Correlates between Levels of Education in Relation to Marital Satisfaction in KISII Township of KISII County, Kenya

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ABSTRACT: *Marital satisfaction* is a pertinent ingredient to the stability of any nation, given that the family is the basic unit of any nation. Too much marital dissatisfaction leads to family members being unstable socially which trickles down to societal problems hence to the nation. A higher level of satisfaction is seen as a measure of marital success. It is, therefore, important to study correlates of marital satisfaction in order to determine what variables could potentially predict the outcome of marital satisfaction. The purpose of this study therefore seeks to establish the correlates between levels of education in relation to marital satisfaction. Literature on the objective above was reviewed. The researcher employed a cross sectional survey design to examine the theme of study. The descriptive study was conducted among 4,019 spouses by using a questionnaire. Content and construct validity was ascertained by a pilot study of applying 20 questionnaires outside the area of study. Analysis was done using a chi square to understand the level of satisfaction, manual calculation of the means, manual thematic analysis of the qualitative data by mail using mean and percentages.

KEYWORDS: Level of Education, marital satisfaction.

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 BACKGROUND

Marital satisfaction is a pertinent ingredient to the stability of any nation given that the family is the basic unit of any nation. A study by infotrak in 2010 showed that only 40 % of Kenyans report being happily married and 3 in 10 said they will marry their current spouse if given a chance to remarry Mcsheffrey (2014). Too much marital dissatisfaction leads to family members being unstable socially which trickles down to societal problems hence to the nation. A higher level of satisfaction is seen as a measure of marital success. It is, therefore, important to study correlates of marital satisfaction in order to determine what variables could potentially predict the outcome of marital success. Spanier (2002) argued that, although the concept of marital satisfaction may seem ambiguous, the growing field of research in this area demands attention. There is a strong interest in the continued study of how couples form successful marriages, to which the profusion of existing research can attest to some level. In this study, the potential correlates of marital satisfaction are explored in an effort to better understand the marital dyad, especially variables that contribute to its success. The variables of study are outlined, and past literature regarding their relationships to marital satisfaction are explored. This has followed an explanation of the

methodology of the current study, a discussion of the findings, and directions for future research in the area of marital satisfaction.

Some research done in the area of marital satisfaction has focused on level of education at time of marriage Heaton (2002). Some of the generalizations of research done agree that there exists virtually unanimous agreement of the association between the age at first marriage and the probability of divorce. And they go further to assert that the younger one is when married, the higher the likelihood of divorce Bumpass (2007). The researcher has explored that assertion and also queried whether people who marry early are at a higher risk of marital instability than those who marry later in life. One major reason for addressing age is that factors which are negatively related to marital "success" (i.e. whether one divorces or remains married) also include many which are related to age at time of marriage, such as low education, , short premarital acquaintance (knowledge and education) . In addition the researcher finds it worth to research and correlate whether personality maladjustment like financial problems, conflicts , social media, absentee spouses, among other variables as researched by Burchinal (1965).

Bumpass (2007) studied whether the inverse correlation between level of education at time of marriage and marital instability was attributable to the participant's education, religious affiliation, parental marital stability, or husband's marital history. They performed a multivariate analysis on a large sample of married, White women under the age of 45, and found that marital instability was not attributable to the aforementioned factors. Their data showed that age at marriage was the strongest single predictor of marital instability in their analysis. This means that, absent of all other seemingly relevant variables, age at time of marriage was the strongest predictor of marital stability. The researcher believes that given the research was done at a global level there needs to correlate age , level of education, gender and courtship and find the strongest predictor of marital satisfaction which might additionally predict marital stability.

Gorchof (2008) studied the relationship between marital satisfaction, age at marriage, and marital role performance. "Role performance" was defined as the extent to which a person acts out what is perceived to be their role socioeconomically and interpersonally in marriage. This study used data from a non - random sample of 394 married couples, including spouses' evaluations of role performance in order to gain a more accurate response. All respondents were in their first marriage, had been married six years or less at the time of the study, and were under 35 years of age. Through use of multivariate analysis, Lee found a positive correlation between age at time of marriage and marital satisfaction after studying variables of length of marriage, education, socioeconomic background, and religious importance. This means that as the age at marriage increased, marital satisfaction increased as well. This positive correlation finding was true for both males and females. Lee concluded, however, that the strength of the correlation was moderate at best, and may be related to an unmeasured third variable—potential for remarriage. He hypothesized that those who marry young may be cognizant of their better potential to remarry in the event of a divorce, and may then be less willing to tolerate dissatisfaction.

Booth (1985) expanded on the research done by Bumpass (2007) and also found that age at marriage was positively correlated with marital satisfaction due to inadequate marriage education in preparation. They hypothesized that this situation likely stemmed from inadequate role models or from lack of exposure length to these role models because of early termination of their "marriage apprenticeship" as a result of early marriage. They felt that people who married at an early age were more likely to experience deficiencies in their marital role performance, which then led to marital dissatisfaction. Data for this study came from a national sample of men and women under 55 years of age who were interviewed by telephone in 1980. Researchers used random digit dialing procedures to locate eligible participants. In total, the analysis involved 1,715 men and women currently in their first marriage. To test their hypothesis they used the MII by Johnson (1985) as well as multiple items to assess role performance, alternatives to the present marriage, and external pressure for marriage. They found that marital instability is the highest for those who married early (before age 20). Those who married in late twenties scored the lowest on marital instability. They found that those who married later than their twenties scored similarly to those that married earlier, which suggested that marital stability may have a curvilinear relationship with age. Beach (2000) continued in this similar study of marital satisfaction in relation to age. Their research indicated that both society and the individual benefit when couples form strong marriages, as those unions frequently lead to less involvement in crime and other detrimental activities by spouses and/or offspring. Slowly declining divorce rates over the last eight years may be related to a sharp increase in the average age of brides and grooms during that same span of time Alfons (2007). However, overall martial satisfaction had dropped significantly over those past four decades. They further concluded that positive and negative factors that led increased marital satisfaction and marital dissatisfaction, respectively, may not be mutually exclusive (i.e. satisfaction in marriage is a judgment based on criteria that changed both with the age of each partner and that of the marriage).

Alfons (2007) also examined the effects of age, number of children, employment status, and length of marriage on marital satisfaction. They found that those who married later were more likely to remain married, but also that those who married

younger and get divorced are more likely to remarry. Contrary to previously stated results, these researchers found that age had a significant negative effect on the sexual adjustment and marital adjustment of first-married adults. In other words, the older one was at the time of first marriage, the less adjusted the individual would be toward the marriage and, consequently, the less satisfaction one would express. Middle-aged adults seemed to have greater adjustment problems than both young and elderly participants involved in the study.

In Africa there are also some researches done on marital satisfaction. But interestingly Owuamanam (2000) reports that the most single variable that pointed on marital satisfaction is the aspect of religious inclination. He pointed out that the major reason for revelation above is the non tolerance and diverse thinking between Muslims and Christians religious philosophy. Given that on the local scene there are no major contrasts between religious communities, the researcher may not consider religion as a major variable.

2   METHODOLOGY

2.1   INTRODUCTION

This section contains Locale of the Study, Research Design, Population of the Study, Validity of Instruments and their reliability and validity, sampling techniques and methods of data collection.

2.2   AREA OF THE STUDY

Kisii township is a town located to the south east of Lake Victoria and is bordered by six counties with Narok to the south, Migori to the west, Homa Bay to the north west, Kisumu to the north, Bomet to the south east and Nyamira to the east.

2.3   RESEARCH DESIGN

The researcher employed a cross sectional descriptive survey design to examine the phenomenon under investigation.

Cross sectional survey design was be used since unlike longitudinal survey design where we have a long experience with the field , the researcher had limited period to accomplish the study .

And although cross sectional survey design was used conclusions were only made at only one time. The researcher utilized both qualitative and qualitative approaches approximately where descriptive, statistical and exploratory styles were be used.

All in all the design used was triangulation which enriched the information received.

2.4   POPULATION OF THE STUDY

The target population comprised of all the married spouses in Kisii Township in Kisii County. There are approximately 4019 spouses according to 2009 census in Kisii Township of Kisii County.

2.5   SAMPLING TECHNIQUES

There are approximately **4,019 spouses (source 2009 census)**. According to Gay (2006), a sample of 5% of the total population is a good representative of the target population for populations that are between 4001 to 10, 000 to ensure homogeneity, size and accuracy. Therefore the study utilized 200 respondents as per the principle above.

2.6   RESEARCH INSTRUMENTS

The Study obtained data from the field using a questionnaire as the main instrument. Self -administered questionnaires were used to collect information from spouses on personal data under study. Closed ended questions were be used because they were faster to code and score for analysis thus consistency of responses across the respondents. Open ended questions were be used to give respondents an open room to give their views of the phenomenon under study.

2.6.1   RELIABILITY OF INSTRUMENTS

The researcher administered the instruments of data collection to 50 respondents outside the locale of the study. This administration of the questionnaires at this level ensured that the questionnaires were understood. Vague questions were rectified.

2.6.2 VALIDITY OF INSTRUMENTS

Content validity was maintained by re- examining the questions to ensured they capture the needed data. The research peers, research experts evaluated all aspects such that the instruments focused on the required information . Construct validity ensured that the instruments obtained the anticipated view , attitudes and perceptions on the subject under research. The researcher administered the instruments to 20 respondents outside the locale of the study. This was done to ensure that the instruments are understood. Administering them outside the of the study will ensure that Hawthorne effect does not occur. After the administration of the instruments vague statements will be discarded. Also those statements that did not capture the right constructs of the study were discarded. The exercise was be supervised all through by the research peers and research experts.

2.7 DATA ANALYSIS AND PRESENTATION

Data analysis was done by both qualitative and quantitative approaches appropriately

The following data analysis procedure was used.

a) Edit of the data on a regular basis which sorted out anomalies in the data in regard to completeness , coherence and checking of contradiction.
b) Coding the data into themes and sub themes where similar responses were grouped together.
c) Availing the similarities and differences within the coded data was done by the researcher.
d) Interpretation of the data and deducting of meaning of the data.
e) Summary, discussion, conclusions and recommendations from the data.

Statistical calculation was done to establish percentages and the mean using the formula.

$$\frac{\text{Frequency X 10}}{M} = \%$$

3 DATA ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

The researcher carried out pre data analysis as follows; total questionnaires were 200, the return rate was 100%, response rate was substantial, then the researcher transcribed common responses into common themes and manually calculated percentages of similar themes. He used excel to draw graphs and pie charts and in some cases used manual coding and analysis. He also used spps to calculate a chi square.

The objectives of the study were; to find out if demographic variables influence marital satisfaction, to compare various levels of education in relation to marital satisfaction and to find out underlying factors that influence marital satisfaction

Table 1. Comparison of educational levels of spouses in relation to marital satisfaction

Levels of education	F	%	Level of marital satisfaction	
			Satisfied	Not satisfied
1. Same level	64	32	39 (60.9%)	25 (39.1%)
2. Husband higher level	104	52	85 (81.7%)	29 (19.3%)
3. Wife higher level	32	16	07 (21.8%)	25 (78.2%)
Total	200	100	111	89

The research also correlated various educational levels l.e primary, secondary, certificate, diploma, degree, and post graduate. After classification it was evident that highly satisfied spouses are where husbands have higher levels 81.7%, then same level with 60.9% and lastly 21.8% where wives had higher education.

The findings are consistent with Tucker (2001) who generalized that married couples with differing education levels may be less satisfied with their marriages especially if the woman is woman is the one with a higher level of education in that dyad.

Table 2. Frequency of marital education /information and marital satisfaction

	Strongly satisfied	Satisfied	No opinion	dissatisfied	Strongly dissatisfied	Mean	Total	Rank
Very Frequent	06	22	2	10	08	3.1	48	1
Frequent	12	14	5	20	09	2.7	60	3
Less Frequent	02	08	06	30	06	2.4	52	5
Seldom	00	04	03	05	05	2.6	15	4
Never	03	07	04	07	04	2.9	25	2
Total	23	55	18	71	31		200	

From the table it was evident that married individuals who received marital education information very frequently were the most satisfied with a mean of 3.1. On the other hand those who never received the information were the 2nd in the satisfaction with a mean of 2.9.

The findings above are in line with Humoud (2010) who reported that the higher the frequency of marital education the higher the satisfaction.

Table 3. Satisfaction in relation with the frequency of marital education

	Very satisfied	Satisfied	No idea	Dissatisfied	Very Dissatisfied	Mean	Rank
Rural	45	25	1	58	71	2.5	2
Urban	89	47	2	40	22	3.7	1

Majority of spouses who stay in the urban areas were satisfied on the frequency with which they received marital information with a mean of 3.7 compared to the rural spouses who had a mean of 2.5.

This statistics concurs with Bradbury (2000) who researched and generalized that marriage in enrichment education magnitude is curvilinear to MS and that however that relationship does not always guarantee MS. That assertion is clearly shown on table 4.2 above.

4   CONCLUSION

- Majority of those who advanced their education were more satisfied i.e. 41.5%, those who remained the same had 33.0%.
- On ambition and MS majority of those who had it were more satisfied i.e. 69.0%
- On L.O.E and MS, more satisfaction was if husbands had a higher education level.
- The quality of MS information education was not always a predictor of MS as urban married people but were less satisfied.
- The married people who received marital education very frequently were the most satisfied.

5   RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Marital experts should counsel spouses on implication of education advancement and vice versa on marital satisfaction.
2. Counseling stake holders should device ways to counsel spouses who did not advance their education and find reasons why they are not satisfied.
3. Marital therapists, parents, friends, religious leaders and relevant stakeholders should counsel on marital hegemony due to education.
4. Marital therapists and related stakeholders should query all the information, procedures that influence the quality of marital information as perceived by couples.
5. Therapists, religious leaders, parents, friends, counseling agencies and counseling stakeholders should incorporate more frequent sessions to make marriages more stable.

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