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Sexual Behaviour, Mental Health as Correlate of Marital Life Adjustment among Couples in Delta State

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Abstract

The study investigated sexual behaviour, mental health as correlate of marital life adjustment among couples in delta state. Two research questions and two null hypotheses were formulated and tested at 0.05 level of significance to guide the study. A correlational survey research design was used for this study. The Population of the Study is all the couples in Delta North Senatorial District of Delta State. Three hundred (300) couples were chosen at random from the two (2) LGA. Ika North East 300 while Ika South 300, which brings a total of six hundred (600) respondents. The sexual behaviour, mental health, and marital adjustment scale (SBMHMAS), was the instrument used to collect the data. There are four parts to it. Part A: deals with personal information, including name of LGA, gender, age, and educational background. Part B had the sexual behaviour scale (SBS), which had 15 items, Part C contained the mental health scale (MHS), which had 15 items, and Part D contained the marital adjustment scale (MAS), which had 15 things. The total number of items was 45. The questionnaire was structured in a four (4) point scale that required respondents to tick (✓) as appropriate the statement for which they Strongly Agree (SA)=4, Agree (A)=3, Disagree (D)=2 and Strongly Disagree (SD)=1 for Positive while Strongly Agree (SA)=1, Agree (A)=2, Disagree (D)=3 and Strongly Disagree (SD)=4 for negative scoring. Measurement and evaluation, guidance, and counselling department expert reviewed the questionnaire, made some

modifications, and determined that the items were appropriate for the study, this helps to improve the face, content, and construct validity of the instrument. The total cumulative variance of the items revealed the scales' content validity. The scale's content validity was 78.62%, with a rotated factor loading matrix that ranged from .52 and .89 was used to determine its construct validity. To establish the reliability of this instrument, Cronbach alpha method was used to estimate the reliability of scales (SBMHMAS). The scales has alpha= .90P ≤ 0.5 level of significance. These scales were pilot tested on a sample of 65 respondents from a separate local government area in delta state. Married couples in Ika North East and Ika South Local Government Areas of Delta State provided the data for this study. Pearson Products Moment of Correlation was used to answer research questions while Regression Analysis and simple correlation were employed to test the research hypothesis at .05 level of significance. The findings revealed that there is a significant relationship between sexual behaviour and marital life adjustment among couples and there is also a significant relationship between mental health and marital life adjustment among couples in delta state. Recommendations was made that Challenged couples should visit Professional marriage counsellor in order to help them understand the causes of their poor marital life adjustment, the challenged couples should come together to find out the causes of their marital life adjustment problem.

Keywords: Sexual Behaviour, Mental Health, Marital Life Adjustment, Couples

Introduction

A matured thinker will quickly agree that adjustment is necessary in all sphere of without hesitation. Is it in school? Religion? Societal value? Marriages? Or what have you? According to psychologists, adjustment is concerned with the ups and downs that people experience in life and how those conditions can result in mental health issues. The follower has little choice but to make adjustments to the existing circumstances. Everywhere and in everything, including our marriage, the situation is the same.

Marital adjustment, according to American Psychological Association APA (2007), is the process through which people successfully acclimate to the challenges and opportunities of marriage.

Adjustment is the process of changing one's attitude, Behavior, etc. to achieve a desired character or situation. It could happen as a result of realizing the need for a new, better way of doing things. Different people have described marriage adjustment differently. Marriage adjustment, according to the American Psychological Association (APA, 2007), is the process through which people successfully adapt to the obligations and opportunities of marriage. Ofoegbu (2012) implies that when marital adjustment is achieved, troublesome marital differences, interpersonal tensions, anxieties, depression, mental health disorder are reduced to the nearest minimum. He continued by saying that improving marital functioning and increasing satisfaction and dyadic cohesion are both possible as a result of marital adjustment. In order for a marriage to succeed, a married person must make conscious efforts to improve their marriage and relationship with their spouse. Marital adjustment requires maturity that accepts and understands growth and development in the spouse.

The ability of spouses to adapt to a variety of changes and to cope with a variety of stresses is crucial to marital stability and pleasure during the course of marriage (Amos, 2010).^[2] a couple that gets along well together typically has a strong familial bond and is able to overcome mental health disorder. An adjusted marriage is one in which each partner provides financial, sexual, emotional, and companionship support to the other. Consequently, the accommodation of a husband and wife to one another at a specific period is what is meant by marital adjustment. Marriage agreement, coherence, satisfaction, affection, and conflict are some of the factors that are involved in marital adjustment. The devotion of the spouses to the union and the companionship they would enjoy during their marriage are key components of marital cohesion. When thinking about all the present facets of his marriage, a spouse's subjective sensations of happiness, satisfaction, and pleasure are referred to as marital satisfaction. So, marital adjustment is the ongoing fulfillment that both partners have in their marriage. The marriage must satisfy and bring happiness to both partners. The warm affection that partners in a happy marriage have for one another is referred to as marital affection. However, a marriage relationship that is out of balance will result in marital conflict. In contrast to an unadjusted marriage, which will likely result in a mental health issue, a well-adjusted marriage will likely experience less stress overall, and even when tension or stress does arise, it will likely be handled quickly. Many variables are responsible for a well-adjusted marriage but only sexual behaviour and mental health would be given consideration in this study.

It is clear that a man's need to satiate his sexual urge is of the biggest significance to him, which is why sexual behavior is taken into consideration. In any marriage relationship between couples, sexual behavior has been seen as being the most crucial component in satiating one's need or impulse to engage in sexual activity. According to Okorodudu (2010)^[8], having sex is the most crucial component of a successful marriage. Since many marital imbalances are a direct or indirect cause of sexual deprivation or discontent, husband and wife should not deny each other of sex.

From a different perspective, Adedeji (2002)^[1] contends that the habit of only the husband being sexually satisfied should not exist and that it is essential for the husband and wife to learn the sexual act in order to enjoy and satisfy one

another. Onuoha (2014)^[10] expands on this point by stating that in order for a marriage to stay romantic and enjoyable, both partners must take concrete measures and acts that inspire and motivate one another toward marital fulfillment and contentment. Ogunkola (2009)^[6] emphasizes that there should be no pre-requisites for sex and that couples should not forbid it. He also believed that sexual incapacity was one of the main factors contributing to unbalanced marriages. Numerous studies have demonstrated that failing to satiate one's sexual urges can lead to unstable marriages, which might result in divorce. So, according to Barash & Lipton (2002), there should be a compelling need to comprehend this sexual satisfaction issue. That upset Olajide (2009)^[9] to advocate for celebrating sex.

Unfortunately, there hasn't been much research done on sexual behavior. Because people get married every day and when they do, their marriages face a variety of obstacles, sexual behavior in relationships shouldn't be ignored. Numerous unfavorable effects of sexual conduct might have an impact on both you and other people. You can battle with emotions of guilt, shame, and low self-esteem. Additionally, you could experience mental illnesses like depression, anxiety, suicidal thoughts, tension, and divorce. If a woman can't sexually satisfy her spouse, the male will go somewhere else to do so. A man's capacity to think clearly will suffer if he is not sexually satisfied. When a man starts seeking sexual fulfillment outside of his marriage, his behavior will alter and he won't be able to adjust. When a man starts seeking sexual fulfillment outside of marriage, his focus on his spouse will be divided. The result of seeking sexual fulfillment elsewhere might result to mental health issues, divorce, sadness, discomfort, tension, etc. All of these things will cause maladjustment or unsettling in the marriage. The same goes for women who seek out sexual fulfillment elsewhere. Marriage, like most other aspects of life, frequently encounters certain challenges. Such circumstances necessitate regular adjustments of one kind or another in order to avoid mental health disorders. According to psychologists, adjustment is concerned with the ups and downs that people experience in life and how those conditions can typically lead to mental health disorders.

Mental health is "a condition of well-being in which the individual recognizes his or her own strengths, can adjust to the typical stressors of life, and works creatively and fruitfully," according to the World Health Organization (WHO) 2004^[11]. The WHO emphasizes that having a healthy mental state involves "more than just being free of mental impairments or illnesses." Avoiding active conditions is simply one aspect of mental health; another is maintaining continual healthiness, enjoyment, and flexibility.

According to Marney A. White, 2022, mental health is the general well-being of how you think, control your emotions, and behave. People occasionally have serious disruptions in this mental functioning. Changes in thought, feeling, or behavior that are distressing or impair a person's capacity to function may be signs of a mental condition. A person's mental health is a condition that is fluctuating according to biological and social variables, allowing them to create and maintain harmonious relationships with others as well as successfully synthesize their own potentially contradictory natural urges. Corey. L. M. Keyes (2006) our emotional, behavioral, psychological, and social well-being are all parts of our mental health. It impacts our mood as well as our

thoughts, feelings, and behaviors. Additionally, it influences how we relate to others, manage our sexual lives, and make wise decisions. Every period of life, from childhood and adolescence to maturity, is vital for mental health. The ability to enjoy life and engage in sexual activity with a spouse can be maintained by maintaining good mental health. Lack of adaptability, stress, despair, and anxiety can all have an impact on mental health.

There is a growing consensus that mental health is not merely the absence of mental illness, but it also includes the presence of positive feelings (emotional well-being) and positive functioning in individual life (psychological well-being) and community life (social well-being). Lamers SM, Westerhof GJ, (2011) [4]. Cognitive, behavioral, and emotional health are all included in mental health. It all comes down to how people think, feel, and act. Adam Felman (2020).

According to the National Alliance on Mental Illness, over 1 in 5 adults in the United States struggle with mental health issues on a yearly basis. The National Institute of Mental Health predicted that 5.6% of America's adults, or 14.2 million persons, had a serious mental illness in 2020. (NIMH).

Mental health can affect People's physical health, relationships, ability to change, and sexual behavior

Early indicators of a mental health condition

No physical examination or scan can accurately determine whether a person has a mental health issue. However, the following warning indicators of a mental health issue should be watched out for:

1. Withholding themselves from friends, family, and coworkers.
2. Refraining from behaviors they would usually enjoy, such as sexual engagement.
3. Sleeping too much or too little
4. being depressed
5. feeling hopeless
6. being perplexed

Statement of the Problem

Marriage is a special social institution created for the spouses to experience various fulfillments and to perform specific societal obligations; as a result, the marriage should be enjoyed by the partners rather than endured. However, current events, as seen in the culture, particularly in the study's location, have revealed that many couples are experiencing maladjustment in their marriages rather than adjustment. Their sexual behavior and mental health are two other factors that the researchers have noticed to be related to marital adjustment among couples in the study area. The researchers have noted that these are key areas of worry for couples that frequently result in marital adjustment problems. A healthy marriage offers happiness and a sense of success to the couple as well as tranquility to the community. Therefore, if couples and society desire to experience peace, factors that connect to or predict marital adjustment cannot be handled with a "wave of the hand." The researchers have been engaged in marital and family therapy for many years as both married and counselors. In many of these endeavors, they have come across a number of couples who are having difficulties adjusting to marriage, which, in their opinion, is sometimes tied to problems with sexual behavior and mental health.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study is to investigate the Sexual behavior, mental health and marital life adjustment among couples in Delta state. In particular, the study will:

1. Determine whether sexual behavior among couples in Delta State may predict marital adjustment.
2. Examine whether mental health can predict marital life adjustment among couples in Delta State.

Research Questions

The following research questions were raised to guide the study:

1. What is the relationship between sexual behavior and marital life adjustment among couples in delta state?
2. What is the relationship between mental health and marital adjustment among couples in delta state?

Hypotheses

The following null hypotheses were formulated to guide the study:

1. There is no significant relationship between sexual behavior and marital life adjustment among couples in delta state.
2. There is no significant relationship between mental health and marital life adjustment among couples in delta state.

Methodology

A correlational survey research design was used for this investigation. The design is considered appropriate to ascertaining if sexual behavior and mental health can predict marital life adjustment among couples in Ika North East and Ika South of Delta north senatorial district of Delta State.

Population of the Study

All married couples in Delta North Senatorial District of Delta State.

Samples and Sampling Technique

From the two (2) local government area, 300 married couples were chosen at random. Ika North East 300 while Ika South 300, which brings a total of 600 respondents.

Research Instrument

The sexual behavior, mental health, and marital adjustment scale, (SBMHMAS), was the instrument used to collect the data. There are four parts to it. Part A: deals with personal information, including name of LGA, gender, age, and educational background. Part B had the sexual behavior scale (SBS), which had 15 items, Part C contained the mental health scale (MHS), which had 15 items, and Part D contained the marital adjustment scale (MAS), which had 15 things. The total number of items was 45.

According to a four-point scale, respondents had to check the statement(s) for which they strongly agreed (SA=4), agreed with (A=3), disagreed (D=2), or strongly disagreed (SD=1) in order to receive a positive score, and strongly disagreed (SA=1), agreed with (A=2), disagreed (D=3), or strongly disagreed (SD=4) in order to receive a negative score.

Validity of the Instrument

A measurement evaluation, guidance, and counseling department expert reviewed the questionnaire, made some

modifications, and determined that the items were appropriate for the study in order to improve the face, content, and construct validity of the instrument.

The total cumulative variance of the items revealed the scales' content validity. The scale's content validity was 78.62%, and a rotated factor loading matrix that ranged from .52 to .89 was used to determine its construct validity.

Reliability of the Instrument

To establish the reliability of this instrument, Cronbach alpha method of internal consistency was used to estimate the internal consistency reliability of sexual behavior, mental health and marital life adjustment scale (SBMHMAS). According to Okorodudu, (2013) [7] Reliability of an instrument refers to the degree of consistency with which the instrument measures whatever it measures. The scales has alpha = .90 $P \leq 0.5$ level of significance. These scales were pilot tested on a sample of 65 respondents from a separate local government area in delta state.

Method of Data Collection

The married couples in Delta State's Ika North East and Ika South Local Government Areas provided the data for this study. Research assistants were used to administer the questionnaire to facilitate the work.

Method of data Analysis

Both research hypothesis and research questions were used in the study. Consequently, Pearson Products Moment of Correlation was used to answer research questions. Regression Analysis and simple correlation were employed to test the research hypothesis at .05 level of significance.

Presentation of Results and Discussion of Findings

This chapter presents results of the analyzed data and discussion of findings.

Research question 1: What is the relationship between sexual behavior and marital life adjustment among couples in delta state.

Table 1: Correlation and coefficient of Determination analysis of sexual behavior and marital life adjustment among couples in delta state

Variable	N	R	r ²	r ² %	Decision
sexual behavior	600	0.163	0.027	2.7	Low Positive relationship
marital life adjustment					

Table 1 showed that the r –value of 0.0163 was the correlation between sexual and marital life adjustment among couples in delta state. The coefficient of determination was 0.027 and the amount of contribution of sexual behavior was 2.7%. This result revealed a low positive relationship between sexual behavior and marital life adjustment among couples in delta state. This implied that sexual behavior contributed to marital life adjustment among couples in delta state.

Hypothesis one: There is no significant relationship between sexual behavior and marital life adjustment among couples in delta state.

Table 2: Regression Analysis of the correlation between sexual behavior and marital life adjustment among couples in delta state

Model Summary			
R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
0.163	0.027	0.025	3.26511

ANOVA					
	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Regression	174.623	1	174.623	16.380	0.000
Residual	6375.242	598	10.661		
Total	6549.865	599			

The result in Table 2 revealed the regression output of the relationship between sexual behavior and marital life adjustment among couples in delta state. The computed F Value of 16.380, and a P – value of .000 level of significance. There fore the null hypothesis which states that there is no significant relationship between sexual behavior and marital life adjustment among couples in delta state rejected. The finding is that there is a significant relationship between sexual behavior and marital life adjustment among couples in delta state.

Research question 2: What is the relationship between mental health and marital life adjustment among couples in delta state?

Table 3: Correlation and coefficient of Determination analysis of mental health and marital life adjustment among couples in delta state

Variable	N	R	r ²	r ² %	Decision
Mental health	600	0.010	0.000	0	Positive relationship
Marital life adjustment					

Table 3 showed that the r-value of 0.010 was the correlation between mental health and marital life adjustment among couples in delta state. The coefficient of determination was 0.000 and the amount of contribution of age was 0%. This result revealed a low positive relationship between mental health and marital life adjustment among couples in delta state. This implied that mental health can contribute to marital life adjustment among couples in delta state.

Hypothesis two: There is no significant relationship between mental health and marital life adjustment among couples in delta state.

Table 4: Regression Analysis of the correlation between mental health and marital life adjustment among couples in delta state

Model Summary			
R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
0.010	0.000	-.002	3.30935

ANOVA					
	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Regression	0.704	1	0.704	0.064	0.000
Residual	6549.161	598	10.952		
Total	6549.865	599			

The result in Table 4 revealed the regression output of the relationship between mental health and marital life adjustment among couples in delta state. The computed F-

value of 0.064, and a P - value of .000 level of significance. Therefore, the null hypothesis six which states that there is no significant relationship between mental health and marital life adjustment among couples in delta state is rejected. The finding is that there is a significant relationship between mental health and marital life adjustment among couples in delta state.

Findings

1. There is a significant relationship between sexual behavior and marital life adjustment among couples in delta state.
2. There is a significant relationship between mental health and marital life adjustment among couples in delta state.

Conclusion and Recommendations

Conclusion

The findings led to the conclusion that were drawn.

1. Among married couples, Sexual behavior significantly predicts marital adjustment among married couples.
2. Mental health is highly correlated with marital adjustment among married couples.

Recommendations

Looking at the findings, the following recommendations are made.

1. Challenged couples should visit Professional marriage counsellor in order to help them understand the causes of their poor marital life adjustment.
2. The challenged couples should come together to find out the causes of their problem.
3. Husband and wife should not deny each other of sex.

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