| 5 and above        | 91        | 41.4       |
| Total              | 220       | 100.0      |

Table three shows that 129 (58.6%) have between 1 and 4 children while 91 (41.4%) have 5 children and above.

**Table 4: Frequency Count and Percentage Distribution of Respondents on the Basis of Religion**

| Religion                     | Frequency | Percentage |
|------------------------------|-----------|------------|
| African Traditional Religion | 12        | 5.5        |
| Christianity                 | 110       | 50.0       |
| Islam                        | 98        | 44.5       |

|       |     |       |
|-------|-----|-------|
| Total | 220 | 100.0 |
|-------|-----|-------|

Table four shows that there are three religious groups; African traditional Religion, Christianity, and Islam. African traditional Religion had 12 (5.5%), Christianity had 110 (50.0%), and Islam 98 (44.5%) respectively. This indicates that Christian respondents participated more in the study than other religious groups.

Table 5: Frequency Counts and Percentage Distribution of Respondents on the Basis of Highest Educational Qualification

| Highest educational qualification   | Frequency | Percentage |
|-------------------------------------|-----------|------------|
| Primary school certificate          | 75        | 34.1       |
| Secondary school certificate        | 71        | 32.3       |
| Post – secondary school certificate | 74        | 33.6       |
| Total                               | 220       | 100.0      |

Table 5 reveals that there are three educational attainment groups; primary school, secondary school and post – secondary school. Primary school had 75 (34.1%), secondary school 71 (32.3%) and post-secondary school 74 (33.6%) respectively. This shows that most of the respondents had primary school certificate.

Table 6: Descriptive ranking of respondents responses to all items in section B of the questionnaire in Mean and Standard Deviation

| Item No | As far as I am concerned effective spousal communication | Mean | S.D | Rank |
|---------|--|------|-----|------|
|         |  |      |     |      |

|    |  |      |      |                  |
|----|--|------|------|------------------|
| 9  | Aids decision-making in marriage   | 2.98 | .919 | 1 <sup>st</sup>  |
| 10 | Encourages free discussion of matters  | 2.83 | .902 | 2 <sup>nd</sup>  |
| 15 | Ineffective spousal communication can leads to chaos in the life of the couple | 2.82 | .915 | 3 <sup>rd</sup>  |
| 17 | It is the life wire of any marriage relationship                               | 2.81 | .882 | 4 <sup>th</sup>  |
| 18 | The more couple communicate the more stable the marriage                       | 2.76 | .959 | 5 <sup>th</sup>  |
| 16 | Promote sexual satisfaction  | 2.71 | .845 | 6 <sup>th</sup>  |
| 14 | Leads to disclosure of secrets   | 2.67 | .854 | 7 <sup>th</sup>  |
| 5  | Reduce marital instability   | 2.67 | .906 | 7 <sup>th</sup>  |
| 11 | Improves shared activities   | 2.65 | 1.05 | 9 <sup>th</sup>  |
| 2  | Promotes love  | 2.64 | .892 | 10 <sup>th</sup> |
| 4  | Promotes togetherness  | 2.62 | .831 | 11 <sup>th</sup> |
| 12 | Improves problem solving and conflicts resolution skills                       | 2.62 | .915 | 11 <sup>th</sup> |
| 8  | Promote intimacy in marriage   | 2.59 | .933 | 13 <sup>th</sup> |
| 13 | Improves acceptance level of individual differences among couples              | 2.59 | .977 | 13 <sup>th</sup> |
| 1  | Is the key to successful marriage  | 2.58 | .931 | 15 <sup>th</sup> |
| 7  | Promote marital stability  | 2.56 | .816 | 16 <sup>th</sup> |
| 6  | Promote peace and unity in marriage  | 2.52 | .755 | 17 <sup>th</sup> |
| 3  | Reduce misunderstanding among couples  | 2.49 | .711 | 18 <sup>th</sup> |

Table six shows the mean rank of the questionnaire. Items that were picked most response to all the items on the by respondents are item 9, 10 and 15. The



item rank 1<sup>st</sup> to 18<sup>th</sup> are the major influence of effective spousal communication on marital stability as expressed by married adults in Kwara State.

### 3.2 HYPOTHESES TESTING

The data obtained from the questionnaire were subjected to t-test statistics and the Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) to compare

Table 7: Mean, standard deviation and t-test comparison of participants responses on the basis of gender

| Gender | No of cases | Mean  | SD   | Df  | Calculated t-value | Critical T-value |
|--------|-------------|-------|------|-----|--------------------|------------------|
| Male   | 115         | 47.77 | 3.93 | 218 | -1.63              | 1.96             |
| Female | 105         | 48.60 | 3.58 |     |                    |                  |

Table 7 shows that calculated t-value is -1.63 while critical t-value is 1.96 at 0.05 alpha level. Thus, the calculated t-value is less than the critical –value. Therefore the hypothesis which stated that there is no significant difference in the expression of married adults on the influence of effective

the responses of the participants by age, gender, religion and no of children.

**Hypothesis One:** There is no significance difference in the expression of married adults on the influence of effective spousal communication on marital stability on the basis of gender?

spousal communication on marital stability on the basis of sex is ACCEPTED.

**Hypothesis Two:** There is no significance difference in the expression of married adults on the influence of effective spousal communication on marital stability on the basis of religious affiliation.

Table 8: Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) comparing the expression of married adults on the influence of effective spousal communication on marital stability

| Religion       | Sum of squares | Df   | Mean squares | Calculated F-ratio | Critical F-ratio |
|----------------|----------------|------|--------------|--------------------|------------------|
| Between groups | 3.52           | 2    | 1.76         | .122               | 3.00             |
| Within groups  | 3127.26        | 14.4 | 14.4         |                    |                  |
| Total          | 3130.77        | 219  |              |                    |                  |

\*Significant,  $p < 0.05$

Table 8 represents the analysis of variance comparing the religious affiliation of the respondents and their expression on the influence of effective spousal communication on marital stability. The table indicates a calculated F-ratio of .122 which is less than critical F-value of 3.00.

This shows that there is no significant difference in the expression of married

adults towards the influence of effective spousal communication on marital stability, on the basis of religion.

**Hypothesis Three:** there is no significance difference expression of married adults on the influence of effective spousal communication on marital stability based on their age.

Table 9: Mean standard deviation and t-test comparison of participants' responses on the basis of age.

| Age            | N   | Mean  | SD   | Df  | Calculated t-value | Critical t-value |
|----------------|-----|-------|------|-----|--------------------|------------------|
| Below 30 years | 109 | 48.21 | 3.92 | 218 | .131               | 1.96             |

|                    |     |       |      |  |  |  |
|--------------------|-----|-------|------|--|--|--|
| 30 years and above | 111 | 48.13 | 3.66 |  |  |  |
|--------------------|-----|-------|------|--|--|--|

Table 9 shows that the calculated t-value is .131 while critical t-value is 1.96 at 0.05 alpha level.

Thus the calculated t-value is less than the critical t-value. Therefore, the hypothesis which states that there is no significant difference in the expression of married adults on the influence of effective spousal communication on marital stability based on age is ACCEPTED.

**Hypothesis Four:** there is no significance difference on how married adults in Kwara State express influence of effective spousal communication on marital stability based on the number of children.

Table 10: Mean Standard Deviation and t-test comparison of participants’ responses based on number of children.

| Number of children | N   | Mean  | SD   | Df  | Calculated t-value | Critical t-value |
|--------------------|-----|-------|------|-----|--------------------|------------------|
| 1 – 4              | 129 | 48.52 | 3.88 | 218 | 1.97               | 1.96             |
| 5 and above        | 91  | 47.68 | 3.58 |     |                    |                  |

Table 10 shows that the calculated t-value is 1.97 while the critical t-values is 1.96 at 0.05 alpha level. Thus, the calculated t-value is higher than the critical value. Therefore, the hypothesis which states that there is

significant difference in the expression of married adults on the influence of effective spousal communication on marital stability based on number of children is REJECTED.

### 3.3 SUMMARY OF THE FINDINGS

The results of the study have been presented in tabular forms which were analyzed in three parts viz: demographic data, item by item analysis and hypothesis testing. Table 1-5 shows the demographic data of respondents based on age, gender, religious affiliation, number of children, educational qualification. Table 6 presents the item by item analysis and ranking of each item. Table 7 show information on analysis of variance (ANOVA), while table 8,9, and 10 present information on t-test as the techniques employed throughout to know whether or not there are significant difference on the hypotheses tested.

However, all the hypothesis tested were accepted because their calculated t-values are lesser than critical t-value of F-ratio which means there is no significant differences in the expression of married adults on the influence of effective spousal

communication on marital stability on the basis of age, gender, religious affiliation and educational qualification.

Therefore, the following are the summary of the findings of the tested hypothesis:

1. There is no significant difference in the expression of married adults on the influence of effective spousal communication on marital stability on the basis of gender.
2. There is no significant difference in the expression of married adults on the influence of effective spousal communication on marital stability based on religious affiliation.
3. There is no significant difference in the expression of married adults on the influence of effective spousal communication on marital stability based on their age.

4. There is no significance difference on how married adults in Kwara State express the influence of effective spousal communication on marital stability based on number of children.

#### **4.0 CONCLUSIONS**

The main objectives of this study were to investigate the influence of effective spousal communication on marital stability as expressed by married adults in Kwara State. This was found by using the variables with which the analysis were done like age, gender, religious affiliation and educational qualification. Four null hypotheses were generated and tested to determine the influence of effective spousal communication on marital stability as expressed by married adults in Kwara State. The t-test and Analysis of Variance

(ANOVA) were used in analyzing the data at 0.05 alpha levels.

Influence of effective spousal communication on marital stability questionnaire (IECMSQ), develop by the researcher was the instrument used to gather data for the study. Two hundred and twenty questionnaires were used. Hypothesis 2 and 3 were tested using analysis of variance (ANOVA) while hypothesis 1 and 4 were tested using with t-test analysis both at 0.05 level of significance. Acceptance or rejection of any hypothesis was based on the result of the data analyzed. The entire four hypothesis were accepted because the calculated t-values and F-ratio are less than the critical value.

However, based on the foregoing data analysis and interpretation of results, married adults in Kwara State shared the same view about the influence of effective

spousal communication in marital stability irrespective of gender, religious, affiliation, age and number of children.

### **Recommendations**

Based on the findings of this study, the following recommendations were made:

1. Marriage counselling clinics should be set up in all major establishments in Nigeria so as to educate married men and women of the need for effective spousal communication in marriage for a peaceful and conducive home environment.
2. Government should try to organize pre-counselling work-shop. This is to prevent some of the problems that could be generated by prospective couples.
3. Counsellors should help married adults to get member of their family

to resolve their problems in other to experience marital stability.

4. Counsellors in training should be well equipped with the knowledge of different theories of marital counselling and communication to enable them assist clients having issues in their marital relationship.

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