

MARITAL STATUS AND MATHEMATICS TEACHERS' INSTRUCTIONAL DELIVERY IN SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN OBUBRA L.G.A., C.R.S.

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Abstract

The study was designed to investigate the influence of marital status on mathematics teachers' instructional delivery in secondary schools in Obubra Local Government Area of Cross River State, Nigeria. A total of 250 teachers (150 married and 100 single/divorced) from all the secondary schools in Obubra Local Government was sampled. A 10-item questionnaire was administered to the teachers to ascertain the level of instructional delivery. Chi-square was used in analysing data generated for the study. The result showed that there is a significant influence of marital status on mathematics teachers' instructional delivery indicating that married teachers were more effective in instructional delivery than single/divorced teachers. Hence, recommendation was made thus: Government should place emphasis on the recruitment of married mathematics teachers who tend to be calm and productive than their single counterparts.

Keywords: Marital status, instructional delivery, Mathematics and Teachers.



Introduction

Every teacher's commitment determines his/her level of effectiveness, innovativeness and persistence among other colleagues. Teachers with a higher level of commitment are better in planning, innovative, resilient, accepted by students and there is good students' performance in examinations (Protheroe, 2008). The more committed a teacher is to his job, the higher the students' learning outcome (garbage in garbage out). A committed teacher is more often loved by students since his lessons are always interesting to them. A teacher with high motivational skills always attracts students to his lesson.

According to Bandura (1989), there is a triadic relationship among personal factors

such as marital status, environmental factors, teaching profession and behavioural characteristics (self-efficacy). A married teacher has time after school to prepare for the next lesson with his students. But a single teacher is always occupied with household chores and is more concerned about going out with peers. There is a significant difference between married and unmarried teachers. However, Yolmaz and Çavau (2008) reported a change in teachers' self-efficacy in classroom management with time without considering the teachers' change in marital status over the study period. Studies in Africa on the same subject matter have been descriptive in nature and have scanty information on the influence of marital status on teachers' instructional

effectiveness in mathematics. All these studies, however, noted the importance of teachers' marital status but they did not consider the influence of marital status on teachers' instructional effectiveness. To investigate the influence of marital status in mathematics instructional effectiveness, the variable (marital status) will be considered in groups such as Single, Married and Divorced.

The role of the teacher in any society is unique and vital. He is the vehicle in which passengers are driven to their destinations. No matter how the vehicle is filled, the place of the driver cannot be taken. Schoenborn (2004) indicated that married adults are healthier and are always committed to disposing their duties effectively than single and divorced teachers. However, the study collected data from American adults on health and job description using Computer-Assisted Personal Interviews (CAPI). Consequently, Islahi and Nasreen (2013) revealed that there exists a significant difference in the effectiveness of job disposition between unmarried and married male teachers only. This agreed with the study conducted by Schoenborn (2004) that married teachers are more efficient in job disposition than other groups.

According to Adio and Popoola (2010), there was a statistically significant relationship between marital status and self-efficacy. Hence, those who were married had higher levels of self-efficacy than those who were not. However, the reviewed study was quantitative in nature using Nigerian teachers for data collection. Akintayo (2010) revealed that a significant difference exists between married and single respondents' experience of work-family role conflict. However, the study reviewed above was only limited to Nigerian industrial workers and not teachers. Njoka (2007), in Embu, Kenya, on the other hand, found that there were no significant differences in Kenyan counseling teachers instructional effectiveness based on marital status. Nginah (2012), in Machakos, Kenya established that marital status influences work-family conflict, with 75 percent of married teachers experiencing more work-family conflicts than single, divorced and separated teachers. The

first domain investigated for influence of marital status was teacher's instructional effectiveness in classroom management.

Tyagi (2013), however, revealed that unmarried teachers have higher level of classroom management than married teachers. Nevertheless, the study was conducted with Indian teacher, not Nigerian teachers. Married and unmarried people display different kinds of policies when they manage people. Roussanov and Savor (2013) found differences in the management styles of married and unmarried managers in favour of married managers. Nevertheless, the study was a pure qualitative study conducted with US managers and not a mixed method study conducted on Nigerian teachers. It, therefore, lacked the quantitative aspect that the current study possesses. On the other hand, conflict in the home was found to have an influence on teachers' instructional effectiveness in public schools. Parsa and Parsa (2014), in Iran, indicated that low inter-parental conflict had positive significant correlation with high job effectiveness, while high inter-parental conflict had negative correlation with low instructional effectiveness. However, the study was carried out among Iranian teachers, not on Nigerian teachers which this study covered.

The second domain of teachers' self-efficacy investigated for influence of marital status was teachers' self-efficacy in instructional strategy. The influence of a person's marital status the teacher's instructional strategy has not received much analytic attention. Kanazawa and Still (2000) indicated that, while men in general are less likely to be divorced than women, and secondary school teachers in general are less likely to be divorced than others, simultaneously being male and being a secondary school teacher statistically increases the likelihood of being divorced. The study by Kanazawa and Still (2000) revealed that personal factors such as cognition strongly affected marital status. However, the study was on the influence of work on teachers' marital status and not the influence of marital status on teachers' self-efficacy in instructional strategy. Chaturvedi and Purushothaman (2009)

revealed that marital status was a significant determinant of motivation to job disposition and motivation leads to instructional effectiveness. However, the study was conducted on Indian female teachers and not male teachers. Due to lack of consensus among researchers, on this topic, this work seeks to examine the effect of marital status of mathematics teachers on their instructional effectiveness in public schools.

Marital Status and Mathematics Teaching

Marital status refers to the condition of being married or unmarried (single/divorced). Male and female married teachers as well as male and female single teachers are in the teaching profession. Martneau (2006) discovered from her research findings that marital status has no significant effect on the job satisfaction of women in paid employment in Benin City. One would expect that a married woman with children and most likely more responsibilities would have different work values from a spinster. But women in paid employment, irrespective of their marital status are satisfied with their jobs and this will consequently be seen in their job performance. Her findings agreed with the work of Ajayi (1983), Iremiren (1986), Chan (2004) and Clark (2006) who found out that job performance was independent of marital status. So, there is no significant difference between marital status and job performance.

A teacher from a broken home cannot perform to his/her maximum and cannot healthily develop his/her students' academic potential to the fullest, due to the fact that s/he is separated. On the other hand, a teacher that is from an organised and stable home is more likely to develop students into full-fledged humans that are able to discover their academic strength and other attributes. Onocha (1985) posited that a teacher from a broken home may have feelings of insecurity which will affect his/her performance. A teacher from a broken home, left with the responsibility of raising children single handedly, will not perform well. Afolabi (2002) underlined that complementing roles in the family by both spouses are the inherent advantage one from a broken home

suffers, when he asserted that the more stable the family, the more secure the teacher will feel even in his place of work and this will show in his performance. The teacher living in the shadow of the broken home is often bewildered by the comings and goings and by the more fact that essential relationships are not promoted or are broken off and disrupted at a very impressionable time. Family dislocation could result from having children outside. Different societies have different attitudes toward such teachers. It is also alleged that teachers who are less productive and ineffective in the teaching/learning process may be consequent upon the affected teachers' inability to concentrate and prepare adequately for the lesson to be taught. Such teachers may be hyper-compulsive and at times could be allergic to even the serenity of the school environment.

In a study carried out by Khurshid, Qasmi and Ashuraf (2012) on the relationship between teacher self-efficacy and their perceived job performance in Islamabad, the population of the study comprised of all secondary level teachers and students of the government schools working under the Federal Directorate of Education, Islamabad. The results showed that marital status affects the self-efficacy of teachers and that married male and female teachers have high self-efficacy which will lead to high job performance.

In another study was carried out by Azim, Haque, and Chowdhury (2013) on the level of job satisfaction of employees in Bangladesh and to test whether job satisfaction level differs among employees in terms of their gender and marital status. On the basis of the literature review on job satisfaction, an eight-item questionnaire is developed to measure the level of job satisfaction. The questionnaire ignored questions on 'the work environment' as we assumed that the working conditions for all employees, whether they are male or female, married or unmarried, remain the same in a given organisation.

Mathematics Instructional Delivery

Instructional Delivery, sometimes called "strategy of instruction," refers to the

strategies teachers use in transferring new information to students with what they already know and in a way that makes sense. This is intended to help students recall the information or skills later, even in a different situation or place. Typically, the teacher's model strategy used for students includes thinking aloud through the problem-solving process, so students can see when and how to use a particular strategy and what they can gain by doing so. Systematic instruction is particularly helpful in strengthening essential skills such as organisation and attention. This often includes:

- Memory devices, to help students remember the strategy (e.g., a first-letter mnemonic created by forming a word from the beginning letters of other words);
- Strategy steps stated in everyday language and beginning with action verbs (e.g. read the problem carefully);
- Strategy steps stated in the order in which they are to be used (e.g. students are cued to read the word problem carefully before trying to solve the problem);
- Strategy steps that prompt students to use cognitive abilities (e.g. the critical steps needed in solving a problem) (Lenz, Ellis, & Scanlon, 1996, as cited in Maccini & Gagnon, n.d.). All students can benefit from a systematic approach to instruction, not just those with disabilities. That's why many of the textbooks being published today include overt systematic approaches to instruction in their explanations and learning activities.

It's also why NICHCY's first Evidence for Education was devoted to the power of strategy instruction. The research into systematic and explicit instruction is clear—the approaches taken together positively impact students' learning (Swanson, in press). The National Mathematics Advisory Panel Report (2008) found that explicit instruction was primarily effective for computation (i.e. basic math operations), but not as effective for higher order problem-solving. That being understood, meta-analyses and research reviews by Swanson (1999, 2001) and Swanson and Hoskyn (1998) assert that breaking down instruction into steps, working in small groups,

questioning students directly, and promoting ongoing practice and feedback seem to have greater impact when combined with systematic "strategies."

- (i) Appropriate Pacing
- (ii) Frequent Student Responses
- (iii) Adequate Processing Time
- (iv) Provide Feedback and
- (v) Monitor Responses.

Mathematics Teaching and Learning

According to the National Mathematics Advisory Panel report published in 2008, the explicit instruction was primarily effective for computation (Basic Mathematics Operation), but not too effective for higher order problem solving. The breaking down of mathematics instruction step by step and involving students in the lesson is more knowledge proficient when combined with good instructional strategies. The teacher must, therefore, gain proper mastery of the subject matter (what to teach), understand and develop the best teaching strategies that will enable him accomplish the task. The strategies of mathematics instructional delivery are best understood and used in the classroom by the teacher if they were developed by him. A teacher must be tactical in developing the most reliable strategy that will enable a successful mathematics instructional delivery. It is, therefore, important to take note of the developmental stage of the students before developing instructional strategies or methods of teaching mathematics.

Creating a supportive and students-engaging classroom environment can help to promote students understanding of mathematics and build reliable confidence in them (Ontario Ministry of Education, 2005). The teacher's ability to create an enabling environment for learning Mathematics can, therefore, determine the extent to which the students' will understand the lesson. The ability of the teacher to utilise teaching aids, post questions and guide responses during the lesson can either make or mar the student's level of understanding the lesson. Students can also maintain positive attitudes towards

learning through the teacher's actions in the classroom. A teacher who lacks the ability to moderate a classroom may end up producing a boring mathematics teaching condition. A boring classroom may lead students to developing negative attitudes towards learning.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study is to:

To determine the influence of marital status of teachers on their instructional delivery in Secondary Schools in Obubra Local Government Area, Cross River State.

Research question

- i. Is there any significant influence of Marital status on instructional delivery of mathematics teachers?

Statement of hypothesis

- i. Marital status of teachers does not significantly influence their instructional delivery in Public Schools in Obubra Local Government Area

Methodology

The research design adopted for the study was survey design. The population of

this study is all the Secondary School teachers in Obubra Local Government Area, Cross River State, Nigeria. The simple random sampling technique was used to select a sample of one hundred and ten teachers (110) from ten schools that were used for the study. The instrument used for data collection was a questionnaire titled "Marital status and Mathematics Teachers instructional delivery in Secondary Schools. The questionnaire was made up of two sections 'A' and 'B. Section A contained demographic details and section B contained Teachers views on the item. The instrument was validated by three lecturers who are experts in the field of measurement and evaluation for necessary corrections. The reliability of the instrument was established 0.752 using the Cronbach Alpha. The questionnaires were administered to randomly selected students in the five schools chosen for the study and retrieved the same day. The responses were later coded and analysed using the Chi-Square distribution.

Hypothesis

Marital status of teachers does not significantly influence their instructional delivery in Secondary Schools in Obubra Local Government Area.

Table 1

A table showing chi-square analysis of Marital Status and Mathematics Teachers Instructional Delivery.

Variables (Marital Statues)	O	E	O-E	$(O-E)^2$	$(O-E)^2/E$
Married	150	125	25	625	
Single/Divorced	100	125	-25	625	
Total	250	250		$X^2 = 10.0$	

Significant at 0.05, df=4

Critical $x^2 = 9.49$

The result on the table above shows that the calculated χ^2 value 10.0 is greater than the critical χ^2 value 9.49 at 0.05 level of significance with 4 degrees of freedom. Since the calculated χ^2 value is greater than the critical χ^2 the null hypothesis is rejected. Hence, marital status of teachers has significant influence on their instructional delivery in Obubra Local Government Area, Cross River State.

Discussion of findings

The marital status of every mathematics teacher has a great influence on his or her job effectiveness. This finding is in line with Scheborn (2004) that married adults always look healthy and are always happy in discharging their duty in the classroom or office. A happy teacher is attributed to a happy family as discovered in this study. The marital status of a teacher determines the level of his effectiveness in the classroom and other activities required of him.

Married teachers develop positive attitude in the school because they will not want to lose their jobs since they have household needs to attend to as parents; they also feel secure and happy. Married people spend time at home preparing for the next day's instruction. On the contrary, unmarried teachers will be committed to household chores and also give more attention to peer activities (football, birthday outing, etc.). Divorced teachers, on the other hand, are easily distracted with feelings of insecurity, single parent responsibility and societal pressure which affect their job performance.

Recommendations:

The following recommendations are made:

- a. Considerations should be given first to married persons when selecting mathematics teachers in secondary schools.
- b. Proper strategies should be adopted by mathematics teachers for effective teaching of the subject in Nigerian schools.
- c. Mathematics teachers must always make use of formative evaluation in

the teaching process to ensure proper utilisation of students' response to the instruction.

Conclusion

Based on the findings, it is concluded that the marital status of Mathematics teachers influences their instructional delivery and upholds the following assertions:

- i. Married teachers develop good attitude to work and deliver lessons effectively in Obubra Local Government Area, Cross River State.
- ii. Single and divorced teachers more often develop negative attitudes in discharging their duties in Obubra Local Government Area, Cross River State.

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