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# Topic:

INFLUENCE OF OCCUPATIONAL STRESS, ROLE-CONFLICT, SEX, AGE AND WORK EXPERIENCE ON MARITAL SATISFACTION AMONG NURSES IN UNIMED TEACHING HOSPITAL, AKURE.

#### **Abstract**

This study was designed to investigate the influence of occupational stress, roleconflict, sex, age and work experience on marital satisfaction among nurses in University of Medical Science Teaching Hospital Akure. The study utilises the descriptive survey design. 200 respondents purposively drawn among married nurses working in UNIMED Teaching Hospital, Akure participated in the study. The instruments used for the study were standardized questionnaire which include Enrich Marital Satisfaction scale, Job related tension inventory and Work family conflict scale. The data obtained from the study were analysed using independent ttest, ANCOVA and ANOVA to test all the hypotheses raised for the study at 0.05 level of significance. The result of the study revealed that occupational stress has no significant influence on marital satisfaction t (198) = .178, p> 0.05. The study revealed further that there is no significant influence of occupational stress on marital satisfaction F(1,198) = .032 p> .05 with the interference of role conflict with occupational stress there is still no significant influence of occupational stress on marital satisfaction F(1,197)=.023 p>.05. Also there is no significant influence of stress on marital satisfaction F(1,194)= .148 p>.05. Subsequently, there is no significant influence of age on marital satisfaction F(2,194) =.992 p> .05. There is no significant joint influence of sex and age on marital satisfaction F(2,1194)= .219 p>.05. Finally work experience has no significant influence on marital satisfaction F(4,195)=1.96 p>.05. Based on the findings of this study it was concluded that occupational stress, work experience, age, sex and role conflict does not influence marital satisfaction. The researcher recommended that since all the variables did not significantly influence marital satisfaction, the future researcher could look into the area of choice of marriage, personality, cultural background, sexual intimacy and religious adherence to work on. Also, Nurses and health workers should try as much possible to strike a balance between their office and family responsibilities; none should be taken with levity as role managed well will not influence marital satisfaction.



# Key words: occupational stress, marital satisfaction, role conflict, workexperience, age.

# Background to the study

Nursing is known as a job with high risk of exhaustion and disease. The hospital environment can cause stress and physical problems among its employees; in fact job stress can lead to physical injury or mental illness and in the long term can cause negative results in performance of people and its work place. Pressure in nursing can affect family life and marital problems, disrupt common social problems, increase family conflicts and endanger people's general health. Work is one of the main sources of stress in people. (Peimanpack, Mansur, Sadeghi, Purebrahim (2013). Marital satisfaction simply means marital contentment. Satisfaction is when the desire, intimacy and perceived need of a partner in a relationship are actualized. It is a state of contentment and pleasure with the absence of problem and complaint. According to Fincham (2006), there are many factors that contribute to a happy marriage because there does not seem to be one magic factor that guarantees marital bliss. These factors include effective communication, interaction, gender roles, conflict management, problem solving and intimate play. Marital satisfaction is the general happiness and pleasure between couples. It is the good feeling of marriage.

Work is of primary importance to mankind and it has been a motivator physically, ethically and ideologically. Work has given human being a sense of mastery over nature and it has been a tremendous feeling of self-fulfilment. It is any expenditure of energy that produces services and products of value to other people. Particular values and functions of work are specific to time and place (Omolayo 2005). Thibaut and Kelly (1989) defined work as a weapon with which common man could achieve not only wealth but also happiness.

Family is the basic unit of life; it is the fundamental unit of society referred to as the building block of any society. Oakley (1984) defines family as a set of people related by blood, marriage or some other agreed upon relationship or adoption who shares the primary responsibility or reproduction and caring for members of the society.

Role conflict occurs when there are incompatible demands placed upon a person relating to their job or position. Person experiences role conflict when they find



themselves pulled in various directions as they try to respond to the many statuses they hold. Burke & Green-glass (1999). There are two types of role conflict; intra role conflict referring to incompatible requirements within the same role, and inter role conflict referring to clashing expectations from separate roles within the same person. Role conflict is a stressor that can occur in the workplace when personal values conflicts with job responsibilities, roles are poorly defined, incompatible roles are performed, or expected roles for one organisation don't match those of another, when conflicting roles both have the same status role strain results. This happens when a person who needs to fulfil a certain role is strained because of obligations or extensive demands on energy, time or resources caused by the multiple roles.

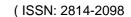
Work experience has a long way to uphold and to disintegrate marital satisfaction in our society. Experience they say is the best teacher, the higher you go in hierarchy the more responsibility you have in nursing profession, there are some skills gained from work experience such as problem solving skills, interpersonal skills, maturity, team work, practical skills, self-confidence and self-esteem having all these skills will help married nurses to cope at home leading to marital satisfaction.

Gender tends to denote the social and cultural role of each sex within a given society. Rather than being purely assigned by genetics, as sex differences generally are, people often develop their gender roles in response to their environments including family interactions, the media, peers and education.

Age is the length of time that a person has lived or has existed (Chaffee 1991). Age gap affects the evolution marital satisfaction over the duration of marriage. Marital satisfaction declines with marital duration for both men and women indifferently. Aged couples are relative to those in similar aged-relationship. The influence of age on marital satisfaction among married nurses could not be ascertain as there is a divorce and separation occasionally among young married couples likewise those who had been married for a long time.

# Statement of the problem

Nursing as a profession brings a lot of responsibilities, which can be exhausting, complicated, boring, and stressful. Over the years, the nurses working in all tiers of government health facilities are faced with a series of marital challenges as applicable to many divorces in their home which can be attributed to job stress and strains with resultant marital dissatisfaction.





The ratio of male to female nurses in Akure Ondo State is about 1:4, according to the study conducted by Adejumo, Akinbode, Iyawe, Emmanuel and Ogungbemi (2018) for assessment of knowledge of chronic kidney disease among non-nephrology nurses, the majority of nurses are female. The researcher keeps on wondering how they will maintain marital satisfaction at the end of the closing hour of every shift duty because Nurses battle with three different types of shift to ensure they cover 24 hours of the day, the nurses at UNIMED are often and are usually too busy attending to various forms of casualties and emergency cases. The researcher perceived that this may be responsible to most of the behaviour exhibited at work and at home thereby influence their temperament and emotions and this makes the society to have impression that nurses are too temperamental. The wear and tear on nurses at every shift duty is becoming alarming and yet most nurses ensure that they maintain marital satisfaction like every other professional while at times the reverse is the case. The work load from the discharge of nurses duty directly and inversely influence their marital satisfaction and occasionally resorted into social, physical, psychological and emotional violence among the married nurses and this influences their marital stability and satisfaction.

Coping with parenting also as a nurse brings additional stress; parenting is time consuming, even though parents all over the world take care of their children with devotion, enjoyment and love. Parenting brings a lot of responsibility which can be exhausting, complicated and unrewarding at times (Bögels, Hellemans, Deursen, Römer, & Meulen, 2014). While the birth of a child most often affects the parents positively, the responsibility and role conflict between work and family may have negative effects on marital satisfaction (Nomaguchi & Milkie, 2003). Based on the background of this study it however becomes an apparent interest to investigate more into this stressor and evaluate its effect on marital satisfaction among nurses.

# **Objectives of the Study**

- The main objective of this study is to investigate the influence of occupational stress on marital satisfaction. Other objectives are specifically to;
- Access whether role conflict could interfere with occupational stress to influence marital satisfaction among Nurses.
- Investigate whether sex and age could influence marital satisfaction among Nurses.
- Examine whether work experience could influence marital satisfaction among



Nurses.

# The hypotheses for this study are:-

- 1-There will be a significant influence of occupational stress on marital satisfaction among UNIMED Nurses, Akure.
- 2 There would be interference of role conflict with occupational stress to influence marital satisfaction
- 3-There will be a significant influence of sex and age on marital satisfaction
- 4- Work experience will influence marital satisfaction.

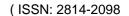
### Significance of the Study

This study aims to improve individual understanding on the role of occupational stress, role-conflict, age, sex and work experience and its detrimental effect on marital satisfaction and will recommend what possible changes should be adopted if these variables would influence marital satisfaction. The study will help to know what influences marital satisfaction among nurses. The findings of this study will add to the existing literature on marital issues, also this study will recommend various psychological dimensions in ameliorating marital problems and occupational stress among nurses and other health professionals.

### **Literature Review**

The theoretical frame work for this study shall be social exchange theory and transactional model of stress: **Social exchange theory** proposed by Thibault & Kelly (1989) posts that all human relationships are formed by the use of subjective cost-benefit analysis and comparism of alternatives. This theory strengthen the adaptation and adjustment strategy of a married couple to enhance marital satisfaction, also helps to face the reality of life squarely and device an alternative means to achieve marital satisfaction.

Transactional Model of Stress The transactional model defines stress as arising from the appraisal that particular environmental demands are about to tax individual resources, thus threatening well-being (Holroyd & Lazarus, 1982). Stress is a product of the transaction between the individual and the environment. The authority and power of the transaction lies in the process of appraisal that binds the person and the environment and, it is this "relational meaning" (Lazarus, 2001) that the person constructs from the transaction and that lies at the heart of the stress process.



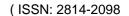


The above model explained the implication of the environment as a stimulus that predisposes stress in an individual, and unconducive environment will initiate stress, likewise unconducive environment in the work place will cause stress and may affect marital bliss. It also evaluates the availability of coping strategies and techniques for adapting to stress in order to maintain marital satisfaction and it provides measures for self-interpretation and evaluation of factors responsible for stress to ensure marital satisfaction.

# **Empirical Literature Review**

Story and Repetti (2006) conducted a hierarchical linear modelling (HLM) among 43 couples to investigate the effect of daily fluctuations in marital behaviour (anger and withdrawal) as a function of same-day job stressors. The results show that there are great significant relations between job stressors and marital interaction; the results also suggest that spouses in high-conflict families may be especially vulnerable to the effects of job stressors on marital interaction. In a research investigation by Baltes and Heydens-Gahi (2003), the role of selection, optimisation, and compensation (SOC) behaviours in relation to both job and family stressors and work-in-family (WIF) conflict and family-in-work (FIW) conflict was examined. The results suggest that the use of general SOC behaviours in both work and family domains are related to lower amounts of job and family stressors and subsequently lower amounts of WIF conflict and FIW conflict.

Another study conducted by Wierda-Boer, Gerris and Vermulst (2009) examined how personality, domain-specific stress, and work-family interference are interrelated. A questionnaire data of 276 Dutch dual-earner couples with young children were analysed using structural equation modelling. The findings demonstrated that job stress and parenting stress were positively related to work-to-family conflict and family-to-work conflict respectively. For women, a The presence of stress at work is almost inevitable in many jobs when pressure begins to build up, it can cause adverse strain on one's emotions, thought processes, and physical condition. When stress becomes excessive, employees develop various symptoms of stress that can harm their job performance and health, and even threaten their ability to cope with the environment. People who are stressed may become nervous and develop chronic





worry. They are easily provoked to anger and are unable to relax. They may be uncooperative or use alcohol or drugs excessively. Although these conditions also occur from other causes, they are common symptoms of stress. In the words of Leth (1995), "to earn a good salary one has to earn a living and to earn a good salary one cannot live life". Stress over a prolonged time also leads to generate diseases of the heart, kidney, blood vessels, and other parts of the body. Therefore, it is important that stress both on and off the job, be kept at a low level enough for most people to tolerate without disorders (Asthana, 1985).

# Methodology

The research design for this study is a survey research design where copies of questionnaires were distributed to research participants in order to measure their response. The samples for this study were drawn from a population of married nurses of UNIMED Teaching hospital in Akure whereby a carefully selected sample of 200 participants (Married Nurses) was considered. Stratified random sampling techniques were used in selecting research participants in order to ensure that all target populations were adequately represented for the study. The data collection in this study was through the aid of standard questionnaires made of 4 sections with total number of 40 items.

**Section A;** demographic data with 5 items taping the personal data of the participants such as age, sex, marital status, work experience and employment status

### Section B;

### Enrich Marital Satisfaction Scale.

EMS is a 15 items scale used to measure marital satisfaction, using a 5 point Likert scale ranging from (1) strongly disagrees to strongly agree (5). Respondents were asked to indicate their level of agreement with statements

#### Reliability

The EMS Scale was evaluated for internal consistency and test-retest reliability. Cronbach's alpha revealed an internal reliability of .86. Test-retest reliability was assessed with 115 individuals over a period of 4 weeks. The reliability coefficient over time was .86. Item-total correlations were conducted to further assess the



degree to which the items form a cohesive scale.

# **Validity**

Concurrent validity; EMS scale had correlations of .71 for men and .77 for women and had correlations of .71 for construct validity. EMS Scale is a reliable and valid scale for the measurement of marital satisfaction

#### Section C

# **Job Related Tension Inventory**

Job related inventory is psychological instrument measuring occupational stress. It was developed by R.L Kahn, (1964). To measure the nature, causes and consequence of job stress. It consists of 15 items using a 6 point Likert scale. Respondents are asked to indicate how frequently they are bothered by job related factors ranging from 1 (never bothered) to 5 (bothered all the time) and 6 (does not apply).

**Reliability** The coefficient of alpha obtained by Sheridan (1979) and Oseghare (1988) are 0.87 and 0.89 respectively.

**Validity** A validity coefficient of 0.77 was obtained by correlating J.T. with rated performance (Sheridan, 1978) while Oseghare (1988) obtained a coefficient of .86 when the correlated J.T equivalent with checklist symptoms stress by Kyriacon and Cliff (1978).

**Scoring** The scale is scored using direct scoring from 1, 2, 3, 4, and 5. The highest participants can get on each scale is 70. The lowest is 14.

#### Section D

# Work Family conflict scale

Work Family conflict scale is a psychological instrument measuring role conflicts. It was developed by Netemeyer, (1996) with a Cronbach alpha of 0.94. The average alpha level for Work Family Conflict scale was .88 (Netemeyer, 1996) with a 5 point Likert scale ranging from strongly disagree (1) to strongly agree (5). The respondents were asked to indicate their level of agreement with statements such as: "The amount of time my job takes up makes it difficult to fulfil family responsibilities" and "Things I want to do at home do not get done because of the



demands my job put on me".

#### Procedure for data collection

The sample technique that was used for this research was stratified random sampling technique. The research was conducted between 11/04 /2019 and 11/05 /2019. The researcher collected letter of introduction from EKSU psychology department to the chairman ethics and research committee of the UNIMED teaching hospital Akure, seeking their permission to collect the data. Thereafter married nurses in UNIMED were approached; the purpose and benefits of the study were explained to them. They were assured of their confidentiality. A research assistant who is a nurse and also working in UNIMED was employed to help in the collection of data and all the 200 copies of questionnaire were retrieved.

**RESULTS** 

Table 1: Independent t-test summary table showing the influence of

Occupational	stress on	marital	satisfaction
Variable		NI.	moon

Variable	N	mean	SD	SE df	t	<u>p</u>
High occupational stress	101	27.37	1.67	.17		.86>.05
				198	.178	
Low occupational stress	99	27.32	1.76	.18		

From the table 1 above it is observed that occupational stress has no significant influence on marital satisfaction. This negates hypothesis 1 which states that there would be a significant influence of occupational stress on marital satisfaction (t (198) = .178, p>.05). Hypothesis not supported

Table 2: Analysis of covariance showing the interference of role conflict with occupational stress to influence marital satisfaction.

Source	SS	df	MS	F	<u>P</u>
Role conflict	.384	1	.384	.130	.72
Occupational stress	.067	1	.067	.023	.88



Error	582.72	197	2.96
Total	583.19	199	

From the table 2 above, it is observed that there is no significant influence of occupational stress on marital satisfaction F(1,198)= .032 p> .05. with the interference of role conflict with occupational stress there is still no significant influence of occupational stress on marital satisfaction F(1,197) = .023 p> .05. This negates hypothesis 2 that states that there would be interference of role conflict with occupational stress to influence marital satisfaction. Hypothesis not supported.

Table 3: Descriptive table showing the mean of sex and age score on marital satisfaction.

	<u>Variables</u>	N	mean	S.D
Sex	Male	56	27.25	1.79
	Female	144	27.38	1.68
Age	20-35	39	27.28	1.77
	36-45	126	27.25	1.74
	>45	35	27.74	1.52

Table 3 revealed that the sex which comprises of male and female had the total number of 200 while the composition is 56 men and 144 female with the following mean score; 27.25 and 27.38 respectively. The SD for male is 1.79 and SD for female is 1.68. The variability in their SD is 0.11, therefore the male nurses and female nurses are not likely to be too differ from each other in most of their dealings. The mean score for their age ranges between 20-35, 36-45,> 45 are 27.28, 27.25 and 27.74 respectively. The SD for the three categories of age are 1.77, 1,74and 1.52 respectively. The variability in the age range between 20-35 and 36-45 is 0.03 while the variability in the age range between 36-45 and> 45 is 0.22. This shows that the variance is higher between the age range of 36-45 and >45 while it is lower in age range between 20-35 and 36-45





Table 4: 2x3 ANOVA table showing the influence of sex and age on marital satisfaction.

Source	SS	df	MS		F	<u> </u>
Sex	.439	1	.439		.148	.701
Age	5.88	2	2.94		.992	.373
Sex & Age	.438	2	.219		.074	.929
Error	575.01		194	2.96		
Total	583.19		199			

From the table 3 & 4 above it shows that there is no significant influence of sex on marital satisfaction F(1, 194) = .148 p > .05).

There is no significant influence of age on marital satisfaction F(2, 194) = .992p > .05).

There is no significant joint influence of sex and age on marital satisfaction F(2, 194) = .219 p > .05). Hypothesis not supported.

Table 5 : One way ANOVA summary table showing the influence of work experience on marital satisfaction.

Work experience	N	Mean		SD	df	F	<u>P</u>
1-5 yrs.		43	27.72		1.55		
6-10 yrs.	38	26.71		1.51	4		
						1.96	.103
11-15 yrs.	38	27.47	,	1.78	195		
16-20 yrs.	45	27.44		1.92			
>20 yrs.	36	27.31		1.65			



From the table 5 above it is observed that work experience has no significant influence on marital satisfaction. This negates hypothesis 4 which states that work experience will influence marital satisfaction F(4, 195) = 1.96 p > .05). Hypothesis not supported.

#### Discussion

Hypothesis one states that occupational stress will significantly influence marital satisfaction and it was observed from the study that there is no significant influence of occupational stress on marital satisfaction. This result is not in agreement with the work of Dierdorff and Ellington (2008) who investigated the 3 behaviour-based antecedents of work–family conflict linked specifically to occupational work role requirements (interdependence, responsibility for others, and interpersonal conflict). The variance may perhaps be as a result of different environmental condition in the research setting and cultural variation. According to Bradbury, Fincham & Beach (2000) affirmed that marital relationships are heavily guided by culturally determined norms, customs and expectation (Berscheid, 1995). Marital satisfaction not determined by stress alone because many undergo stress daily but still having marital fulfilment.

It is important to recognize that examining differences in work—family conflict across occupations naturally involves varying levels of analysis, as individuals are "nested" within occupations. One way to conceptualize occupations in this manner is by considering the distinct behavioural contexts that occupations generate. These behavioural contexts are delineated by the variety of situational opportunities and constraints commensurate to an occupation (Johns, 2006, as cited in, Dierdorff and Ellington, 2008). The above literature review reveals the relationship between long hours of work, heavy work load, person-job fit; job stressors significantly affect the marital happiness among employees. The review also shows that organization policies and support can improve significantly marital happiness and in turn improve



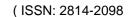
the work efficiency, physical and psychological well-being of the employees. The earlier researches also show that employees who are high on marital role commitment were associated with increased enhancement in work efficiency. Thus, these researches provide a potential assert to the present investigation to understand the relationship between the work environment and marital happiness.

A meta-analysis by Twenge (2003) on the effects of having children on marital satisfaction, indicated that becoming a parent has a negative effect on marital satisfaction and every additional child adds to that effect. Parents reported less marital satisfaction than couples who did not have children. Women reported less marital satisfaction than men; especially mothers of infants. Those with higher educational levels and better financial positions also reported less marital satisfaction in the role of parenthood.

Hypothesis two states that role conflict will significantly influence marital satisfaction and it was observed from the study that role conflict does not have a significant influence on marital satisfaction. This result negates the opinion of Carstensen (2010) who suggested that role conflict has a negative influence on marital satisfaction and thus affects the psychological well-being of an individual. Role conflict said to bring psychological discomfort to the stressor and this has the capability of influencing the marital satisfaction of an individual. HSU, Chen, Yu, & Lou (2010) also argued that individual with an undefined role may find it difficult to realize their full potential in any given task and this thus could foster aggression and intra-psychic conflict within such individual, if this is not addressed in time, the in burnt anger is capable of leading to depression which in turn will lead to marital dissatisfaction as such individual may find it difficult to maintain relationship with another person.

The result of this study shows that ability to manage many roles prevent marital crisis, many with limited roles may have conflicts if not properly managed.

Hypothesis 3 states that sex and age will significantly influence marital satisfaction and it was observed from the table that sex and age does not have significant influence on marital satisfaction. This result negates the work of Bridge(2009) who opined that older people tends to be more satisfied maritally as a result of





experience gotten from their job in an attempt to relate work with their marital life. Also, wang-sheng Lee & Terra Mckinnish(2018) also opined that older nurses tends to enjoy their marriage than the younger ones, in his study, he argued that older nurses has learnt in the time past significant factors that's capable of influencing marital satisfaction and many are in the primes of their career and they are not as busy as they are when they are young, so this thus allow them to cater for their homes in order to enjoy the peace in their marital life and this may be very unlikely to the younger ones. This study is in agreement with previous studies conducted by Schwartz (2006) that age was found to be negatively related to marital satisfaction.

Hypothesis four states that work experience will significantly influence marital satisfaction and it was reported from the table that work experience has no significant influence on marital satisfaction. The result is not in agreement with the work of Kahana & Kahana (1971) that argued that experience gotten from work acts a moderator of marital satisfaction. For instance, A nurse who has learnt the contribution of good diet to individual physical well-being and psychological well-being may therefore understand the strong reason of preparing good meals at home in an attempt to improve the physical and psychological well-being of the members of his/her family.

In accordance with Lee & Shehan (1989) found that actor effect of work hours deferred for men and women. Men's work hours were negatively associated with their marital satisfaction, consistent with hypothesis 4 and the notion that time based demands can deplete personal resources and reduce family satisfaction. However, in contrast to this hypothesis, women's longer work hours were positively associated with their marital satisfaction.

Experience goes a long way in influencing marital satisfaction. Bandura (1971) argued that behaviour can be learnt and unlearn and this learning is a permanent change in behaviour as a result of our experience. The consistency may also be linked to similarity in the human behaviour regardless of the tribe, race and ethnicity. Therefore, learning is an adaptive measure that allows individual to know what to do at a moment in order to enjoy the bliss of life.



## Conclusion

Based on the above discussion, it can be concluded that occupational stress, role conflict, sex, age, and work experience does not have a significant influence on marital satisfaction. This implies that nurses are resilient and that marital satisfaction and occupational stress are two different entities which may or may not influence each other. The society will now understand that nurses' temperament and marital satisfaction is not as a result of occupational stress and same applicable to other professions.

# Recommendations

Based on the findings, the following are the recommendations of the study:

- Following critical review and analysis of this study, it seems other factors like number of children, sexual satisfaction, choice of marriage, personality, cultural background, religious adherence coupled with other variables could significantly influence marital satisfaction therefore future researcher could work towards this direction.
- Nurses and health workers should try as much as possible to strike a balance between their office and family responsibilities; (none should be taken with levity) as role managed well will not result in marital instability
- Individual should attain certain age before going to marriage and before engaging into any pensionable work as the variability in marital satisfaction is higher at age greater than 45.
- Workers at all levels should be well informed through various religious organisation to improve on their level of resilience and adaptation in order to enhance high marital satisfaction



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